PROFESSIONAL BURNOUT IN SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY: IMPACT OF CHANGING PRACTICES

By Benjamin R. Burns

We recommend acceptance of this thesis in partial fulfillment of the candidate's requirements for the degree of Education Specialist in School Psychology

The candidate has completed the oral defense of the thesis.

Robert J. Dixon, Ph.D. Thesis Committee Chairperson	7-10-09 Date
Casey T. Tobin, Ph.D. Thesis Committee Member	5/4/09 Date
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Thesis accepted

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UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-LA CROSSE

Graduate Studies

PROFESSIONAL BURNOUT IN SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY: IMPACT OF CHANGING PRACTICES

A Chapter Style Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Education Specialist

Benjamin R. Burns

College of Liberal Studies
School Psychology

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ABSTRACT

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The present study investigated what impact a shift to a Response-to-Intervention (RtI) model might have on reported burnout levels of school psychologists. The role of the school psychologist has long been envisioned as one of nothing but testing and paperwork. With recent legislation, RtI has become a mandated option to replacing the traditional discrepancy model. The present study investigates what impact the extent to which schools are implementing RtI-type practices, the individual school psychologist's knowledge of and attitudes towards RtI, and the perceived discrepancy between the school psychologists' knowledge and attitudes and those of their principals has on the three factors of burnout as conceptualized by Maslach and Jackson (1986): emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment. Results of the present study yielded a small relationship between the discrepancy with the principal on RtI and emotional exhaustion, suggesting those who do not "see eye-to-eye" with their principal will experience more emotional exhaustion. Results also yielded a small to moderate relationship between a school psychologist's own knowledge of and attitudes towards RtI and the extent to which their building was implementing RtI with personal accomplishment, suggesting that moving towards RtI practices will lead to more feelings of personal accomplishment.

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CHAPTER I

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The term "burnout" is likely to be a term people have used at one point or another. Burnout is defined as a chronic condition that often comes on so slowly that it is overlooked until it is full blown and a major problem (Reiner & Hartshorne, 1982). Professional burnout of mental health professionals can have detrimental effects on the clients they serve, as well as on their own lives. In addition to psychological consequences, one Dutch study found the average annual financial consequences of burnt-out employees amounts to approximately $3.43 billion per year ("Stress in the Working Environment", 1998). In considering the potential for such devastating consequences, and the vulnerable populations often served by school psychologists, it is important to study burnout in regards to the field of school psychology. Doing so could have important implications not only for school psychologists, but the children, families, and schools they serve.

A national study by Huebner (1992) found 36% of school psychologists experienced high emotional exhaustion, 10% showed high levels of depersonalization, and 28% had low levels of personal accomplishment. Two years later, Niebrugge (1994) found the following levels of burnout for school psychologists in Illinois: emotional exhaustion (29%), depersonalization (11%), and low personal accomplishment (51%).

More recently, a study of school psychologists in North Carolina yielded data similar to Huebner's 1992 national survey: emotional exhaustion (40%), depersonalization (10%), and low personal accomplishment (19%) (Mills & Huebner, 1998). These studies suggest it is likely a significant number of school psychologists may be experiencing symptoms of burnout at any given point in time. However, the potential impact that recent federal legislation holds for burnout and school psychology in general is the driving force behind the present study. Interestingly, no studies have looked at the relationship between burnout and Response to Intervention (RtI).

This research will explore the traditional role of the school psychologist, describe the development of the construct of burnout and explore possible causes and consequences of burnout for school psychologists, educators and other professionals. The challenges to the traditional role of the school psychologist by RtI and the potential relationship between this model and burnout will be explored. The goals of the present study then are to report current levels of burnout among school psychologists and to investigate to what extent RtI influences levels of burnout among school psychologists.

Traditional Role of the School Psychologist

The estimated 30,000-35,000 school psychologists in the United States have predominantly been thought to have two roles, that of sorter and repairer (Fagan, 2008). The sorter function is concerned with determining which children have a disability and are therefore eligible for special education services. This traditional role is the one most people are familiar with and it follows the "refer-test-place" sequence. It is no secret, even among teachers and administrators, that the majority of the average school psychologist's time is spent in assessment-related activities (Gilman & Gabriel, 2004;

Levinson, Thomas, & Orf, 1996). The repairer function has therefore been concerned with how to "fix" children who are misbehaving or achieving academically significantly behind their peers. Fagan argues the roles today may seem very much the same, but numerous laws and research have lead to many new practices within the field of school psychology, most notably team approaches, problem solving models and research-based methods (i.e., RtI).

Burnout

Conceptualization

Common symptoms of burnout include chronic fatigue, cynicism, irritability, anger at those making demands, self-criticism for putting up with demands, hair-trigger display of emotions, less empathic behavior, and accompanying physical symptoms such as headaches, loss of appetite and chest or back pains (Miles & Chittooran, 2001). While any individual can theoretically become "burnt out" with their job, the most detrimental consequences lie with those individuals who work in traditional human services fields. Burnout has been found to exist in school psychology, as well as several related professions, including teachers, school counselors, social workers, psychologists, physicians, psychotherapists, nurses, and police officers.

In attempting to conceptualize burnout, Maslach and Jackson (1981) constructed a survey originally composed of several items believed to measure hypothesized aspects of burnout. A factor analysis yielded four main factors of burnout: (a) emotional exhaustion, (b) depersonalization, (c) personal accomplishment and (d) involvement (Maslach & Jackson). Involvement was later dropped as a component of burnout, and as a result, the three factors of burnout are emotional exhaustion (e.g., feeling

overwhelmed), depersonalization (e.g., seeing a client as a burden) and reduced personal accomplishment (e.g., feelings of incompetence).

The suggested causes of burnout have varied throughout the years. A meta-analysis found the following to be the top correlates of burnout across many different human-services related fields, including school psychology: role conflict, supervisor support, coworker support, autonomy, and job satisfaction (Lee & Ashforth, 1996). When Lee and Ashforth broke down the studies into Maslach and Jackson's three factors of burnout (emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and personal accomplishment), they found the variables which consistently correlated best for all three dimensions of burnout could be grouped into four categories: supervision, role conflict/ambiguity, intrapersonal characteristics and various demographic variables.

Looking at the 'Big Five' personality variables (openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism), Mills and Huebner (1998) found these variables correlate strongly with, and account for some variance of, burnout; particularly the personal accomplishment dimension. A similar study found negative affectivity to predict high emotional exhaustion and depersonalization (Iverson, Olekalns, & Erwin, 1998). As part of the design of their study, Mills and Huebner found these results were consistent across time, suggesting reports of burnout reflect both state and trait components. Stress is a similar concept in which differences can be teased out between trait and state components.

It should be noted though that while similar, the concepts of stress and burnout are distinct. Several studies have suggested burnout is typically a result of prolonged exposure to various types of stress (Huebner, 1993a; Miles & Chittooran, 2001; Mills &

Huebner, 1998). One study extended the description of the relationship between burnout and stress to be more cyclical in nature: stress leads to burnout, which could lead to more stress, or new types of stress, or other negative consequences (Mills & Huebner).

Burnout and Other Professionals

Many of the same correlates of burnout among educators were found to be predictive of burnout among other professionals whose line of work often encompass intense interpersonal relationships. Separate studies found caregiver role identity significantly predicts burnout among social workers (Siebert & Siebert, 2007) and role conflict and role ambiguity were reliable predictors of burnout among salespersons (Low, Cravens, Grant, & Moncrief, 2000).

Many intrapersonal characteristics have been linked to burnout among other professionals. Over-involvement was found to account for 29% of the variance in overall burnout scores in social workers (Koeske & Kelly, 1995), while levels of intrinsic motivation were found to predict burnout among salespersons (Low et al., 2000). Avoidance, dependence, and antisocial characteristics were found to predict burnout in resident physicians (Thomas, 2004), while fear of failure and interpersonal conflict predicted burnout among baseball and softball umpires (Rainey, 1995). Finally, exhaustion, cynicism, and disengagement, as a result of emotional job demands, predict burnout in nurses and police officers (Bakker & Heuven, 2006).

For counseling and general psychologists, the type of practice setting was found to be the largest predictor of burnout, with those in private practice experiencing the least burnout (Rupert & Morgan, 2005; Vredenburgh, Carlozzi, & Stein, 1999). A previous study of psychologists also found burnout to be related to younger age, lower salary, lack

of control and less engagement in individual therapy (Ackerley, Burnell, Holder, & Kurdek, 1988). Caseload discrepancy, the difference between an individual's ideal and actual number of clients, was found to predict burnout in physicians (Shirom, Nirel, & Vinokur, 2006) and psychotherapists (Raquepaw & Miller, 1989). Time demands and actual workload were associated with burnout for resident physicians (Thomas, 2004). Finally, burnout was also observed to occur at the health team level (Garman, Corrigan, & Morris, 2002). One study indicated psychologists who were more opposed to practicing while burnt-out actually worked less hours per week, saw fewer clients, and had better knowledge of burnout prevention strategies (Skorupa & Agresti, 1993).

Consequences of Burnout among Other Professionals

The most common consequence of burnout reported among other professionals has been the intention to leave their profession. This has been found for teachers (Schwab, Jackson, & Schuler, 1986), nurses (Armstrong-Stassen, Al-Ma'Aitah, Cameron, & Horsburgh, 1993), psychotherapists (Raquepaw & Miller, 1989), salespersons (Low et al., 2000), and umpires (Rainey, 1995). Burnout was also related to lower job satisfaction, lower performance, and lower organizational commitment in salespersons (Low et al.). Other reported consequences of burnout are patient satisfaction for behavioral health teams (Garmen et al., 2002), greater absenteeism in health care workers (Peterson, Demerouti, Bergström, Åsberg, & Nygren, 2008), and poorer decision making in Child Protection Services workers (McGee, 1989). One longitudinal study across professions found individuals who changed careers early were less burnt-out than those who did not in a follow-up study 12 years later (Cherniss, 1992).

Burnout and Educators

One study of burnout among teachers revealed the importance of personal relationships and mentors (Schlichte, Yssel, & Merbler, 2005). Another sample of teachers suggested colleague social support predicts all three dimensions of burnout, while role conflict accounts for 24% of emotional exhaustion variance and 12% of depersonalization variance. Autonomy accounted for 12% of personal accomplishment variance (Schwab, Jackson, & Schuler, 1986).

A study of school counselors found intrapersonal characteristics, such as an individual's style of coping, accounted for 25% of the variance in emotional exhaustion scores, 8% in depersonalization scores, and 35% in personal accomplishment scores (Wilkerson & Bellini, 2006). Another study found disruptive students and lack of supervisor support were antecedents of burnout among teachers and school administrators (Burke, Greenglass, & Schwarzer, 1996). This seems to suggest lack of supervisor support can help lead to burnout, even if not a direct cause.

Many studies have suggested various demographic and workplace characteristics influence burnout in educators. Grayson and Alvarez's (2007) study of burnout in teachers revealed student-peer relations and parent/community factors account for 13% of the variance in emotional exhaustion, instructional management accounts for 7% of the variance in personal accomplishment, and student-teacher relations, student academic orientation and administration factors account for 14% of the variance in depersonalization scores. General organizational factors were found responsible for 12% of the variance in emotional exhaustion scores and 15% of the variance in depersonalization scores for school counselors (Wilkerson & Bellini, 2006).

One interesting study found students believe teachers who are burnt out feel 'wiped-out' at the end of the day, believe working with pupils for a full day is oppressive, and teaching is turning them into an impatient person (Tatar & Yahav, 1999). This study also suggests students are able to clue into their teacher's burnout and that this can directly affect the classroom environment.

Consequences of Burnout among Educators

In addition to the intent to leave their profession (Schwab et al., 1986), studies with teachers have noted less energy exerted in teaching, greater absenteeism, and difficulty relating to family members, as well as higher reports of somatic complaints (Belcastro & Hays, 1984). Burnt-out teachers significantly reported the frequency of 23 somatic complaints and the intensity of 26 somatic complaints. A model of 25 somatic complaints was derived that accurately classified 89% of teachers as either burnt-out or not (Belcastro & Hays). Heart symptoms and depressive mood were also found to be consequences of burnout among teachers and school administrators (Burke et al., 1996).

Burnout and School Psychologists

Much of the existing research suggests supervisors and supervision is crucial in burnout prevention and management, especially for those just entering the field (Huebner, 1992; Huebner, 1993a; Huebner, 1993b; Huebner, 1994; Sullivan & Conoley, 2008). A study by Niebrugge (1994) found satisfaction with supervision was the best overall negative predictor of burnout and accounted for 30% of the variance. Satisfaction with supervision was also found to account for 9% of the variance of emotional exhaustion, and 13% of the variance for depersonalization. Similarly, Huebner (1994) found support from supervisors was the strongest contributor to school psychologists'

overall well-being, including lower levels of stress. One longitudinal study across professions, including school psychology, found those who moved to a new job and experienced less burnout indicated good supervision was a key component (Cherniss, 1992).

In 1993, Ross and Goh found 31% of school psychologists in a national survey were receiving supervision, while 59% reported they would like to be supervised. Of those who were being supervised, 69% were only being supervised on an "as-needed" basis (Ross & Goh). In another study, 70% of a national sample indicated they thought school psychologists should be supervised, and yet only 10% of that same sample actually was receiving supervision (Fischetti & Crespi, 1999). A third, national study found 68% of respondents were receiving either formal or informal supervision (Chafouleas, Clonan, & Vanauken, 2002); however, of those 68%, only 10% reported receiving 3 hours or more of supervision per month versus the NASP recommendation of 2 hours per week (approximately 8 hours per month) (NASP, 2004). One explanation offered for the reduced number in hours of supervision is the increases in other professional development opportunities, namely conferences, in the past decade which have made supervision seemingly less needed (McIntosh & Phelps, 2000). Other explanations include the need to be familiar with both clinical practice and the clinical supervision process; updating one's knowledge base may be a deterrent keeping more supervision from occurring (Crespi & Dube, 2005).

Other studies suggest job and role definitions are the best predictor of burnout, and accounted for 27% of the variance in the frequency of emotional exhaustion, and 19% of the variance in the intensity of emotional exhaustion (Huberty & Huebner, 1988).

An earlier study comparing the rates of the three dimensions of burnout, as well as role conflict and role ambiguity among school psychologists, social workers, guidance counselors, reading specialists, and teachers, found school psychologists ranked third (emotional exhaustion), fourth (depersonalization), and third (personal accomplishment) among the professionals. Teachers reported the highest levels of all three dimensions of burnout (Pierson-Hubeny & Archambault, 1987). However, school psychologists reported the most role ambiguity and the second most role conflict among the different professionals (Pierson-Hubeny & Archambault). Furthermore, role conflict was found to account for 24% of the variance of emotional exhaustion and 10% of the variance of depersonalization. Role ambiguity accounted for 9% of the variance in personal accomplishment (Pierson-Hubeny & Archambault).

Mills and Huebner (1998) found the 'Big Five' personality variables (openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism) to account for some variance of burnout, particularly with regards to increased levels of personal accomplishment. The study found personality factors accounted for 10%, 12%, and 24%, respectively, for emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment (Mills & Huebner).

An earlier study by Huebner and Mills (1994) found similar levels of variance explained by personality factors for depersonalization (15%) and personal accomplishment (21%), but not for emotional exhaustion. That study also specifically identified several personality characteristics as influencing burnout; individuals high in competitiveness and egocentricity, or low in conscientiousness and extraversion were found to experience more burnout (Huebner & Mills). It has also been found school

psychologists with well integrated personalities are less likely to experience burnout (Sandoval, 1993).

Many studies have found demographic or workplace variables are also related to burnout among school psychologists. In one older study, participants reported their most common stressors were excessive caseloads and not enough time (Reiner & Hartshorne, 1982). However, other studies have shown it is not the actual caseload, but the discrepancy between actual caseload and ideal caseload, referred to as caseload discrepancy, predicts burnout (Niebrugge 1994; Huebner 1992). Correlations in the Niebrugge study between the discrepancy and each of the three dimensions of burnout were .30 (emotional exhaustion), .30 (depersonalization), and -.11 (personal accomplishment). A step-wise regression found this caseload discrepancy accounted for 6% of the variance observed in emotional exhaustion scores and 5% of the variance observed in depersonalization scores. These findings indicate a relationship between feeling overwhelmed and experiencing symptoms of burnout.

In addition to these caseload discrepancies, Huebner's (1992) study also found a lack of resources accounted for 12% of the variance in emotional exhaustion scores and 7% of the variance in depersonalization scores. Urbanicity, or type of location the school psychologist worked in, was also found to account for 6% of the variance in emotional exhaustion (Huebner, 1992). A later study found time pressures accounted for 8% of the variance in both the frequency and intensity of emotional exhaustion (Huberty & Huebner, 1988). A more recent study investigated differences between "in-house" school psychologists, those who are assigned to only one school, and traditional school psychologists, those that travel between multiple schools. Results indicated the "in-

house" school psychologists experienced higher levels of job satisfaction and personal accomplishment, as well as lower levels of burnout (Proctor & Steadman, 2003).

Consequences of Burnout among School Psychologists

In addition to the common symptoms of burnout found by Miles and Chittooran (2001), burnt-out School Psychologists have been linked to several other negative consequences. These consequences include reduced commitment to profession (Kruger, Wandle, & Watts, 1993), greater dissatisfaction with professional roles (Huebner & Mills, 1994), and lower overall job satisfaction (Worrell, Skaggs, & Brown, 2006). These potential negative consequences are exacerbated by the suggestion that overlooking the early warning signs of burnout can lead to burnout becoming both chronic and severe (Reiner & Hartshorne, 1982).

Challenges to the Traditional Role

IDEA and RtI

In 2004, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) was amended, allowing states to use a Response to Intervention (RtI) model instead of the traditional discrepancy model as a means to declare students eligible for special education (Merrell, Ervin, & Gimpel, 2006). While states and school districts are still trying to grapple with this change, the implications of RtI extend beyond the shift in job duties and expectations of a school psychologist to potentially impacting burnout of these professionals.

Berninger (2006) believes the reauthorization of IDEA is a step in the right direction, but that more needs to be done. Specifically, acknowledging school psychologists and their extensive knowledge of assessments will continue to play an important role in determining several things, including special education eligibility and

RtI issues. There also needs to be more recognition for the school psychologists' training and ability to optimize the achievement, behavior, and mental health of all students. Berninger contends a more preventative model, i.e. RtI, would better allow for school psychologists to meet the diverse needs of the entire school population. One hallmark and strength of RtI is it will be manifested uniquely at each school. Fagan (2008) suggests this is because RtI is designed as more of an intervention than a diagnostic tool. This feature is intended to allow RtI to adapt to the available resources and various needs of each school.

While RtI-type practices have been described as a research-based, solutions-focused, problem-solving model, the traditional discrepancy model has been described as a search for pathology (i.e., a focus on what's wrong with the child) (Merrell et al., 2006). Several researchers have suggested the focus should rather be more on doing something to help the struggling learner (Merrell et al.). Some 'transactional' approaches to conceptualizing how RtI should be used even go so far as focusing on the complex social contexts in which learning takes place, including the instruction (McEneaney, Lose & Schwartz, 2006). RtI also has implications of offering children a 'non-categorical' solution to receiving help, potentially avoiding the negative stigmas that often accompany special education labels (Merrell et al.).

Denton, Vaughn, and Fletcher (2003) suggest the reasons why research-based practices are not being implemented more frequently are (1) a lack of information regarding these instructional practices and how to implement them, and (2) disbelief that these practices will actually be effective. They further suggest distrust of the existing literature on research-based practices and disbelief that these practices are actually more

effective than their current practices are also contributing to the lack of implementation of research-based practices (Denton et al.).

Desire for Role Expansion

A recent survey found only a small percentage of school psychologists are actively using RtI (Dean & Tysinger, 2006), while another survey found most school psychologists are dissatisfied with the traditional discrepancy model (Thomas, 2006). Many other studies have shown school psychologists desire to spend less time conducting traditional assessments and spending more time focusing on direct intervention, problem-solving consultation, organizational consultation, and applied research (Merrell et al., 2006; Worrell et al., 2006). Even earlier, Huebner and Mills (1994) found school psychologists desired to devote more time to consultation and counseling services. Worrell et al. also reported large numbers of school psychologists will be retiring in the next 5 to 10 years, exacerbating the current shortage and increasing the student-to-psychologist ratios, thus forcing school psychologists to perform more traditional assessments.

One study of school psychologists found the following percentages for how much of their time is actually spent in various activities, and how much they ideally preferred to spend: assessment (actual – 55% vs. ideal – 32%), direct intervention (actual – 19% vs. ideal 29%), and consultation (actual – 23% vs. ideal – 33%) (Reschly & Wilson, 1995). A more recent study yielded similar findings: assessment (actual – 55% vs. ideal – 32%), direct intervention (actual – 21% vs. ideal 28%), and consultation (actual – 22% vs. ideal – 33%) (Hosp & Reschly, 2002).

Perceptions of RtI

Recent studies have highlighted the shift in school psychologist's attitudes towards RtI-type practices in the past decade. When asking what should be included as criteria for a specific learning disability (SLD) in reading, and what is the most important criteria, 67.3% of school psychologists reported RtI should be a criteria, while only 15.4% reported they thought it was the most important criteria (Speece & Shekitka, 2002). Five years later, a similar study found 81.1% of school psychologists believed RtI should be a criterion, while 32.8% now felt RtI was the most important criteria for determining a SLD in reading (Machek & Nelson, 2007). The more recent study also found only 61.9% felt that the traditional IQ-achievement discrepancy should be a criteria; this is about 20% less than the number who think RtI should be a criteria (Machek & Nelson). On a similar note, the earlier study found 60.8% of school psychologists supported "inadequate instruction" as exclusionary criteria for a SLD in reading, while the more recent study found that 67.6% of individuals supported the same notion (Machek & Nelson; Speece & Shekitka).

Machek and Nelson (2007) also asked respondents to rate how knowledgeable they felt in regards to RtI. Interestingly, 83.2% of the self-described "more-knowledgeable" individuals endorsed RtI as criteria, compared to only 71.1% of the self-described "less-knowledgeable" individuals. Likewise, 69.9% of the "less-knowledgeable" individuals endorsed the IQ-achievement discrepancy as criteria, compared with only 60.4% of the "more-knowledgeable" individuals. This study indicates individuals who are more knowledgeable and comfortable with RtI are more

likely to endorse its use, although the numbers of school psychologists who endorse the use of RtI is generally on the rise.

Potential Impact of Role Expansion

Role expansion has been implicated in increasing school psychologists' job satisfaction, decreasing levels of burnout, and increasing their ability to provide effective services (Huberty & Huebner, 1988). In other words, some research suggests role expansion is necessary if school psychologists are to meet the poignant needs of children, their families, and the greater school communities (Sheridan & D'Amato, 2003).

Several recent publications have implicated possible roles for school psychologists at each of the three tiers in an RtI framework (Burns & Coolong-Chaffin, 2006; Canter, 2006). Possible roles at the Tier 1 level include district curriculum committees, consultation with administrators regarding the assessment system, and assisting in interpreting scores and deriving criteria to differentiate children between the three tiers (Burns & Coolong-Chaffin). Roles at the Tier 2 level could include assessment, data-based decision making, consult with teachers about assessments, interpreting data, and interventions, and consulting with school and district administrators regarding interventions. Finally, roles at the Tier 3 level could include intense collaboration and consultation with teachers and service delivery professionals regarding problem-solving processes and individual interventions, more individualized assessments, and individual service delivery. These new roles only serve to build upon the school psychologists' expertise in assessment and the need for more school psychologists (Canter). Canter stresses the point of RtI is not to add more tasks to the

school psychologists' list of things to do, but to reallocate their time to better address prevention and early intervention, serving more students up front and in the long run.

One study conducted in Iowa, where RtI practices have been in place for several years, found school psychologists engaged in 14 hours of assessment per week compared to the national average of 22 hours per week, and their hours of direct intervention and problem-solving consultation were 9 and 12, respectively, while the national averages are 7 and 6 (Reschly, 2003). This study also found these school psychologists reported higher levels of job satisfaction as compared to national samples. Another study conducted after the implementation of an RtI framework in Minneapolis found they hired more school psychologists as a result: the number of school psychologists nearly doubled in about 10 years (Lau, Sieler, Muyskens, Canter, Vankeuren, & Marston, 2005).

If the traditional role of the school psychologist is evolving, it is imperative to research what impact this could have on many aspects of the field, including burnout. Will a school district's transition to an RtI-type model mean less work for school psychologists, or rather, different kinds of work? Could RtI help to reduce an individual's caseload and impact other demographic variables? Could RtI also impact the way in which supervision and evaluation are handled for school psychologists? The present study seeks to investigate the relationship between RtI and burnout by looking at both the extent to which a school or district is implementing RtI, as well as the school psychologist's personal attitudes towards RtI.

Role Conflict and Differing Perspectives

When employees and their supervisors are not in agreement as to what they should be doing, that is likely going to lead to some stress and potentially burnout. One

study found 33% of principals believed psychometric testing was the most common activity of school psychologists, while 67% of the principals wanted psychometric testing to be the most common activity for their school psychologists (Landau & Gerken, 1979). Later studies have shown administrators' perceptions to shift with the line of thinking generally represented in the field. For example, one study found 63% of administrators perceived school psychologists to actually spend 41-100% of their time in assessment, while slightly less (59%) said they would prefer to see the school psychologists spend 41-100% of their time in assessment related activities (Levinson, Thomas, & Orf, 1996). The same study also found discrepancies between the actual and ideal percentages of the school psychologist's time spent working with regular education students and in prevention activities, with the general trend favoring spending more time engaged in those activities (Levinson et al.). Preferring their school psychologists to spend less time in assessment-related activities and spending more time working with regular education students and in prevention activities however does not entirely erase the gap between views of administrators and those of school psychologists. As a further testament to disconnect between administrators and school psychologists, one study found over 50% of all school personnel, including 78% of administrators, viewed their school psychologist as a guest to the building, rather than a member of the regular school staff (Hagemeier, Bischoff, Jacobs, & Osmon, 1998).

A more recent study further investigated perceptions of actual vs. ideal roles of the school psychologists from the viewpoint of teachers, administrators and school psychologists (Gilman & Gabriel, 2004). The percentages of individuals who thought school psychologists should do more testing were teachers (44%), administrators (30%),

and school psychologists (11%). Likewise, the percentages who preferred less testing were teachers (2%), administrators (1%), and school psychologists (16%). The percentages of individuals who thought school psychologists should spend more time working with regular education students were teachers (50%), administrators (39%), and school psychologists (75%). Similarly, the percentages of individuals who thought school psychologists should spend more time counseling students, both individually and in groups, were teachers (58%), administrators (40%), and school psychologists (75%). Finally, the percentages of individuals who thought school psychologists should spend more time in consultation with teachers were teachers (62%), administrators (63%), and school psychologists (41%).

The results from the Gilman and Gabriel (2004) study suggest while teacher and especially administrator perceptions of how much time the school psychologist should be spending in various activities has begun to reflect the broader policy changes under a research-based, problem-solving RtI-type model, there still exists some differing opinions. For example, administrators and teachers still think the school psychologist should be involved in significantly more testing than school psychologists do (Gilman & Gabriel). Similarly, while administrators and teachers do think school psychologists should be participating in more work with regular education students and counseling, the percentages are still far fewer than the preferences of school psychologists.

Furthermore, the best predictors of an administrator's (principals and superintendents) satisfaction with their school psychologist were the discrepancies between the administrator's perceptions of the school psychologist's actual vs. ideal time spent testing, and the actual vs. ideal time spent in prevention services (Levinson et al.,

1996). The more in line a school psychologist's time was with what administrators thought it should be, the more satisfied the administrators were with him/her. It can be assumed these discrepancies have the potential to influence school psychologists as well. Differing perceptions between school psychologists and administrators has enormous potential to influence burnout and its factors. For this reason, the present study is interested in assessing whether or not school psychologists differ from their principals with respect to their knowledge of and general attitudes towards RtI, and what influence that may have on the school psychologist's reports of burnout.

Goals of the Present Study

The present study has two main objectives. The first goal is to report the descriptive statistics regarding the presence of burnout among school psychologists in the state of Wisconsin. The second goal is to investigate to what extent the following variables are able to predict each of the three factors of burnout (Emotional Exhaustion, Depersonalization, and Personal Accomplishment): (1) the extent which an individual's primary school is implementing RtI-type practices, (2) an individual's reported Stage of Concern regarding RtI, and (3) the discrepancy between an individual's reported stage of concern and his/her reported stage of concern for his/her primary school's principal.

CHAPTER II

METHOD

The objectives of the present study are to report the presence of burnout among a sample of school psychologists and to investigate to any possible relationship between burnout and the following variables, (1) the extent which an individual's primary school is implementing RtI-type practices, (2) an individual's reported Stage of Concern regarding RtI, (3) and the discrepancy between an individual's reported stage of concern and his/her reported stage of concern for his/her primary school's principal.

Participants

The participants consisted of approximately 500 individuals from the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction's (DPI) list of individuals who hold the school psychologist license. Every other name on the list was chosen, starting with the first name, based on the outcome of a coin toss. Participation in the study was voluntary. Fifteen surveys were returned as undeliverable, and another 19 were thrown out because they were incomplete or returned blank. The final response rate was 37.9%, with a usable response rate of 34.1%.

Procedures

Prior to distributing the surveys, a proposal of the study, including the procedures to obtain informed consent, was approved by the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse's Institutional Review Board. An informational letter, consent form, and survey were sent

to the randomly selected participants who formed the study's sample group (see Appendix A). The survey is composed of the Maslach Burnout Inventory-Human Services Survey (MBI-HSS) which assesses the current levels of burnout, the Supervisor Attribute Scale to assess levels of satisfaction with supervision, an RtI Survey which assesses the levels of implementing RtI, a Stages of Concern Questionnaire (SoCQ) to assess the attitudes of school psychologists and their principals towards RtI, and a page of demographic questions. A postcard was sent out one week before the survey to alert participants that the survey will be coming. Completing the survey took approximately 15-20 minutes. A copy of the demographic questions from the survey can be found in Appendix B.

Instruments

Maslach Burnout Inventory

Used to measure an individual's self reported levels of burnout, the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) is currently in its 3rd edition (Maslach, Jackson, & Leiter, 1996). The MBI is currently reproduced in three forms: Human Services, Educators, and General. It consists of 22 items which factor onto three scales: Emotional Exhaustion (9 items), Depersonalization (5 items), and Personal Accomplishment (8 items). Each of the 22 items is rated relative to frequency of occurrence from 0 (never) to 6 (every day). Higher scores on Emotional Exhaustion and Depersonalization and lower scores on Personal Accomplishment are reflective of greater burnout. The internal consistency of the three subscales was estimated using Cronbach's Alpha: .90 for Emotional Exhaustion, .79 for Depersonalization, and .71 for Personal Accomplishment (Maslach et al.).

The MBI series of surveys has long been the unspoken standard in burnout research, and an overwhelming majority of the studies cited in the current study's literature review have also used the MBI series to assess levels of burnout. For the present study, the Maslach Burnout Inventory-Human Services Survey (MBI-HSS) was chosen over the other forms because it was perceived to relate best to the type of work and professional interactions school psychologists' experience. An example of one question loading onto each of the three factors can be seen in Appendix C as copyright laws will not allow for the display of the entire MBI-HSS.

RtI Survey

The Responsive Education for All Children (REACh) initiative is a collaborative effort between the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction Special Education Team and the Office of Educational Accountability designed to help Wisconsin schools establish and sustain the capacity to reduce the barriers to learning and enable all students to experience success (Ring, Dagen, Kratochwill, & Volpiansky, 2006). The REACh initiative seeks to accomplish this by putting into place multi-tier educational options and early intervention services which include, but are not limited to, RtI (Ring et al.). The RtI survey used in the present study was based off of this REACh initiative and the work of Ring et al. Participants are given a series of 10 statements (e.g. commitment to the vision that all students can succeed and that failure can almost always be prevented) and asked to rate their perceptions of the extent to which their school is implementing the technique described in the statement. Responses are rated on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (not present) to 5 (always used, follow up established). Since many of the respondents may be responsible for more than one school, they are asked to fill out the

questionnaire for the school at which they spend the most time. The adapted RtI questionnaire can be found in Appendix D.

Stages of Concern Questionnaire

The Stages of Concern questionnaire (SoCQ) was originally developed with the intent to measure the different 'stages of concern' an individual could be in when faced with implementing new innovations (Hall, 1976; Hall, George, & Rutherford, 1977; Hall & Hord, 1987). The stages of concern reflect a combination of how informed an individual is regarding a new innovation and their affective beliefs towards the innovation. Hall (1976) proposed an individual could be at one of seven stages of concern, ranging from 0 (awareness) to 6 (refocusing), in regards to the new innovation to be implemented. Each of the 35 items is rated on an 8-point Likert-type scale that ranges from 0 (not true of me now) to 7 (very true of me now) (Hall et al., 1977).

Cheung, Hattie, and Ng (2001) refined Hall's original SoCQ to encompass only five stages of concern, instead of the original seven. They first deleted 6 items from the original 35 because their item-total correlations were not greater than .40 (Cheung et al.). The researchers then combined Hall's stages 1 and 2 into just one stage, and stages 4 and 5 into one stage. After deleting other items, this revised SoCQ consists of 22 items and the following stages of concern: 0 (awareness), 1 (informational/personal), 2 (management), 3 (consequence/collaboration), and 4 (refocusing). The item-total correlations of the 22 items ranged from .46 to .70 and the alphas of the five scales ranged from .75 to .84: These numbers were actually slightly higher than Hall's original numbers (Cheung et al.; Hall, 1976).

Cheung et al.'s (2001) revised SoCQ focused on teacher's responses to implementing a new teaching method. For the purposes of the present study, the wording of the questions was changed to reflect the interests of school psychologists with RtI, as opposed to teachers with a teaching method (e.g., "I know what school psychologists are required to do in an RtI system"). In addition, the items from Cheung et al.'s SoCQ were further adapted to reflect the school psychologist's principal's current stage of concern regarding RtI (e.g., "My principal knows what school psychologists are required to do in an RtI system"). The discrepancy between a school psychologist and their principal in terms of RtI (SoC-D) will be calculated by taking the absolute value of the difference between a respondent's report of their own individual stage of concern and their report of their principal's stage of concern. The adapted Stage of Concern questionnaires can be found in Appendixes E & F.

While the questionnaire Cheung et al. (2001) developed places an individual at one of five stages, according to what aspect of the policy switch they were most concerned with at the moment, the data for the present study often irreconcilably yielded more than one stage for an individual. For example, many individuals rated themselves equally as concerned in both the beginning stages, such as awareness, and the later stages, such as refocusing. A further concern was that separating school psychologists and their principals simply based on a '0' to '4' scale would not produce discrepancies large enough to affect the dependent variables significantly. Therefore, the present study reverse scored the necessary items and obtained a total score for an individual's Stage of Concern, which now instead of representing a specific stage, represents a comprehensive

measure of their overall knowledge of and attitudes towards RtI, in which higher scores represent more overall knowledge of, and more positive attitudes towards, RtI.

Descriptive Analysis

H1: The levels of the three factors of burnout will correlate with various demographics (i.e. number of students served, number of buildings served, location of buildings served, etc.)

Statistical Analysis: The means and standard deviations will be computed across the following; number of students served, number of buildings served, location of buildings served, years as a school psychologist, primary work setting, highest degree attained, satisfaction with supervision, ethnicity, gender, age, and marital status.

Primary Analysis

$H2_0$: The extent to which a school is implementing RtI-type practices (RtI Survey), an individual's knowledge of and attitudes towards RtI (SoCQ-I), and any perceived differences between an individual's knowledge and attitudes and their principal's knowledge of and attitudes towards RtI (SoCQ-D) will not be correlated with Emotional Exhaustion, Depersonalization, or Personal Accomplishment.

$H2_a$: Higher perceived discrepancies between an individual's knowledge of and attitudes towards RtI and their principal's knowledge of and attitudes towards RtI will be related to higher levels of Emotional Exhaustion.

$H2_b$: Individuals who are more knowledgeable about RtI, and who hold more favorable opinions towards RtI, will experience lower levels of depersonalization.

$H2_c$: Individuals whose schools are implementing RtI-type practices to a greater extent will experience higher levels of Personal Accomplishment.

Statistical Analysis: The three independent variables (Implementation of RtI, Individual Stages of Concern, and Discrepancy between Stages of Concern) will be entered into separate stepwise regression equations for each of the three dependent variables (Emotional Exhaustion, Depersonalization, and Personal Accomplishment). Implementation of RtI will be measured using the RtI Survey and the Individual Stages of Concern will be measured using the Stages of Concern questionnaire adapted from Cheung et al. (2001). The discrepancy between a school psychologist and his/her principal will be measured by taking the absolute value of the difference between the participant's report of his/her own stage of concern, as measured by the SoC-I, and the participant's report of his/her primary principal's stage of concern, as measured by the SoC-P. A value of $p < .05$ will be considered significant for the regression analyses.

It is predicted the study will show similar results as previous studies in terms of the number of school psychologists experiencing the three components of burnout. It is believed the independent variables are the most salient and influential aspects of RtI-type practices based on the current research regarding knowledge of and attitudes towards RtI and levels of implementation (Reschly, 2003; Machek & Nelson, 2007; Vaughn & Fletcher, 2003), and regarding discrepancies between role perceptions and expectations between school psychologists and their principals (Gilman & Gabriel, 2004). In addition to the description, the present study will explore factors that may help predict which workplace conditions or worker characteristics are directly contributing to burnout.

CHAPTER III

RESULTS

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of moving towards a Response to Intervention (RtI) model would have on the burnout levels of school psychologists.

Descriptive and Comparative Data

The final sample consisted of 165 practicing school psychologists from across the state of Wisconsin. One-hundred-and-twenty of the participants (72.7%) were female and 40 were male (24.2%). The sample was comprised of 153 Caucasian, 2 African-American, 2 Native American, and 1 Hispanic individuals. Seventy-six participants (46.1%) reported their primary location was in a rural setting. The most common work setting was an elementary school (n = 134), though many participants reported working in more than one setting. Seventy-one participants (43.0%) reported having obtained their masters degree plus 30 credits, 70 their specialist degree, and 15 their doctorate. Table 1 reports the frequencies for these demographic variables while Table 2 summarizes the sample's interval demographics.

Table 1. Frequencies of Demographic Variables (N = 165)

	Frequency		Frequency		Frequency
Female	120	Caucasian	153	Elementary	134
Male	40	African-American	2	Middle School	91
Rural	76	Native American	2	High School	71
Urban	47	Hispanic	1	Preschool	47
Suburban	35	Other	1	Early Childhood	41

Table 3 provides the means, standard deviations, ranges, intercorrelations, and internal consistency estimates for all measures used in the present study. The reliability of the questions that compose each of the measures was calculated using the Chronbach's Alpha and ranged from .73 to .95.

Table 2. Ranges, Means, and Standard Deviations for Descriptive Characteristics (N = 165)

Variable	M	SD	Range
Age	40.83	11.25	25-65
Yrs as a SP	13.40	9.76	1-36
No. Buildings	2.47	1.37	1-9
No. Students	1050	526	200-2700

Of the participants in the present study, 23% reported significant levels of emotional exhaustion, 5.5% significant levels of Depersonalization, and 12.7% significant levels of Personal Accomplishment. These numbers are lower, though altogether similar, to those reported by several previous studies on burnout among school psychologists (see Figure 1). Forty-five participants reported experiencing just one component of burnout, 10 reported experiencing two components, and only 1 participant reported experiencing all three components of burnout.

Table 3. Correlations, Coefficients, and Psychometric Data for All Scales (N = 165)

Scale	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. MBI	—						
2. MBI-EE	—	—					
3. MBI-DP	—	.37**	—				
4. MBI-PA	—	-.13	-.26**	—			
5. SoC-S	—	-.12	-.04	.30**	—		
6. SoC-P	—	-.13	-.01	.20*	.43**	—	
7. RtI Survey	—	-.04	-.04	.28**	.29**	.64**	—
M	62.59	19.20	4.59	38.80	72.91	61.47	28.93
SD	11.80	9.37	4.05	5.84	15.38	19.77	7.52
Range	28-99	2-44	0-22	19-48	37-104	0-101	11-46
α	.79	.91	.73	.82	.90	.95	.89

Note. MBI = Maslach Burnout Inventory; MBI-EE = Emotional Exhaustion Subscale; MBI-DP = Depersonalization Subscale; MBI-PA = Personal Accomplishment Subscale; SoC-S = Stage of Concern for Self; SoC-P = Stage of Concern for Principal.
* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

The first hypothesis predicted that the three independent variables would correlate significantly with various demographics. Data analysis revealed that the levels of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment were not significantly correlated with age, years as a school psychologist, ethnicity, location, number of buildings, number of students, primary work setting, or the highest degree attained.

Primary Analysis

To test the hypotheses about which factors of RtI would predict school psychologist's levels of burnout, a separate stepwise regression formula for each of the components of burnout (Emotional Exhaustion, Depersonalization, and Personal Accomplishment) was used. A school psychologist's own knowledge of and attitudes towards RtI (SoC-S), the discrepancy between their knowledge of and attitudes towards RtI and that of their primary principal's (SoC-D), and an estimate of the extent to which their school is already implementing RtI-type practices (RtI Survey) were the independent variables entered into each of the regression analyses.

Emotional Exhaustion

Only the discrepancy between a school psychologist and their principal (SoC-D), in regards to their knowledge of and attitudes towards RtI, entered into the equation significantly for emotional exhaustion, accounting for about 3% of the variance in emotional exhaustion scores ($\beta = 0.16$, $p < .01$). This suggests there is a small relationship between "being on the same page as your principal" and emotional exhaustion. Table 4 summarizes the results of this regression equation.

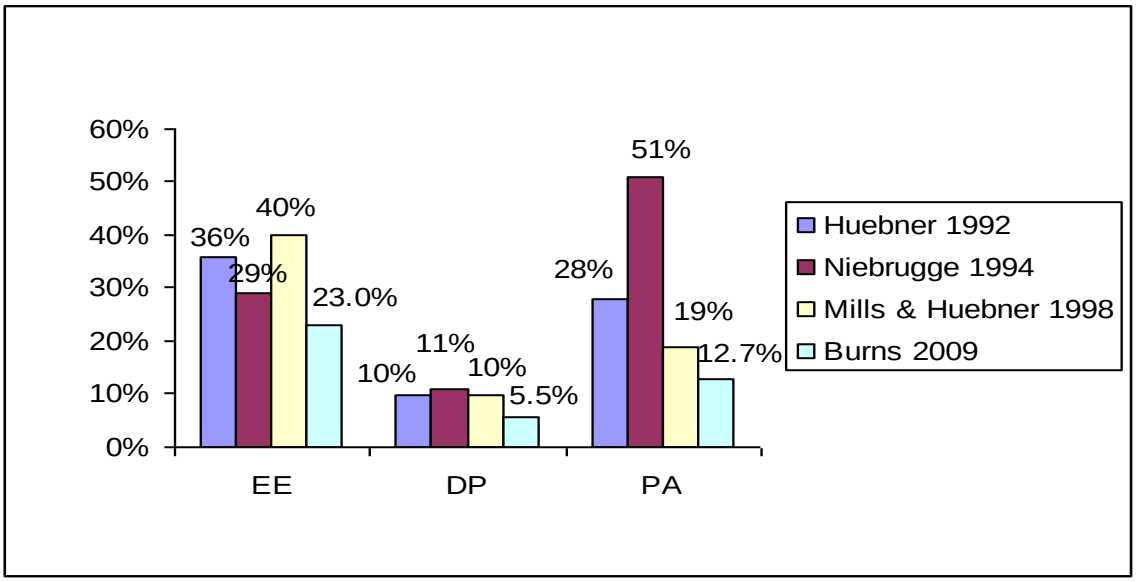

Figure 1. Reported levels of the three components of burnout among participants.

Depersonalization

None of the independent variables entered into the regression equation significantly for depersonalization. This suggests the lack of a relationship between depersonalization and adopting RtI practices.

Table 4. Summary of Stepwise Regression for Emotional Exhaustion

Variable	*B*	SE *B*	β
Step 1			
SoC-D	0.10	0.05	0.16*

Note. SoC-D = The discrepancy between SoC-S and SoC-P.
$R^2 = .03$, $p < .01$. N = 165.
* $p < .05$.

Personal Accomplishment

Two variables, a school psychologist's own knowledge of and attitudes towards RtI (SoC-S) ($\beta = 0.30$, $p < .01$), and the extent that their building is implementing RtI-type practices ($\beta = 0.22$, $p < .01$) entered significantly into the regression equation for personal accomplishment, respectively. Together they accounted for about 13% of the variance in scores of personal accomplishment: adding the RtI Survey to the equation added another 4.3%. Table 5 summarizes the results of this regression equation.

Table 5. Summary of Stepwise Regression for Personal Accomplishment

Variable	*B*	SE *B*	β
Step 1			
SoC-S	0.11	0.03	0.30**
Step 2			
SoC-S	0.09	0.03	0.24**
RtI Survey	0.17	0.06	0.22**

Note. SoC-S = Stage of Concern for Self.
$R^2 = .09$ for Step 1, $\Delta R^2 = .04$ for Step 2, $p < .01$. N = 165.
** $p < .01$.

Other Findings

In addition to the quantitative data collected for the primary analyses, three open ended questions were asked of the participants. One-hundred and eight participants (65.5%) responded to the first question: "What are two enablers that have helped your school implement RtI type practices?" The most common responses were 'Administrative leadership and/or support' (42.6%), 'Professional development' (21.3%), and 'Teacher buy-in/support' (17.6%). These responses suggest the most important thing

to the success of RtI is far and away some form of administrative leadership and/or support (See Appendix H for a complete list of participants' responses).

The second question was: "What are two things you would like your principal to know about RtI?" Ninety-one participants (55.2%) responded to this question. The top answers were, 'Generally what RtI is and how to implement it' (29.7%), 'How much time is needed to implement RtI' (19.8%), and 'That their leadership and support is critical' (18.7%) (See Appendix I for a complete list of participants' responses).

One-hundred and eleven participants (67.3%) responded to the third question: "What are two barriers for your school to implement RtI?" Over half (51.4%) reported 'Teachers' lack of knowledge/buy-in/training' was a barrier for their school. Other top answers included, 'Not enough time and/or money' (50.5%) and 'Lack of administrative leadership and support' (24.3%). Again it seems school psychologists view a lack of education and training of other educational professionals in regards to RtI as a major barrier to successful implementation (See Appendix J for a complete list of participants' responses).

One final piece of data collected concerned supervision. Shockingly, only 9.1% of participants reported their primary supervisor currently holds the Nationally Certified School Psychologist (NCSP) credentials, as is recommended by NASP. Directors of Special Education were the most common supervisor (49.1%), followed by Pupil Services Directors (27.9%), and Superintendents (9.7%). Only 7.3% of participants reported their primary supervisor was their principal.

CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION

There were two main objectives of the present study. The first was to report the descriptive statistics for reported levels of burnout among school psychologists in the state of Wisconsin, and the second was to investigate the relationship between a Response to Intervention (RtI) model and burnout. The three aspects of RtI the present study focused on are a school psychologist's own knowledge of, and attitudes towards, RtI (Stage of Concern – Self), the discrepancy between their own knowledge and attitudes and those of their building principal (Discrepancy), and the extent to which their building is actually implementing RtI type practices (RtI Survey).

In contrast to what was predicted, reported levels of burnout among school psychologists were lower in the present study than levels reported in past studies; in some cases up to half as much (Huebner & Mills, 1998). However, the same general trend was observed among the three components of burnout: emotional exhaustion was the most common component experienced by the participants and depersonalization the least common. There are several possible explanations for this result. One possible reason for these observed results is none of the previous studies were conducted in Wisconsin, and given that educational policy and procedural decision making is determined by each individual state, it is likely that workplace conditions from state to state could vary enough to produce the observed results. A second factor is all of the comparison studies

were conducted at least 10 years prior to the present study and there could be any number of other variables influencing the practice of school psychology that have only come into play in the past ten years. Some examples of these potential mitigating factors could be President Bush's No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) in 2001, the President's Commission on Excellence in Special Education in 2002, which laid a lot of the groundwork for the reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA) in 2004, and the increased use of technology in education.

Another possible explanation is changes in the role of the school psychologist have contributed to the observed drop in reported levels of burnout. As early as 1994 studies reported school psychologists desire to spend less time in assessment and more time in consultation and direct intervention (Hosp & Reschly, 2002; Huebner & Mills, 1994; Reschly & Wilson, 1995). This also fits with the findings of Reschly (2003) in which school psychologists working in a well functioning RtI system in Iowa actually saw a decrease in the number of hours spent in assessment and an increase in the number of hours spent in consultation and direct intervention. Given that one of the major goals of RtI is to be more proactive by spending more time in preventative activities such as direct intervention and consultation and less time in assessment related activities, it could be possible that the shift towards RtI is influencing the reported levels of burnout through the changing role of the school psychologist.

One reservation often held against RtI is that it is creating more work for the school psychologist. One might logically assume this could lead to higher levels of burnout. The findings of the present study seem to suggest that regardless of whether or not RtI is creating more work for the school psychologist, it appears that it is not

increasing the reported levels of burnout. Another implication is the apparent lack of relationship between depersonalization and school psychologists. It appears that regardless of the decade the profession has enough interpersonal contact to avoid depersonalization, at least more than the other components of burnout.

The first hypothesis predicted that the three components of burnout would correlate with various demographics. This hypothesis was based on several previous findings of correlations between burnout and such demographic variables as excessive caseloads (Reiner & Hartshorne, 1982), an urban setting (Huebner, 1992), and number of buildings (Proctor & Steadman, 2003). The results clearly indicate there were no significant correlations between any of the demographic variables and any of the components of burnout. This might suggest other differences between the populations of studies are responsible for the previous correlations. One possible explanation is that an RtI model, because it is still very new to most individuals and because RtI is a practice meant for all school buildings in all settings, it may be neutralizing the effects of demographic variables.

The first regression equation hypothesis predicted the discrepancy between the knowledge and attitudes of a school psychologist and those of their building principal would be the best predictor of emotional exhaustion. In supporting this hypothesis, the present study also fits well with findings and implications of previous research. For example, given that past research has found not seeing "eye to eye" with your supervisor on job and role definitions to predict levels of burnout and satisfaction, it is possible the same is true in regards to RtI (Lee & Ashforth, 1996; Levinson et al., 1996). If a school psychologist and his/her principal are not seeing "eye to eye" on RtI, and the role of the

school psychologist is caught between what he/she thinks they should do and what his/her principal thinks he/she should do, it will likely lead to more burnout, specifically emotional exhaustion. It is not surprising then that the number one response from participants when asked to name an enabler of RtI was administrative leadership and support.

The second regression equation hypothesis predicted individuals who are more knowledgeable about, and hold more favorable opinions towards, RtI would experience the lowest levels of depersonalization. Unfortunately, the present study failed to support this hypothesis. Depersonalization, as Maslach, Jackson, and Leiter (1996) have defined it, relates to a lack of feeling and impersonal response towards recipients of one's care or service. Given the aims of RtI, it seems existing relationships between school psychologists and teachers would not be negatively affected in an RtI model. In fact, consistent with what Reschly (2003) found in Iowa, it is likely RtI will only increase the amount of interpersonal contact a school psychologist has with teachers, students, and families. While just increasing the amount of time does not necessarily ensure the quality of the time or interactions, the goal of RtI is to be more proactive, thus helping school psychologists to likely feel more connected to everything that is going on.

To further this point, it is probable that depersonalization, as Maslach and Jackson have conceptualized it, is more about how an individual feels towards others, rather than simply the number of interactions with a person or building. Long before RtI arrived on the scene school psychologists were working with other school personnel and forming relationships. It would make sense then that simply introducing a set of new practices

that increases the number of interactions wouldn't necessarily change how the school psychologist felt towards an individual or building.

The third regression equation hypothesis predicted school psychologists whose schools were implementing RtI type practices would report higher levels of feelings of personal accomplishment. While this hypothesis was supported by the present study, another variable, the school psychologists' knowledge of and attitudes towards RtI, turned out to be an even better predictor of personal accomplishment. Prior research has shown the majority of school psychologists would prefer to use RtI as criteria for determining eligibility for a Specific Learning Disability (SLD), and that the majority of school psychologists desire to spend more time working with regular education students and in counseling activities (Gilman & Gabriel, 2004). The findings of the present study imply individuals who are more knowledgeable of, more in favor of, and whose schools are implementing more RtI type practices, are experiencing more feelings of personal accomplishment. Perhaps feelings of personal accomplishment are more rooted in one's beliefs about their job or situation than they are on actual events; this would explain why the school psychologists' knowledge of and attitudes toward RtI was a better predictor than their actual participation in RtI activities.

Under the current discrepancy model, it can be very frustrating having to wait for a child to fall far enough behind to finally get help, or to have to try to explain to parents why their child can't get help yet. It seems likely that a shift towards a more proactive and preventative approach, in which there is less focus on paperwork and more focus on early intervention with students, would result in an individual feeling like they have

accomplished more, especially if past research indicates this change in job duties is a welcome one.

Thinking of some possible specific changes in the role of the school psychologist within an RtI model that may directly influence feelings of personal accomplishment, benchmarking might help school psychologists to form more personal connections with students and progress monitoring could help highlight any progress/success. For those students who do experience success with early intervention, if a school psychologist has been able to be a part of that process through these RtI practices, they no doubt will feel more of a sense of ownership over that student's success.

These findings also have implications for some of the traditional activities of a school psychologist. IQ tests and psychoeducational reports are arguably much more removed from what is actually going on in the student's life than are RtI practices such as benchmarking, progress monitoring, and early intervention. As a result, spending more time engaged in the RtI activities certainly has the potential to increase a school psychologist's feelings of accomplishing worthwhile things.

Other findings of note were the participants' answers to three open-ended questions and data collected regarding supervision. The questions centered on what participants thought made RtI work, or not work, in their schools. Two overwhelming themes emerged from these responses. The first is the importance of having strong leadership/support from administration, and the second is having teachers knowledgeable and "on-board" with the changes. Within an RtI framework, teachers are being asked to come out of their classrooms and collaborate with one another, and principals are being asked to shift from managers of teachers to instructional leaders. Principals who are able

to accomplish this shift are likely to be effective in getting their building to adopt some form of an RtI model. Principals who are resistant to these changes will likely find that the rest of the building will follow suit as well, grants specifically set up to help get RtI off the ground will be hard to get, and any change will be hard to accomplish.

A principal merely endorsing RtI is certainly an important first step, though this alone will not by itself get the school to where it needs to be in terms of RtI. Continued professional development will continue to be crucial, as will patience. Many researchers are estimating that a broad systems level change such as RtI will take somewhere between three and five years (Burns & Coolong-Chaffin, 2006). The findings of the present study suggest administrative leadership/support is one of the most important factors in successfully implementing RtI and can influence other important factors such as continued professional development and teacher knowledge/support. Unfortunately, data from the present study also imply school psychologists feel their principals still have much to learn about RtI.

Currently, it seems as if much of the information regarding RtI is only disseminated into the school systems through the role of the school psychologist. The present study then not only suggests that school psychologists who are not on the same page as their principals may be subject to more emotional exhaustion and may have a more difficult time implementing RtI, but also that involving principals and other administrators with RtI at the professional development and dissemination levels will help to enable implementation. Certainly when principals and administrators are able to get involved in the early stages of this systems level change, they are better prepared for their crucial role of leading the change within a school building.

In terms of supervision, less than 10 percent of participants reported their primary supervisor held the NCSP credentials, as recommended by NASP. Past research has repeatedly stressed the importance supervision plays in predicting burnout (Huebner, 1992; Huebner, 1993a; Huebner, 1993b; Huebner, 1994; Niebrugge, 1994; Sullivan & Conoley, 2008). While past research has tended to focus on the importance of a school psychologist's primary supervisor, the focus of RtI and findings of the present study would suggest the supervision of the building principal is important as well. Only 7.3% of participants reported their principal was their primary supervisor, suggesting perhaps information should have been collected regarding both sources of supervision. The primary supervisor, if someone other than the principal, may certainly be important in influencing the role of the school psychologist, but the principal certainly would also be an important relationship, especially considering the collaboration necessary to the successful implementation of RtI.

Implications for School Psychologists

The findings of the present study provide some important implications for the field of school psychology, and education in general, as we move towards an RtI model. The overall findings suggest the existence of small to moderate relationships between an RtI model and specific components of burnout. Some specific findings suggest there may be a small link between not seeing "eye to eye" with your building principal on matters of RtI and feeling emotionally exhausted. Similarly, the most popular answers from open ended questions implicate the importance of administration leadership and support in the implementation of RtI. Therefore, increased collaboration among educational professionals, and especially strong leadership and support form administration, are likely

to be very important in not only implementing RtI successfully, but also in avoiding emotional exhaustion.

Some specific examples of what school psychologists can do include forming pre-referral teams to hold regular meetings with teachers who have concerns about students, participating in School Improvement Teams (SIT) to work on exacting changes at a building wide level, and advocating for continued professional development among staff in a collaborative nature through Professional Learning Communities (PLC) (Burns & Coolong-Chaffin, 2006). Canter (2006) stressed that in an RtI model school psychologists should reallocate their time in order to expand the role to include all they have been trained to do.

The present study implies RtI is not related to depersonalization, while other specific findings seem to suggest moving to an RtI model will increase a school psychologist's feelings of personal accomplishment. Hopefully a shift in feelings of personal accomplishment is actually accompanied by more real life success stories, but at the very least, a shift in perception still has positive implications. Increased feelings of personal accomplishment likely would have an impact on job satisfaction and many other variables: more time spent working with students and teachers has already been shown to be a welcome and desired change (Gilman & Gabriel, 2004).

Returning then to one of the main goals of the study, the results unfortunately provide little implication for predicting and avoiding burnout. The only aspect of moving towards an RtI model that may help predict and avoid burnout is its significant relationship to increased levels of personal accomplishment. The implication is that adopting an RtI model will, in a sense, protect an individual from a lack of personal

accomplishment. The results of the present study did not implicate an ability to significantly predict when an individual would experience emotional exhaustion or depersonalization.

Future Research

The results of the present study indicate many possible directions for future research. One research agenda that is most needed is simply further investigation of the relationship between RtI and burnout. This is important not only because RtI is a relatively new concept and therefore little research currently exists, especially in relationship to burnout, but also because RtI tends to be ambiguous in its implementation. The lack of a common and consistent set of practices between districts in regards to the implementation likely has an effect on the differences observed in RtI research.

Another research direction that may be informative would be to add a longitudinal component to the study of RtI and burnout. Since the shift towards RtI is still relatively new for many districts across the nation, any impacts on burnout observed in the present study may be more positive than the final impacts RtI would actually have, or vice versa. A longitudinal component to this research might also shed more light on the relationship between being on the same page as the principal and the toll that may take over time on an individual's emotional exhaustion and overall reported levels of burnout.

Other future research could focus on differences between school psychology and general educational practices across the country. Specific policies, and more poignantly specific RtI policies, in Wisconsin surely vary from those of other states. Future research could compare the findings of the present study to any relationships found between RtI and burnout in other states and in other settings. It is possible the findings of the present

study would vary in other settings, such as strictly urban vs. strictly rural, etc. Research could also focus on only those schools that have received grants to implement RtI, such as the REACh grant, to investigate the impact of receiving these grants.

A final direction for future research involves examining supervision practices. While the present study did collect minimal supervision-related data, it did not focus on the direct impact supervision has on burnout. Given the extent to which supervision has been shown to relate to burnout in the past (Huebner, 1992; Huebner, 1993a; Huebner, 1993b; Huebner, 1994; Niebrugge, 1994; Sullivan & Conoley, 2008), future research could focus on how supervision in the context of an RtI model impacts burnout, and possible differences between supervision in an RtI model and in the traditional model.

Limitations

While the results of the present study may be encouraging, they should be interpreted with caution due to several limitations. Several of these limitations relate to how the study was conducted. A limitation with the survey itself was the fact that all of the scales were based on self reports. Particular timing, such as having a bad day, when filling out the survey could have influenced the results one way or the other. Furthermore, there is no good way with this data collection method to ensure that the participant is aware of what they don't know. The same can be said for their principal and their building; do they really know exactly what it is their principal does and does not know? Do they really know to what extent their building is implementing RtI type practices?

While this method may not have yielded the most valid account of the principal's knowledge of and attitudes towards RtI, it still should be a valid indication of the

perceived discrepancy between the principal and the school psychologist when it comes to matters of RtI. Whether or not a school psychologist and their principal actually differ is likely to be less important in predicting levels of burnout than if the school psychologist believes the two differ. This is because burnout is inherently a psychological construct: whether or not one feels "burnt-out" is an accurate depiction of the phenomenon. Consider two individuals working in identical situations, but one reports feeling "burnt-out", while the other doesn't. This does not change the fact that they have the same situation to deal with, just that they view their situations differently. For this reason, the self reports the present study gathered should be sufficiently valid to measure the relationship between the independent variables and burnout.

The findings of the present study could also be influenced by the way in which the Stage of Concern variables were operationalized. While Cheung et al. (2001) used the Stages of Concern survey to categorized individuals into one particular stage, the present study instead used the survey to obtain an overall measure of an individual's knowledge of and attitudes towards RtI. It was presumed this change would more accurately reflect an individual's knowledge of and attitudes towards RtI, and allow for more significant comparisons between school psychologists and principals, but it is possible an unprecedented change to the measure such as this may have influenced the results of the present study in unknown ways.

Similarly, the way in which the open-ended questions were categorized is a limitation of the study. Participants' responses were categorized by only one individual and thus potentially susceptible to bias. Using multiple raters and calculating the inter-

rater reliability would have been helpful in not only making these results less of a limitation, but also in ensuring the validity of the categories that were constructed.

Other limitations of the present study revolved around the interpretation of the results. The ability of the present study to represent schools outside, and to an extent within, Wisconsin is limited by the ambiguous nature of RtI. RtI is still a relatively new concept, or at least the transition to an RtI model is still a relatively new one for many districts nationwide and the current parameters of what RtI consists of are loose enough that each district's implementation is likely different from the next. This is both an advantage and a flaw of RtI. Certainly the student population and staff of each district will differ from the next enough so that having some aspects of RtI open to interpretation will allow for districts to find the best ways for RtI to work successfully for them. However, this openness to interpretation also calls into question the validity of several issues, including the results of this study. Unfortunately there is no way to be sure the questions asked were the right questions to get at what RtI truly consists of. It is also impossible to determine if all participants had the same practices in mind when thinking of RtI while completing the survey. Because of these limitations, any implications of the present study should be thought of in reference to RtI as a model and not as any specific set of interventions or practices.

Conclusion

Because the shift to an RtI model is still very new for many school districts, the present study was exploratory in nature in its investigation of the relationship between RtI practices and burnout. One of the primary goals of RtI is for school personnel to adopt a more proactive and preventative approach to helping struggling learners through

increased collaboration, consultation, and direct and early intervention. The findings of the present study suggest school personnel being on the same page is important in terms of avoiding emotional exhaustion, and that moving toward this model will likely increase feelings of personal accomplishment among school psychologists. RtI can be an elusive concept, defined differently from one school district to another and from one state to another. Because of this, these findings should be interpreted in view of RtI as a concept, rather than any specific set of practices. Finally, as this research is exploratory in nature, there exists a strong need for further research to more fully understand the relationship between adopting RtI practices and burnout.

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APPENDIX A

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Dear School Psychologist:

My name is Ben Burns. I am a candidate for an Educational Specialist degree through the University of Wisconsin – La Crosse. As part of my requirements, I am conducting research for my thesis on the impact of RtI practices on burnout. The survey that follows will help me to gather this information.

As the profession moves towards implementing RtI practices in our schools it is imperative that we have a good understanding of its' impacts on all facets of our jobs. The information collected by my study can be helpful to identify what impact, if any, moving towards an RtI-type model in the schools will have on burnout. The information gathered in the study also holds potential insight for you into your own personal practices.

Your participation in this research is voluntary and confidential. The refusal to participate will not result in any sort of penalty. No identifying information will be associated with the surveys. The survey will take approximately 15-20 minutes to complete. Completion of the survey is considered informed consent to use your responses in the research.

I will be presenting the results of my study through a poster presentation at the National Association of School Psychologist's annual conference in Boston at the end of February, as well as at the Wisconsin School Psychologist Association's spring conference in Stevens Point in March. If you are unable to attend either of those conference but would still like to receive information regarding the results of the study, please write me at the address provided indicating this. Fell free to contact me with any other questions, comments, or concerns that you may have.

Thank you very much for your participation, it helps a lot and I greatly appreciate it!

Sincerely,

Benjamin R. Burns, M.S. Ed.
Phone: (651)338-7854
e-mail: burns.benj@students.uwlax.edu

University of Wisconsin – La Crosse Faculty Advisor:
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Questions regarding the protections of human subjects may be addressed to the UW-La Crosse Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects, (608)785-6892.

APPENDIX B

DEMOGRAPHICS QUESTIONNAIRE

The following demographic questions pertain to your personal and professional identities. Please answer the following to the best of your ability. If you find that no best descriptor exists for you, please feel free to write one in next to the question.

1. Gender: Male _____ Female _____

2. Age:_____

3. Years as a School Psychologist: _____

4. Ethnicity: (Please check one)

_____ African-American/Black
_____ Asian-American/Southeast Asian-American/Pacific Islander
_____ European-American/White/Caucasian
_____ Latino/Latina/Hispanic
_____ Native American
_____ Multiracial
_____ Other: _____
_____ Prefer not to answer

5. School Location: Rural _____ Suburban _____ Urban _____

6. Number of Buildings Served: _____

7. Approximate Total Number of Students Served: _____

8. Primary Work Setting (check all that apply):

_____ Early Childhood Center
_____ Elementary School
_____ High School
_____ University Setting
_____ Preschool
_____ Middle School
_____ Private Practice
_____ Other: _____

9. Highest Degree Attained: _____ Masters plus 30 _____ Specialist
_____ Doctoral _____ Other: _____

APPENDIX C

MASLACH BURNOUT INVENTORY

MASLACH BURNOUT INVENTORY

"Human Services Survey"

by Christina Maslach and Susan E. Jackson

Directions: The purpose of this survey is to discover how various persons in the human services or helping professions view their jobs and the people with whom they work closely. Because persons in a wide variety of occupations will answer this survey, it uses the term "recipients" to refer to the people for whom you provide your service, care, treatment, or instruction. When you answer this survey please think of these people as recipients of the service you provide, even though you may use another term in your work.

Please read each statement carefully and decide if you ever feel this way about your job. If you have never had this feeling, write a "0" (zero) before the statement. If you have had this feeling, indicate how often you feel it by writing the number (from 1 to 6) that best describes how frequently you feel that way.

How Often:	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Never	A few times a year	Once a month or less	A few times a month	Once a week	A few times a week	Every day

I. Depersonalization

5. I feel I treat some recipients as if they were impersonal objects.

II. Personal Accomplishment

9. I feel I'm positively influencing other people's lives through my work.

III. Emotional Exhaustion

20. I feel like I'm at the end of my rope.

APPENDIX D

RTI SURVEY

For the school that you spend the most time at, please rate the progress of this school in implementing Response to Intervention (RtI) by circling your perception of the level of use of RtI in that building. We do not hold any one definition of RtI, so please think of it in terms of your own perceptions of what it involves.

	not present				**Always used, follow-up established**
1. Commitment to the vision that all students can succeed and that failure can almost always be prevented	1	2	3	4	5
2. Strategies for administrative leadership and support	1	2	3	4	5
3. An environment of collaboration at all levels of decision-making and planning including structures and schedules that support collaboration for data based decision-making for instructional enhancement such as professional learning communities	1	2	3	4	5
4. Resource mapping systematically used as planning tool to identify existing and potential resources to facilitate student success	1	2	3	4	5
5. On-going evaluation and data-based decision making for continuous improvement	1	2	3	4	5
6. Research or Evidence-based strategies consistently used to address diverse learning and behavioral needs. The school has a coordinated model for providing evidence- based universal, selected and targeted options to address wide range of student needs.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Consistent procedures for universal screening and ongoing monitoring of each student's progress toward meeting local benchmarks and for identifying potential risk and areas of student needs	1	2	3	4	5
8. A collaborative problem-solving process for addressing the needs of individual students	1	2	3	4	5
9. Ongoing professional development and support for staff and families directly related to priority needs for enhancing student outcomes	1	2	3	4	5
10. Parent and community involvement in the development and implementation of efforts	1	2	3	4	5

Comments about the use of RtI in your school:

APPENDIX E

STAGE OF CONCERN QUESTIONNAIRE - INDIVIDUAL

The purpose of this section is to determine what school psychologists who are using or thinking about using Response to Intervention (RtI) are concerned about at various points in the adoption process. The items were developed from typical responses ranging from no knowledge at all about RtI to those with many years of experience in using RtI practices. Therefore, a good part of the items in this section may appear to be of little relevance at this time. For the completely irrelevant item, please choose "NA." Other items will represent the concerns you do have, in varying degrees of intensity, and should be marked on the scale.

Please respond to each item in terms of your present concerns, on how you feel about your involvement or potential involvement with RtI. We do not hold any one definition of it, so please think of it in terms of your own perceptions of what it involves. Remember to respond to each item in terms of your own present concerns about your involvement or potential involvement.

Question	**not true of me now**				**very true of me now**	
1. I do not even know what RtI is	1	2	3	4	5	NA
2. I do not have enough time for RtI	1	2	3	4	5	NA
3. I know how to accomplish effectively the obligations of RtI	1	2	3	4	5	NA
4. I can revise RtI to improve its effectiveness	1	2	3	4	5	NA
5. I can develop working relationships with other teachers	1	2	3	4	5	NA
6. I am not concerned about RtI	1	2	3	4	5	NA
7. I have an inability to manage all the RtI requirements	1	2	3	4	5	NA
8. I can familiarize others with the progress of RtI	1	2	3	4	5	NA
9. I am concerned about my impact on students within RtI	1	2	3	4	5	NA
10. I can revise certain components of RtI	1	2	3	4	5	NA
11. I am occupied with things other than RtI	1	2	3	4	5	NA
12. I can modify the RtI structure based on students' outcomes	1	2	3	4	5	NA
13. I spend time collecting data for benchmarking and progress monitoring	1	2	3	4	5	NA
14. I know what school psychologists are required to do in an RtI system	1	2	3	4	5	NA
15. I can coordinate my practice with other teachers and specialists for RtI	1	2	3	4	5	NA
16. I know the time and energy commitments required to implement RtI effectively	1	2	3	4	5	NA
17. I am not interested in learning about RtI	1	2	3	4	5	NA
18. I know how to supplement or enhance RtI practices	1	2	3	4	5	NA
19. I use feedback from students and faculty to implement or enhance RTI practices in my school	1	2	3	4	5	NA
20. I know how my role will change with RtI	1	2	3	4	5	NA
21. I am aware of the arguments for why RtI is better than the current criteria	1	2	3	4	5	NA
22. I know how RtI differs from the discrepancy approach	1	2	3	4	5	NA

Comments about your role and current RtI practices in your primary school:

APPENDIX F

STAGE OF CONCERN QUESTIONNAIRE - PRINCIPAL

For the school that you spend the most time at, please respond to each item in terms of your principal's present concerns; how you perceive your principal to think and feel towards RtI. We do not hold any one definition of RtI, so please think of it in terms of your own perceptions of what it involves.

Question	not true of my principal now				very true of my principal now	
1. My principal does not even know what RtI is	1	2	3	4	5	NA
2. My principal does not have enough time for RtI	1	2	3	4	5	NA
3. My principal knows how to accomplish effectively the obligations of RtI	1	2	3	4	5	NA
4. My principal can revise RtI to improve its effectiveness	1	2	3	4	5	NA
5. My principal can develop working relationships with other teachers	1	2	3	4	5	NA
6. My principal is not concerned about RtI	1	2	3	4	5	NA
7. My principal has an inability to manage all the RtI requirements	1	2	3	4	5	NA
8. My principal can familiarize others with the progress of RtI	1	2	3	4	5	NA
9. My principal is concerned about my impact on students within RtI	1	2	3	4	5	NA
10. My principal can revise certain components of RtI	1	2	3	4	5	NA
11. My principal is occupied with things other than RtI	1	2	3	4	5	NA
12. My principal can modify the RtI structure based on students' outcomes	1	2	3	4	5	NA
13. My principal spends time reviewing data collected for benchmarking and progress monitoring	1	2	3	4	5	NA
14. My principal knows what school psychologists are required to do in an RtI system	1	2	3	4	5	NA
15. My principal can coordinate his/her practice with other teachers and specialists for RtI	1	2	3	4	5	NA
16. My principal knows the time and energy commitments required to implement RtI effectively	1	2	3	4	5	NA
17. My principal is not interested in learning about RtI	1	2	3	4	5	NA
18. My principal knows how to supplement or enhance RtI practices	1	2	3	4	5	NA
19. My principal uses feedback from students and faculty to implement or enhance RTI practices in my school	1	2	3	4	5	NA
20. My principal knows how my role will change with RtI	1	2	3	4	5	NA
21. My principal is aware of the arguments for why RtI is better than the current criteria	1	2	3	4	5	NA
22. My principal knows how RtI differs from the discrepancy approach	1	2	3	4	5	NA

Comments about your principal and current RtI practices in your primary school:

APPENDIX G

RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION: "WHAT ARE TWO ENABLERS THAT HAVE HELPED YOUR SCHOOL IMPLEMENT RTI-TYPE PRACTICES?"

Table 6. Participant Responses to "What are two enablers that have helped your school implement RtI-type practices?"

- administrative support and a willing staff
- Curriculum coordinator has taken the lead here to be informed and to inform others. Creation of reading specialist positions to provide tier interventions
- people and time are available
- REACh grant; Aimsweb training and assessment tool
- Frankly, our district's push to decrease SPED referrals has helped. Positive behavior intervention and support model has helped with behavioral issues.
- A strong leading specialist. Sending a team to a RtI training at CESA where we developed goals and strategies to implement RtI.
- Administrative support. Professional development opportunities
- we aren't
- The need to improve student outcomes. Focus on early intervention
- special ed moves toward RtI; school psychs giving presentations
- We are at the beginning phase of implementation. If I had to name two enablers I would say the law, because we would not be doing this if it were not required, and the hiring of a reading specialist this year.
- commitment from supervisor to implement RtI; at risk committee
- a.y.p.
- administrative support-professional growth, subs to assist w/ progress monitoring, etc.; strong support from young teachers who are eager to learn more and willing to try new things
- leadership support(principal); skill level of key people
- EIS$-allowed us to purchase 2 interventions; having a few teachers who are looked at as being great teachers be supportive of what we have done so far
- professional development; DIBELS already a part of title program in years past-familiarity
- my involvement; training staff on a case by case basis
- principal; program manager
- at this point we are in the very beginning stages of RtI and are not at a true point of implementation
- peer collaboration and more teacher trainings
- The principals are on board and the director of SPED and pupil services has allowed us to use a pot of IDEA money to hire interventionists to work closely with classroom teachers - teachers are starting to buy in now.
- administrative support; reading team support
- Our school district is not implementing RtI practices yet. However, we do have many new reading interventions.
- The upcoming changes to federal regulations about eligibility; the way we were running special education was not effective and too many kids in special ed.
- At the present time, working on writing a REACh grant, we are doing resource mapping and starting the RtI process. The director of instruction and reading specialist are working with the principals and school psychs to implement RtI.
- problem solving initiative within MPS-supports in place for us already; CST process within school
- Use of benchmarks-DIBELS; CST process
- Pupil services director and MS principal are knowledgeable on RtI and help to drive RtI programming.
- teacher support; admin support-especially director of pupil services

- PBIS system because it is school-wide and now district-wide; emphasis as a district
- The administration supports the implementation of RtI; we have a "work group" in my school to implement RtI that includes a variety of teachers and specialists
- REACh grant; principals on board with the process
- we haven't implemented
- "newer" teachers that had courses in their studies (about RtI) using explanations and offering the message that much of what teachers' current practices entail can easily translate into the RtI structure
- adoption of data-driven decision making and availability of data for progress monitoring and universal screening; use of EIS money from special education budget to pay for it
- administrative buy in/support; working w/ other psychs in the district
- quality staff development from CESA 7; collaborative efforts with reading support, learning support, and school counselors
- We are not fully transitioned into RtI yet.
- We are still in the beginning phase of RtI implementation. We are beginning with K-3.
- We're not there yet!
- REACH Grant
- universal screening for reading; CSTs
- buy-in by administration and many staff; time for professional development
- getting teachers on board; getting the union on board
- supportive administration; REACh grant
- administrative support; staff training
- Administration is pushing RtI. Our district is very into assessment of all students.
- professional development opportunities
- Have not implemented
- REACh grant; leadership team at school
- REACh grant; support from administration
- Having at least a plan for problem-solving meetings already in place-though not always well used particularly at the secondary level; having a wonderful Curriculum & Instruction director who understands that RtI is a regular ed initiative and who has taken it upon herself to get the district up and running on this.
- A cohesive kindergarten team who support RtI; Taking it slowly, adding only 1 grade level per year
- We are in a transition in leadership in our district. I have not gotten very far in discussing this. We currently have a committee. We need leadership from people other than SPED.
- Our literacy initiative and Title One teachers' interest/support.
- Received a grant and had a committee working on it; principal and director of SPED are fully supportive of RtI and promote it with the staff.
- The mandate to change and the student study team process.
- passionate school psychs; lack of leadership (teachers are coming up with their own ideas)
- The beginnings of administrative support. I think they're "getting it!"
- District had a grant to help implement RtI practices for 1 year; sped director came from Iowa where they have used it for years.
- we hired a part time coordinator, however, she hasn't received any RtI training
- previous principal/administrator support (very important); teacher "buy-in" through use of data
- REACh or EOCA grants; strong administrative leadership
- cooperation of the teachers and parents
- reading specialists; title one
- child study process; DIBELS bench marking
- we have not implemented RtI
- administrative support; effective collaboration

- good working relationship with teachers and staff; computer progress monitoring system(SIMS)
- administration support to allow us to attend conferences, workshops etc.; support from a few teachers can help persuade the rest of its effectiveness
- REACh grant; scheduled team problem-solving meetings that involve parents
- supportive administration; teacher participation
- having several teachers "buy-in" and spread the word as well as the assistance of a REACh grant
- conference at CESA; backing by director
- additional support staff; changing staff development/training
- working as a collaborative team/learning community; staff vision to improve learning
- professional learning community model across district; very supportive admin team
- have not implemented -in beginning stages
- REACh grant-funding; admin support
- a need to provide some level of intervention to regular education students; disproportionality
- time to meet with others; formal protocol to help with problem identifications
- director of special education's support; support of admin and other specialists (i.e. speech paths, sped teachers, etc)
- principal who understands RtI; staff supportiveness
- administration; knowing that there is a need for change in our elementary schools
- desire knowledge
- director of pupil services, elementary principal
- some of the types of components are in place already; student consultation teams-problem solving and collaborative; through student consult teams we try interventions and review how they are doing
- REACh project; full inclusion environment
- administration is on board; teachers are beginning to buy-in
- No time to participate. I manage, review and LEA at all meetings. Volume of paperwork for current students not eliminated. I still have to review all IEPs and support RtI. We do not have RtI implemented yet.
- School hasn't yet. I, however, am knowledgeable and do understand (as best a person can) what I could be doing. So my answers are about my knowledge base. It will be 3 years before my school gets there. They have started using MAPS testing as step 1.
- administrative support; teacher cooperation
- district leadership team; principal/leadership commitment
- Attending workshops to become more knowledgeable on RtI. Introducing the concept to Reg. Ed. Teachers through in-services.
- Training and education. Administrative support at district level, as well as support from teachers who are willing to learn to learn and try RtI practices.
- We do not use strict RtI practices at my school yet, but I have worked in schools that have. Within the schools RtI specialists have helped to enable the process.
- Professional development through my school's participation in the REACh grant. REACh grant mentoring and participation in REACh training.
- The in-service that the district has presented on the need for differentiation of instruction for all students.
- REACh grant - develop a leadership team to coordinate RtI; teacher success stories
- We are not currently implementing RtI practices…but we are looking at how to approach it as a district and understand what we already have in place.
- Being full time in my school; Having a graduate student to keep me up on current practice
- Administration leadership - their support on teams and willingness to take time out of the day to meet
- REACh grant and the Aimsweb program; "SOS" committee that includes myself, the principal, reading specialist who meets with teachers

- administrator support
- administrative support; professional development
- REACh grant and a literacy coach
- administrative support; local expertise

APPENDIX H

RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION: "WHAT ARE TWO THINGS YOU WOULD LIKE YOUR PRINCIPAL TO KNOW ABOUT RTI?"

Table 7. Participant's Responses to "What are two things you would like your principal to know about RtI?"

- Time commitment from staff that is needed, and what logistical barriers exist in a building of 1700 students
- More about data and benchmarks. More about tier intervention strategies
- It's not going to fix all the problems. It will take a lot of time and effort
- school psych role; SPED and general ed teachers role
- The need for RtI in academic as well as behavioral ones. Steps to begin to implement a system that soon will be required.
- We need to commit more resources to early intervention. Just talking about the need to move towards RtI won't make it happen; we need his leadership and support.
- This needs to be driven by regular ed. This needs to be welcomed at a district level
- Structure of a basic RtI model. Commitment of resources needed.
- the basics; the role of support staff
- how to structure it-curriculum, scheduling, staffing, etc.; how to modify it for students who are not progressing
- An understanding of what progress monitoring is. How to implement tier 2 interventions.
- In general be more familiar with RtI.
- Time commitments/trajectory for implementation effectiveness; prevention!
- how much support is needed from him; additional positions that will be required to fully implement RtI
- that it is a systems change, not "another at-risk program" push.; that data is crucial in all systems but especially RtI
- the time commitment needed; the skills needed to implement RtI effectively
- how long to try interventions; the role of school psychs in the process
- that it is a useful approach to work with students; my concerns about how to make it work in a small district with very limited resources
- progress monitoring at different levels of intervention
- my principal is very knowledgeable of RtI-the principal needs to be more effective with teachers implementation and start making them take more data and focus on subjects other than just reading
- the amount of time needed to implement a systems change; to know the impact on regular education and that change happens slowly
- importance of progress monitoring; importance of teacher consistency of implementing RtI, this need for consistent principal supervision
- that it is a regular education initiative and should be led by the principal; we may need to restructure teacher schedules and subjects in order to accommodate interventions
- the benefits RtI has on student learning; importance of forming a team to analyze data to help w/ student outcomes
- school wide supports need to be in place first; the amount of time and effort needed to implement an effective intervention with integrity
- she is pretty aware of RtI, so nothing is needed
- progress monitoring and how it will happen; the need to demand differentiation of instruction from teachers
- Time differences in how my day would be structured; time and task differences for teachers in their implementation of RtI.
- that it requires creating a structure/schedule to allow teachers and other professionals the opportunity to review data and make decisions regarding instruction of students; that this is about interventions and differentiating instruction and not placement of students
- the high level of systems change needed to fully implement; the importance of integrity in data based interventions

- it is data-driven; it involves a variety of interventions
- I would like to see more administrative commitment, to help insure RtI is implemented faithfully at the individual classroom level
- Right now my principal and I are on a school team with other teachers regarding RtI training. This training has been ongoing due to our school's participation in a REACH grant designed to implement RtI initiatives. My principal and I are learning together.
- what it is and how it is a general education initiative mostly
- I am district-wide, so I'm thinking about our principals as a group; I would like everyone to realize RtI needs to look different for our ELL students.
- It takes buy-in from administration for successful implementation. It takes time and we need to move forward with it starting now.
- The importance of understanding it and working towards actual implementation.
- That collecting data/assessment takes away from instruction time. Lots of training will be necessary.
- regular education; time commitment
- it is a regular ed initiative; regular education teachers need to be trained in RtI
- it is not one size fits all; staff must be encouraged/supported to use RtI model and such support will include more that knowledge about it but rather a systematic way to dedicate staff time to it
- It's only as effective as the classroom teacher utilizing the model; it takes extra manpower and time to really focus on those performing below expectations
- importance of progress monitoring and how it needs to look
- Hard to answer since I do not know my new principal real well, since they are new to the district
- that it's another "educational fad" and that has a downside that's not completely understood by its proponents
- how it differs from the discrepancy model; Rti is a general education initiative
- it requires decision making that will bring about angry/upset teachers initially; it requires actions to be taken from those decisions
- how much data is needed; that it is a process and will take some time to do right
- why RtI is better than the discrepancy model; doesn't know base curriculum enough to give good suggestions for change to teachers
- we have a new principal this year without past administrative experience, so I would like for him to obtain a better general idea of a) what the RtI framework looks like and b) how to implement it.
- the role of special educator vs. regular education; more methods for progress monitoring
- shift in teacher centered to student centered; time obligations
- how to allocate resources-people time and money-to make it work, using data appropriately and sharing with teacher for grouping etc
- I'm not sure
- what exactly it will take to implement RtI; how to get all staff on board
- How time consuming it is; the fact that it is a whole systems change for it to be truly effective.
- Due to REACH, she is very knowledgeable. I would like more effort put into building wide visioning though.
- that changes won't come overnight and that teachers need to be given the tools to succeed in an RtI framework or else they will not attempt to do the interventions
- effectiveness for all students
- why the change to an RtI system is better for our students; what/how resources will need to be allocated in order for RtI to be successful
- time requirements; resource requirements
- maybe the amount of extra time necessary for psychs to implement RtI effectively
- the amount of admin support that will be needed in initial stages; the importance of

needing staff understanding and support from reg ed perspective

- more interventions/examples; how to look at and collect different data; school psych role
- how my role will change; what the principal needs to do to lead staff toward an RtI model
- use of data to drive interventions
- my principal seems to have a good grasp on the components of RtI and what it entails for all educators in her building
- progress monitoring; how to plan the intervention and who is doing them for RtI
- tools and resources needed
- I would like to see our district create some consistency between buildings
- more about what the school psych's role is in the RtI process; more training for themselves and teachers on how to do RtI
- how to implement sound progress monitoring; encourage his staff to seek tier 3 interventions outside of special education
- instructional leadership re: intervention integrity and progress monitoring and documentation will determine success of RtI
- Time commitments from reg ed. Referral rates should decrease. Not all school psychs think this is an appropriate method to label students SLD.
- The importance that gen ed take the leadership in implementing tier I, rather than looking to SPED. How to set up a system to effectively manage/plan/monitor tier I, tier II interventions.
- how many schools in WI have RtI in place and are using it? Who has what roles in RtI in those schools that use RtI?
- It is data-driven. Reg. Ed. Will be responsible for implementing RtI.
- What his role will be regarding RtI once it's implemented. How to help ensure intervention integrity.
- The time it takes to implement it effectively and how involved the reg. ed. Staff needs to be.
- The heavy role of reg. ed. In this process. Not much else-my principal is a former school psych so I think she has a good understanding of RtI.
- The importance of their involvement in supervising and supporting classroom teachers.
- How to better communicate it with teachers; How to use it to cast a vision for our school
- nothing currently, truly implementing RtI
- I think my principal is quite knowledgeable about what it is. I feel it's more of getting reg. ed. teachers on board and time to implement
- This is a tough one - I feel he knows as much about it as I do and is making good progress towards its implementation.
- How it will affect my position as a psych.
- We should be doing more
- Potential contributions of the school psychologists and other educators. How this can be applied to a behavioral model.
- that effective RtI requires increased supervision of the teaching staff; that effective RtI requires education of the teaching staff
- How to implement effectively; Why this model will be more effective than discrepancy approach

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APPENDIX I

RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION: "WHAT ARE TWO BARRIERS FOR YOUR SCHOOL TO IMPLEMENT RTI?"

Table 8. Participant's Responses to "What are two barriers for your school to implement RtI?"

- size of the school, and current duties interfering with people implementation and follow up for the RtI process
- Community knowledge and input. Available resources for intervention strategies.
- willingness of teachers to do it
- time for collaboration; teachers thinking and ideas about struggling students (they want them out of the classroom and with a SPED teacher)
- We have a lot of work to do around collaboration, grade level teams truly leaving ,etc. We have just implemented standards based grading and that is taking a lot of time and energy for staff.
- lack of money, which results in lack of staff and materials
- parent input/buy-in
- RtI is not welcomed by the sup of special ed or the sup of student services
- lack of resources; lack of guidance from DPI
- administrative beliefs; time
- Reg ed teachers not understanding/believing in it; lack of support from principals
- We have not trained our staff. We do not have tier 2 interventions.
- time and resources
- lack of resolution on state level; lack of individual based interventions
- No use of universal screening in areas other than literacy-which really hurts us when determining where students are achieving. Lack of research in this area makes developing interventions very challenging. A schedule that is not conducive to providing students with more instruction. Our grade level teams teach the same subject at the same time-I wish they were at separate times.
- 9 and 3 (staff development and an environment of collaboration)
- lack of administrative support; teachers not wanting to use universal interventions
- lack of admin leadership; lack of teacher planning time
- time; expertise of staff
- lack of teacher training; no good RtI model for math difficulties
- money and staff
- district policy and budget to work with training and data collection
- money-lack of creative scheduling practices
- change in use of resources and resistance of staff in these roles to make change; more emphasis on data collection
- change is hard; current administration is ineffective
- supervision-demands consistent progress monitoring/data collection; lack of resources, high poverty
- lack of leadership; no plan of action
- having administration on board with RtI; establishing a collaborative environment for decision making and planning; accepting "change"
- refer-test-place mentality; many teachers do not differentiate instruction or implement interventions with integrity
- time; personnel
- time, reading specialist - huge obstacle for RtI reading staff at the elementary and, less so, at the MS. I've heard this from other psychs as well.
- time for problem-solving meetings and for interventions; training for all staff on the problem-solving model
- teachers' fears of diversifying and adapting curriculum-teaching approaches; also, some teachers are not skilled enough

- utilizing/knowledge of research based interventions; integrity of interventions
- time; staff development; money
- time; DPI dragging on it
- General education teachers' resistance to data collection. Belief that RtI is SPED initiative
- teachers' inability to differentiate instruction to meet a range of student needs; teachers' unwillingness or inability to develop and implement interventions to meet the needs of struggling students and instead their focus on believing they belong in special education
- fundamental differences in opinion about data collection procedures (reading teachers vs. school psychs); lack of tier 2 interventions
- waiting for a coordinated response from district administration; many people are not convinced how it will be better than the current efforts/intervention
- late start
- providing adequate professional development; agreeing on the procedure
- I think there are many barriers currently to implementing RtI practices. One, although conceptually, what we need to do I'm still sort of confused sort of on how to move the school in that direction. It's hard to still operate old systems while trying to start new; staff buy-in may also be difficult
- financial resources for staff to receive training; time set aside for collaboration among staff
- lack of commitment and knowledge
- the union; the incredible diversity of our district
- Lack of benchmarks in our district-not sure what are standards for student rate of progress and grade-level objectives are. I think my school is struggling with how much of RtI should be district-wide vs. building wide?
- administrative push; training of staff
- people not enough support; time
- old school thinking; negative teachers
- lack of training on the part of regular education teachers; lack of buy-in with RtI by regular education classroom teachers
- personnel to work w/ at risk or identified students; time in the day to spend w/ struggling students
- new administration; lack of adequate training for teachers
- current initiatives already in place-RtI will overwhelm teachers
- time and money
- not as much research available for secondary level; requirements take up a lot of teachers' time
- poor leadership (principal's inability to retain info gained from many learning opportunities and workshops on RtI, poor decision-making skills, fear of making change that may disrupt the status quo, even if that isn't working); poor leadership (same problems with director of I and C)
- fear from teachers and skill deficits from teachers; teachers thinking RtI is just "another thing" they have to do
- HS level is still into "# of credits to graduate, not skills to be successful"
- Understanding what it is and how to use it. Most teachers feel, from what I see, is that it's another hoop to jump through before a student is referred and out of their classroom
- new administration/principal w/ little knowledge of RtI; lack of time in school calendar for staff professional development
- commitment and buy-in on behalf of teachers
- teams are created to implement RtI but plans are not followed; excuses are accepted for why the student is or the plan is failing which the student is blamed more often than not
- resistance by regular ed staff; resources $
- time, money, space, flexibility in daily schedule
- ownership, is it a special ed or general ed initiative?; DPI/info from state-special ed director has been told that RtI is on hold in the state

- intervention ideas; lack of progress monitoring tools
- Our school is part of a very large district. We don't want to implement more than what the district is currently doing because then we might have to change what we are doing once the district decides exactly how to implement RtI. Our school staff needs to do more academic interventions and progress monitoring.
- reluctant teachers; lack of resources in small district
- some teachers very concerned about prep time and missing any to spend time in collaboration teams; no common vision agreed upon
- lack of parent input in RtI process; not all teachers participate at the same level
- teacher "buy-in"; resources
- small size; limited resources
- time constraints; teacher collaboration
- amount of resources/people to provide selected and targeted interventions; sufficient time to plan/organize; $ for district to implement and/or decide on which RtI to use
- our district is not implementing it; useful daily/weekly progress monitoring
- some teachers are negative; "view" that RtI may not be effective or legitimate
- adequate time and personnel
- lack of resources; lack of support from admin standpoint
- time and $
- staff buy-in; lack of leadership
- identification of problems; use of data to drive interventions
- teachers not implementing RtI-based strategies; lack of teacher knowledge on RtI and special ed practices overall-over-referral of ELL/minority students for spec ed testing
- time and money
- consistent data collection; research based interventions-knowledge and use of
- time factors and structure of implementing RtI; buy-in of importance of RtI by teachers
- resources needed for effective implementation: staffing/time; $ this is huge
- agreeing on what to use for progress monitoring and interventions; getting all administrators on the same page and knowing more about what RtI means
- resources; planning time
- systematic progress monitoring inconsistencies; teacher time management
- time and resources; teacher buy-in
- lack of evidenced-based interventions and tier 2 options for students; current student assistance team is often viewed as a "referral" stage versus a "pre-referral" problem solving team
- human resources stretched; financial challenges of district
- lack of staff to assist in screening, benchmarking, progress monitoring; lack of reg ed. Buy-in and staff do not have training in research-based interventions or monitoring tools
- Bringing gen ed teachers on-board-convincing them to do this. Changing the notion that SPED is a service not a place.
- Other priorities being emphasized-literacy and technology; someone to make RtI their passion.
- resources
- Lack of knowledge and administrative support of the changes needed. Teacher resistance to the unknown.
- Lack of teacher knowledge about RtI and willingness to change. Limited resources.
- lack of knowledge and $
- Old notions of what Special Education services are. Interventions-we just don't feel like we have many interventions beyond Title to offer struggling students.
- Lack of administrative leadership at the building level for teachers.
- Lack of direction/unity in reading philosophy/best practice for instruction in reading; poor relationships between staff and leadership in some cases

- It is being approached as a district initiative and we are in the beginning steps of introducing it.
- staff buy-in; resources
- Not enough knowledge about what math interventions to use for struggling students; educating the staff on the RtI process
- Parent and community involvement/time
- time; knowledge
- Professional development for general educators; agreement of progress monitoring tools to use
- Lack of total buy in by the staff; antiquated teaching methods
- Teacher attitudes; resources/funding
- Other initiatives have been of primary importance; administration/district-wide direction is limited

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