

CHAPTER V

Implications and Interpretation

Overview

The purpose of the study was to determine if selected teacher variables such as the work itself, advancement, International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) organizational relationships, working conditions, and pay are correlated to the level of overall job satisfaction of teachers in Hare Krishna schools at the primary or secondary level. This study also examined the demographics of Krishna teachers, the characteristics of their schools, and what relationships these had with how well the teachers are satisfied in terms of ten satisfaction factors and overall job satisfaction.

A complete census of teachers in Krishna schools worldwide was attempted with a survey instrument. Responses were analyzed using correlations for the continuous variables and one-way ANOVA F test for the categorical variables. Of a total of 377 teachers, 344 responded, or about a 90% response rate for the entire population. This high response rate was achieved through the diligence of the school leaders and contact persons throughout the world over a four month period. The study covered 32 Krishna schools, of which three small schools in America recently closed. By far the largest Krishna schools are located in India, which also contained 12 of the schools in this study. Please see Appendix five for a complete table of all the schools in this study, and the number of teachers per school.

The information this study reveals has never been gathered before, either by members of the Hare Krishna Movement or by those studying it from outside. When this researcher asked the secretary of ISKCON's International Governing Body Commission (GBC), in the summer of 2005, for a list of current Krishna schools, many existing schools were not listed and many schools on the list were closed, some for more than a decade. For example, not only this researcher, but also almost all the other Krishna school leaders worldwide, were not aware of the existence of one of the largest schools in the Krishna Movement, in Tripura, India.

From the opening of the first Krishna schools through the late 1980s, some facts were collected annually on Krishna schools (Urmila, 2005), but there has never been anything close to comprehensive reporting on teacher demographics, school characteristics, and school policies. Certainly no one has ventured beyond a gathering of the most basic facts to examine whether or not Krishna school teachers are happy in their profession, and, if so, what factors do and do not contribute to their satisfaction. As one teacher wrote, "Thank you very much for doing this survey because this helps us to know what is really happening in the gurukulas [literally residence of the teacher; ancient model of Krishna schools where students lived with the teacher's family and was given broad training]." Not only is this study the first comprehensive attempt at gathering information about Krishna schools, but it also represents the first time since 1988 that teachers have been asked about their knowledge of international Krishna educational policies and programs. "On a local level there doesn't exist precise information about the education ministry of ISKCON," as one teacher put it in survey comments.

General Reflections on Results

This researcher had assumed that the factors which influenced job satisfaction for Krishna teachers might differ from those of teachers in secular schools, or even other religious schools. This study demonstrated that all ten job satisfaction factors have a statistically significant correlation with overall satisfaction for Krishna school teachers. All but one, security, was significant at $p < .01$. Just as qualitative and quantitative research on the members of the Hare Krishna movement (such as Danier, 1974; Mukunda, 2001; Shin, 1987; Weiss & Mendoza, 1990) found Krishna devotees to correspond to the general population in their intelligence and psychology, so this study indicates that what encourages and discourages teachers in Krishna schools parallels the sources of satisfaction of teachers in general.

Krishna school teachers showed the strongest correlation between overall satisfaction and the following: (a) advancement, (b) colleagues, (c) working conditions, (d) supervision, and (e) ISKCON organizational management. Among these, the supervision factor had the strongest correlation with overall satisfaction. Only one of these four, advancement, is an intrinsic motivator; the rest are extrinsic hygiene factors.

Considering first the area of advancement, it is of note that 91 out of the 344 teachers, or 26.5%, reported they hold some administrative position in addition to teaching. It is often the case, in this researchers' experience, that a Krishna school administrator more closely resembles the principal teacher of pre-industrial schools (Spring, 2001) than the more modern Western model of a manager who may only visit classrooms for mandated evaluations and rarely, if ever, teach a regular class. Krishna school principals commonly provide regular classroom instruction, even daily. Therefore, many Krishna teachers may be

able to avoid making an absolute choice between classroom teaching and job promotion. On the other hand, especially in the larger Krishna schools, the lack of opportunities for job advancement for those who wish to remain a classroom teacher may be similar to the situation in many Western schools. As one teacher wrote in the open comment section at the end of the survey, “Answer of ‘no’ to some of the questions may be misleading...as do you have opportunities for upward mobility...because that really isn't an aspect of the school structure.”

The strong correlation between advancement and overall satisfaction may also be related to the way the term advancement is used in Krishna jargon. To advance, even professionally, is likely to signify for Krishna teachers an internally perceived increase in personal purity, dedication, and spiritual happiness, whether or not there is a concomitant raise in title, authority, or responsibility. That kind of spiritual advancement should lead to overall satisfaction (Bhagavad-gita 2.39 purport).

In the areas of working conditions and colleagues, one possible reason Krishna teachers enter their profession is to be in a physical environment that reminds them of Krishna, and to work with colleagues for whom spiritual perfection is important. In most Krishna schools the food, bulletin boards, music, and so forth, are connected with Krishna. Such working conditions, even if circumstances are difficult in other ways, may provide much job satisfaction, as the goal of work is to always remember Krishna (Bhagavad-gita, 9.27). Specifically with regards to colleagues, the most important element in Krishna spiritual life is to have the association of other devotees of Krishna (Srimad Bhagavatam 4.20.26) in whose company one will find “great satisfaction and bliss” (Bhagavad-gita 10.9). One may suspect that for some Krishna school teachers, the association of colleagues is more

part of the intrinsic work of teaching than an external factor. As one teacher wrote at the end of the survey instrument,

Teaching in a Krishna school is like a dream come true for me. I feel very much privileged and honored by getting an opportunity to serve in an ISKCON school. I also enjoy every bit of time that I spend with so much pious devotees around.

Krishna teachers reported a high rate of satisfaction with ISKCON organizational management, a mean of 3.44 in a range of 1-5, or an overall mean of 48.28 out of a range of 14-70. The degree of satisfaction with organizational structure and policies seem, and reasonably so, to be related mostly to cultural or religious factors in the teachers or their work. For example, four out of the five teacher demographic variables that had a significant relationship to greater satisfaction with ISKCON organizational management involved teachers' religion or culture. They are as follows: (a) being raised in a culture that was predominantly Hindu or Vaisnava, (b) having a family of origin that was Hindu, Vaisnava, or ISKCON affiliated, (c) present self-identification as other than an ISKCON member, and (d) years teaching in a Krishna school. School characteristics that relate to satisfaction with ISKCON organizational management often concern practices and policies not likely to be found in many schools outside of the Krishna Movement, such as whether or not the school required observance of Vaisnava (the monotheistic branch of Hinduism that names the Supreme Lord as Vishnu or Krishna, and of which the Krishna Movement is a part) festivals and early morning religious practices (sadhana) for students.

It should be noted that Krishna teachers who self-identified as ISKCON members were significantly less satisfied with ISKCON organizational management. This researcher has heard many teachers express frustration and disappointment with the ISKCON

organizational systems and policies in regards to primary and secondary education. As one teacher wrote in the survey, “Certainly, from the top to the bottom, there was nowhere near enough preaching of the importance of education/spiritual training, or help and support.” Some respondents who wrote final comments indicated that their satisfaction occurred in spite of ISKCON organizational management, as one teacher wrote,

After 26 years of teaching in ISKCON schools I have to admit that most of my experiences were rewarding. However, I do not think (most of) our leaders understand the importance of this kind of education. I would like it to become one of the top priorities in Srila Prabhupada’s mission. [note: Srila Prabhupada, or Prabhupada, was the founder of ISKCON or the Krishna Movement.]

It was expected that teachers’ strength of religious faith or practice would affect levels of satisfaction; yet, these had significant correlations with only four and one satisfaction factor, respectively. On the other hand, Krishna school teachers, like teachers everywhere, showed a relationship between their students’ higher academic achievement and a higher level of their own job satisfaction. Which is the causative agent and which the effect—satisfaction or student achievement—cannot be determined from this study. Indeed, all that can be concluded is that either they affect each other or that other factors affect both.

The effect of religious culture is rarely considered in research on education (Grace, 2003; Marshall & Gerstl-Pepin, 2005). However, culture is important to Krishna teachers’ job satisfaction. The data concerning relationships between teacher demographics and satisfaction shows that teachers raised in a family of Hindus, Vaisnavas, or ISKCON members (these categories may overlap) are more satisfied overall and with each of the satisfaction factors, except the work itself and responsibility. The data concerning relationships between school characteristics and satisfaction indicates that teachers’

satisfaction in eight out of eleven areas—the ten factors and overall satisfaction— is higher if more of their students’ families were ethnic Indian Hindus and if the school is located in a world region where Hindu or Vaisnava culture is dominant. This interrelationship of religion, culture, and satisfaction in Krishna teachers’ work gives some indication of the value of culture even to those who ultimately seek to transcend it.

Implications for Implementation and Further Research

Policy Suggestions Based on Data of Krishna Teachers’ Demographics

Highlights of findings:

- 34% of Krishna teachers are male
- Over 90% are in their first marriage or are single, never married
- About 80% of those with school-aged children send those children to Krishna schools
- Over 30% have graduate degrees
- Half identify as ISKCON members
- Most who are not ISKCON members are Hindus
- 60% are strict vegetarians
- About one third regularly chant 16 rounds of the Hare Krishna mantra
- Of those who teach academic classes, almost half have government licensure and three-fourths have a bachelor’s degree or higher
- Of those who teach classes in spiritual practice or dogma, about one-fifth to one-half do not have a main indicator of strict following of Krishna religion, such as ISKCON identification, strict vegetarianism, harinama initiation, or gayatri diksa

Policy suggestions based on teacher demographic information:

- Have stricter policies for teaching classes in religious practice and dogma. Religious qualifications are important for these classes
- Meet the needs of teachers who are not ISKCON members (such as special training and facility)
- Help Krishna school teachers to be able to send their own children to Krishna schools

This study yields rich and thick data in the area of general knowledge about Krishna school teachers’ demographics and their schools’ characteristics and policies. A few possible areas where school leaders can use this study’s data are provided here. First, Krishna school leaders can have only ISKCON members who are strict vegetarians teach classes in religious

practice (ashrama and sadhana) and religious dogma (scripture memorization and philosophy). It may not be wise to continue the current situation, where 20% of the teachers of ashrama or sadhana classes are less than strict vegetarians. Prabhupada wrote in this regard, “the teachers themselves should be fixed up initiated devotees, otherwise how the children can get [sic] the right information and example?” (Letter to Aniruddha, March 7, 1972) Presently over one-fourth of teachers of religious practice are not initiated [harinam, where one becomes a disciple and vows to be vegetarian, chant Hare Krishna a prescribed amount daily, and abstain from intoxicants, gambling, and illicit sex], and almost 30% of teachers of religious practice do not even self-identify as ISKCON members. The numbers are higher when it comes to teaching religious dogma as compared to practice. About a third of teachers of religious dogma are not ISKCON members, with about the same percentage not being strict vegetarians or having harinam initiation. As the tendency in Krishna schools has shifted to a concern over teachers’ academic qualifications, it might be wise to consider that transmission of an enthusiasm for religious philosophy and practice will be difficult if the teachers themselves lack this conviction in their own life.

Second, considering the large percentage of teachers who are not ISKCON members, Krishna school leaders may wish to implement policies to meet those teachers’ needs. For instance, one such teacher wrote, “Krishna teachers should be given a special dress like the way the devotees dress, because at times we also go to the temple.... Teachers need to be taught deity worship at the temple.”

Third, Krishna school leaders, and ISKCON leaders in general, can implement policies to encourage all Krishna school teachers to send their school aged children to Krishna schools. Leaders may note that about 20% of the school-aged children of Krishna

school teachers are not being educated in Krishna schools. Perhaps there are teachers who do not have faith in the very schools in which they work, or perhaps the available schools cannot serve all the children needing an education.

Further Research on Krishna Teachers' Demographics

Further research regarding teacher demographics can address questions about differences in teachers by country, type of school, chief source of funds, and so forth. For example, it may be that more Krishna schools in India than in other countries are likely to hire teachers who are neither ISKCON members nor even vegetarian, perhaps because school leaders feel that an ethnic Indian Hindu teacher has enough sympathy and understanding of Krishna consciousness to teach in a Krishna school. Krishna schools in countries where Hindu or Vaisnava culture is not dominant may be more hesitant to hire non-ISKCON teachers. The Krishna schools in Africa, many of which have students who come from families that are neither ISKCON members nor ethnic Indian Hindus, may have different needs and criteria about the kind of teachers they hire.

Policy Suggestions Based on Data of Krishna School Characteristics

Highlights of findings on school characteristics:

- About one-third of teachers work in schools that are mixed day and boarding
- About 60% of teachers have half or more of the eligible students in the local community attending their school
- Only about 40% have student bodies where half or more students' native language is the same as language of instruction
- Over 90% are in schools where student achievement is between average to superior
- About 12% have more than half the students on financial aid (some work in government funded schools where such considerations are not applicable)
- 40% have all or most students from ethnic Indian Hindu families
- 19% have more than half of students from ethnic Indian Hindu families
- 19% have no students from ethnic Indian Hindu families
- 24% have all or most students from ISKCON families
- 13% have no students from ISKCON families
- Half work in schools that are mostly funded by tuition

- About three-fourths are in schools where most teachers are paid salaries
- About 70% are in schools that separate students by age or grade
- Between 60-90% are in schools that require some Krishna practices

Policy suggestions based on school characteristics information:

- Recruit more students from families in the Hare Krishna Movement to attend Krishna schools
- Increase ways to have the best of the traditional boarding school training without a residential school

First, Krishna leaders can aim to recruit more students from families in the Hare Krishna Movement. Specific policies to accomplish this would involve getting more support from ISKCON leaders, developing a system of internal ISKCON regional and international oversight and accreditation, and giving high quality information about the schools to Krishna Movement members. Ensuring that teachers are both academically and spiritually qualified and that students are well prepared for further education and vocations is also important. Presently, only 23.8% of teachers reported that all or most of their students come from ISKCON families, and more than 40% of teachers work in schools where less than half of the community's eligible students attend.

Second, for students who are not going to live in ashrama (traditional boarding) schools, leaders who wish to be faithful to the vision of the Krishna Movement's founder, Prabhupada, need innovative ways to keep the essence of traditional gurukula education. One solution, which the schools in which most Krishna teachers work have adopted, is to increase specific programs of Vaisnava practice and philosophy as part of the curriculum. Yet, perhaps more needs to be done. One teacher expressed these concerns,

I have great fear ashrama aspects are finished. There is no impetus for taking up this position, at least for girls. So training will come from the community in general. So where is the adult training on the mere sadhana level? Householders can't attend morning programs and women's training

doesn't exist. The kids like to hang out and chant together, but 1 out of 400 attend shastra [scripture] class when the opportunity is there. So how does training go on? How do we get leaders?

In general, the swing away from boarding schools, with only 4.4% of teachers working in exclusively boarding schools, presents Krishna educational leaders with a challenge if they desire to give their students the type of spiritual training that the traditional ashrama school provided, but without the ashrama. Specifics in this regard are discussed in the section on culture.

Further Research on Krishna School Characteristics

There is a wealth of future research that can be done on Krishna school characteristics. One can explore the relationship between academic achievement, or required spiritual practices, and factors such as whether the schools are day or boarding, in an area that has a predominantly Hindu or Vaisnava culture or not, a school with or without government funding, schools with age-segregated or multi-level classroom organizations, and so forth.

Policy Suggestions Based on the Ten Satisfaction Factors and Overall Satisfaction

Highlights of findings:

- Teachers have high overall satisfaction
- All ten satisfaction factors are significantly correlated with overall satisfaction
- All satisfaction factors but security are correlated to overall satisfaction at $p < .01$
- Of the ten satisfaction factors, those with the strongest correlation with overall satisfaction were supervision, work itself, responsibility, and colleagues
- Pay had weakest correlation with overall satisfaction
- The widest range of teachers' satisfaction was in areas of pay, security, recognition, and ISKCON organizational management

Policy suggestions based on the ten factors and overall satisfaction:

- Implement policies suggested by Herzberg (1968/2003)
 - Teachers taking responsibility for areas out of the classroom, such as what kind of staff development they need or what resources they use
- Implement policies suggested by Lester and Shuman (1990)
 - Hire administrators from within the school

- Teachers train assistant teachers
- Implement policies suggested by Nelson and Dailey (1999)
 - Give teachers recognition for various areas of student accomplishment in addition to academics
 - Assess programs where there is a strong teacher recognition
- Ground all such programs in the language, etiquette, symbols, and norms of Krishna culture

First, Krishna leaders can implement some of the policies and programs specific to improving each of the ten satisfaction factors as explained by Herzberg (1968/2003). These include increasing teachers' taking responsibility for decisions outside of the classroom, such as what kind of staff development they need or what resources they use. Lester and Shuman (1990), also list 50 strategies school leaders can use for increasing teacher satisfaction, grouped according to the intrinsic motivating factors. For example, to increase satisfaction with advancement, they suggest hiring all administrators from within the ranks of teachers at that school. In the area of responsibility, they suggest having teachers be the trainers for assistant teachers. Specific organizational policies to increase employee satisfaction with recognition (Nelson & Dailey, 1999) can also include ways of evaluating the effectiveness of those programs. For example, Krishna school leaders can evaluate changes in student attendance, academic achievement, behavior problems, and parent involvement as related to the degree and kind of recognition given to teachers for excelling in these areas. Unfortunately, school leaders, in general, often overlook such a seemingly common sense strategy as assessing the effect of specific policies or staff development programs (Guskey, 2002).

Second, it is reasonable to assume that much of what is shown in research to be effective in improving the recruitment and retention of good teachers would also be effective

policies for Krishna school leaders to implement in their schools. This assumption comes from the finding that the conceptual framework that explains job motivation for people in general also applies to Krishna teachers. Such a conclusion, while perhaps seeming obvious to those outside the Krishna Movement, is by no means an assumption to ISKCON members, who are at least striving to be motivated only by pure love and devotion for the Supreme Lord (Srimad Bhagavatam 7.10.6). Yet, the heart of this study shows a statistically significant relationship between ten factors of job satisfaction and overall job satisfaction for Krishna school teachers. What is perhaps most striking about these data, as noted in the overview in this chapter, is that Krishna school teachers' job satisfaction is related to the same forces that shape job satisfaction for people in general. Evidently, 40 years from ISKCON's founding, there are still those running schools who feel that all Krishna devotees are automatically in a state of perfection. As one teacher writes in the open comments section, "The headmaster is a fundamentalist who despises material education 'reading' in general and thinks that chanting will get you a job."

There has been a general shift in the Krishna Movement towards getting good quality training and expertise for the members, whether the source of training is in or out of ISKCON. This study lends firm support to the idea that Krishna teacher staff development and school policies based on the conceptual framework of this study are likely to improve teacher satisfaction and thus student achievement. But there is a caveat. Certainly some training and policies can be directly imported into Krishna schools from other religious and cultural milieu. At the same time, the culture that is native to those following the spiritual process of Krishna consciousness has emerged in this study as a factor with strong relationships to job satisfaction. Therefore, if Krishna school leaders want to bring greater

satisfaction to their teachers, motivational training and organizational policies designed to increase Krishna teacher satisfaction should be firmly grounded in the cultural language, etiquette, behavioral norms, and symbols that are part of Vaisnava native culture. Otherwise, the policies, programs, and staff development may meet with resistance from the very people they are designed to assist, and may even produce negative unanticipated consequences (Marshall & Gerstl-Pepin, 2005).

Further Research on Relationships Between Satisfaction Factors

First, future research in the area of the elements of Krishna teachers' satisfaction can involve developing an instrument to measure satisfaction factors in ways that relate specifically to the situations in Krishna schools. Second, comparisons can be made between the satisfaction of Krishna school teachers in the ten factors and that of teachers in secular schools or schools of other faiths.

Third, general research on the effectiveness of Krishna schools could focus on students rather than teachers. For example, two teachers in this study suggested that the students in Krishna schools should be surveyed about satisfaction. It would be helpful to have studies of Krishna school students that measure their moral and religious values and practices, similar to the work Dijkstra and Veenstra (2001) did with Christian school students. Or, like Dickson's (2004) study of graduates of one Jewish day school, research could concentrate on the effects on the adult life of former Krishna school students. One study on students in one Krishna school (Lilliston, 1985) concentrated on students' psychological health. With a somewhat different focus on both psychological and sociological health, other studies (Rochford, 1999b; Rochford & Heinlein, 1998) on Krishna youth have looked at attendance at Krishna schools as one of several sociological factors affecting them.

Fourth, regarding student success in Krishna schools, this study asked teachers to assess their students' general academic achievement, training in Krishna consciousness, and emotional care. Further research could involve document review from each of the schools to examine the relationship between direct assessment of students and teachers' perceptions.

Finally, Prabhupada envisioned a school system that would produce world leaders. Indeed, the traditional gurukula ashrama system was intended, in part, for that very purpose (Srimad Bhagavatam 4.12.23 & 7.12.13-14). Future studies could examine to what extent former Krishna school students take up leadership positions in or out of ISKCON, in whatever spheres—religion, scholarship, government, business, and so forth. If Krishna school students do or do not enter into leadership positions in percentages out of proportion to their portion of the general population, then research could be done as to what aspects of an education in a Krishna school do or do not foster such leadership qualities and inclinations.

Policy Suggestions Based on Relationships Between Teacher Demographics and Satisfaction

Finding:

- The correlations between satisfaction measures and the generic measure of strength of faith was strongest with responsibility, and was negative with security

Policy suggestions:

- Give all teachers evidence of job security; do not neglect security for the religious
- Give appropriate responsibility to all teachers, regardless of strength of religious faith

Findings:

- Teachers who are from families of ISKCON members, Vaisnavas, or Hindus have higher satisfaction
- Teachers who are ISKCON members have lower satisfaction
- Teachers whose childhoods were spent in geographical regions where Vaisnava or Hindu culture was dominant have higher satisfaction

Policy suggestion:

- Align school culture with a culture native to Krishna religion

Findings:

- The correlation between satisfaction measures and the specific Krishna measure of strength of religious practice was only weakly correlated with working conditions
- Teachers who are ISKCON members have lower satisfaction

Policy suggestions:

- Make Krishna schools friendlier to strict followers of the Krishna religion
- Give special recognition and responsibility to teachers who are strict Krishna followers
- Give Krishna teachers who are strictly following the religion a larger role in decision making
- Especially recognize Krishna teachers who are ISKCON members for their unique contribution to a Krishna school
- Give teachers who are ISKCON members more direct input into school decision making
- ISKCON leaders in general can recognize Krishna teachers who are ISKCON members as a valuable resource for decision making in the society in general

Findings:

- Teachers' whose education level is higher have higher satisfaction
- Teachers who have government licensure have higher satisfaction

Policy suggestions:

- Set up a fund to help Krishna teachers get graduate degrees while they teach, or while they are on a sabbatical
- Krishna leaders in general can generate or re-direct funds to finance Krishna teachers getting government licensure
- Krishna leaders in general can generate or re-direct funds to help Krishna teachers get degrees from existing ISKCON colleges
- Put more effort into expanding and publicizing ISKCON teacher training certificate programs
- Move toward ISKCON teacher licensure

First, Krishna school leaders, based on this study, should give all their teachers sufficient evidence of job security, regardless of the strength of those teachers' religious faith. The correlation between strong religious faith and satisfaction with security was a negative one. Perhaps Krishna teachers with strong religious faith are less inclined to work in secular schools than are their less religiously inclined colleagues. Thus the fact that most Krishna schools have no system of tenure, pension, or even medical benefits may contribute to less satisfaction with job security in a general sense. Or perhaps, from a more esoteric

point of view, those with stronger religious faith find their security in spiritual things, with more skepticism about worldly security arrangements. Finally, Krishna school leaders may not feel they need to provide arrangements for job security to those who are working with a sense of divine calling.

Second, Krishna school leaders can implement policies that give opportunities for responsibility to all teachers. The strongest correlation between strength of religious faith and a satisfaction factor was with responsibility, .318, $p < .001$. Perhaps Krishna school leaders, parents, and ISKCON members, presently give more fulfilling responsibilities to Krishna teachers with stronger religious conviction. Or perhaps these teachers are more dedicated to the mission of their schools and therefore voluntarily take on responsibility in areas that are important to them.

Third, Krishna school leaders who want their teachers to be satisfied, and therefore more likely to be effective, should align the culture of their school organization more with the culture native to Krishna consciousness. How Krishna school leaders can implement policies based on cultural considerations is discussed in a separate section of this chapter, because similar conclusions about culture and teacher satisfaction emerge in the data on school characteristics. The teacher characteristic that showed a relationship with the most satisfaction factors—nine—was whether or not teachers were raised in a family of ISKCON members, Hindus, or Vaisnavas. Of those nine, five were significant at $p < .001$, which included the relationship with overall satisfaction. Being raised in a region where Hinduism or Vaisnavism was prominent was also strongly related to overall satisfaction at $p < .001$, as well as having significant relationships with four other factors. The conclusion that emerges from the relationships between teacher demographics and satisfaction is that culture is

important to Krishna school teachers. When Krishna teachers' native culture is similar to the native culture of Krishna consciousness, the teachers are more satisfied.

Fourth, Krishna school leaders need policies to make their schools friendlier to teachers who are strict followers of the Krishna religion. Leaders can give special recognition to teachers whose behavior is more in line with Krishna teachings, since they are uniquely qualified to guide the students in religious matters. A position as a teacher in a Krishna school can be portrayed as an honor given to those who are not only academically qualified, but also firm in their religious practice. The move in the last two decades away from the traditional gurukula system and toward a more Western model of achievement may have been at the cost of the job satisfaction of those teachers who are in the best position to transmit love of Krishna to their students. Perhaps surprisingly, the measure of teachers' strength of religious practice had a significant correlation with only one satisfaction factor, that of working conditions. The correlation was weak, .122, $p < .05$. There does not appear to be much of a relationship between how strictly teachers follow the practices of Krishna consciousness and how satisfied they are working in Krishna schools. The measure of strength of religious faith, however, which is applicable to people of any religious identification, had a significant correlation with four satisfaction factors in this study. It appears that there is more of a relationship between general religious faith and being satisfied with teaching in a Krishna school than between satisfaction and specific Krishna religious practices.

Fifth, Krishna Movement leaders in general might want to include the voice of Krishna teachers who are strict ISKCON members in larger policy issues that affect the Krishna movement. Both Krishna teachers' self-identification as an ISKCON member and

their higher degree of strict following of Krishna religious practices are significantly related to lower satisfaction with ISKCON organizational management. It appears that the more Krishna teachers are dedicated to the Krishna religion, the less satisfied they are with the management of their religious society. Krishna school leaders can especially provide for their teachers who are strictly practicing ISKCON members to (a) advance in their profession, (b) receive recognition for their accomplishments, and (c) have direct input into school leadership decisions. Being an ISKCON member significantly lowers Krishna teachers satisfaction in these areas presently.

Sixth, educational leaders, and Krishna leaders in general, should move to implement teacher licensure programs and increase the number of ISKCON affiliated, government accredited graduate school programs. Doing so requires either the generation of new resources or the re-directing of existing ISKCON resources. Such policies require commitment in ISKCON beyond what Krishna school leaders can probably supply on their own. Teachers with a government teacher license or a graduate degree are more satisfied in several areas, including overall. Yet, while 30% of Krishna teachers have an advanced graduate degree, more than 30% of Krishna teachers do not have even a bachelor's degree, less than half hold teacher licensure, and the vast majority have not taken Krishna related teacher courses offered in ISKCON colleges or by Vaisnava Training and Education. As one teacher wrote in the open-ended survey comments, "Teachers need to further their education to a higher level [for] which they need financial aid from the leaders or administration of the school."

There are numerous ways in which Krishna school leaders could implement policies to increase the number of teachers who have access to higher levels of training. For example,

Krishna teachers can take courses from Vaisnava Training and Education (VTE) and other ISKCON based training institutions. For several years, the VTE has offered three levels of courses, 30 hours each, in pedagogy. These courses are reasonably priced, each usually taught in an intensive one-week program, and available in many parts of Europe and India throughout the year. Many experienced Krishna teachers contributed to the development and piloting of these courses, which represent the first steps toward a full teacher licensure program in ISKCON. However, only 17.2% of teachers have taken these courses, and only 4.7% have taken courses in ISKCON's colleges which are accredited by government recognized agencies. Educational leaders could work to discover the reasons why these courses are not better attended by their faculty, and, in general, seek to aid the level of training and education of their staff.

Some teacher training and education, whether for initial certification or for existing teachers, can be done through creating more of a global, or at least regional, learning community of Krishna school teachers. One teacher writes, "If we have a chance to tour all the Krishna schools periodically, we will develop our mind and should develop our teaching methods." Another teacher commented, "I would like to give my poor suggestions to have link for all Krishna schools in the world." Yet another teacher suggested that ISKCON schools should work "hand to hand."

Further Research on Krishna Teacher Demographics and Satisfaction

Further research stemming from the data relating teacher characteristics to satisfaction can explore, through interviews and observation, more precise ways in which, for example, the region in which a teacher spent his or her childhood relates to satisfaction with the organization of ISKCON or advancement in the teaching profession. More research could

also ascertain how these teacher characteristics relate to each other. Other areas of research could focus on what kind of education best prepares teachers for work in Krishna schools.

Policy Suggestions Based on Relationships Between School Characteristics and Satisfaction

Finding:

- Teachers whose students score higher on achievement assessments have higher satisfaction by every satisfaction measure

Policy suggestions:

- Have specialists to give students extra help when needed
- Have specialists to help gifted students go beyond the standard course of study

Findings:

- Teachers who have more students from families of ethnic Indian Hindus have higher satisfaction
- Teachers whose school is in a geographical region where Vaisnava or Hindu culture is dominant have higher satisfaction

Policy suggestion:

- Align school culture with a culture native to Krishna religion

Finding:

- Teachers in schools where students are not required to study technology due to lack of resources have less satisfaction

Policy suggestion:

- Provide enough funds for technology

First, policies to increase student achievement could affect teacher satisfaction and thus help in both recruitment and retention of high quality teachers. Such programs include having specialists available to give students extra help, or enable gifted students to go beyond the standard course of study. What stands out most from these data are the relationships between student academic achievement and every aspect of Krishna teachers' satisfaction. Five of these relationships, those with: (a) work itself, (b) recognition, (c) colleagues, (d) working conditions, and (e) overall satisfaction, are significant at $p < .001$.

Second, because culture emerges in this data as important to teachers' satisfaction both regarding teacher demographics and school characteristics, policy implementation based

on culture is discussed in a separate section of this chapter. Cultural school characteristics make a difference in teachers' satisfaction. Teachers who have more students whose families are ethnic Indian Hindus have significantly higher satisfaction in eight of the eleven satisfaction factors, and if the school is located in a region where Hindu or Vaisnava culture is dominant, teachers' satisfaction is higher in seven factors. Both the students' culture and the culture of the school's location are related to higher overall satisfaction for teachers at $p < .001$.

Third, leaders who provide sufficient technology and facilities for education may reduce teachers' frustrations with roadblocks in their environment. When technology education is not available or required for students teachers' satisfaction in the extrinsic areas is reduced.

Further Research of School Characteristics and Satisfaction

There is a wealth of possibilities for further research in this area. For example, these data indicate that whether Krishna schools are co-educational or single sex affects teachers' satisfaction in almost all areas. In general, teachers in schools for only girls are the least satisfied. Interviews with teachers and observations in these schools could probe deeper to help discover how to have each type of school foster teachers' satisfaction and student achievement.

Relationships between the various factors could also be explored. For example, there may be common elements of schools whose chief source of funding is from the government, or the requiring of early morning sadhana could be more common in boarding or mixed boarding and day schools than in schools with only day students.

On a deeper level, only a limited amount of information about the characteristics of Krishna schools can be understood from these data. Qualitative studies based on in-depth visits to each Krishna school are probably necessary to give a more accurate idea of the state of primary and secondary education in the Hare Krishna Movement. These studies could involve interviews with school leaders and selected teachers, observations of classroom and administrative procedures, document review of school policy booklets and newsletters, observations of parent programs, and so forth. So little is known about Krishna schools that the field is open for extensive studies in almost every respect.

Culture, Religion, and Job Satisfaction for Krishna Teachers: Theory and Implementation

Findings:

- Teachers who are from families of ISKCON members, Vaisnavas, or Hindus have higher satisfaction
- Teachers who are ISKCON members have lower satisfaction
- Teachers whose childhoods were spent in geographical regions where Vaisnava or Hindu culture was dominant have higher satisfaction
- Teachers who have more students from families of ethnic Indian Hindus have higher satisfaction
- Teachers whose school is in a region where Vaisnava or Hindu culture is dominant have higher satisfaction
- Teachers whose students have required early morning sadhana (religious practice) have higher satisfaction
- Teachers whose students have required sadhana (religious practice) during school hours have lower satisfaction
- Teachers whose students are required to learn Vaisnava practices such as deity worship during school hours have lower satisfaction
- Teachers who are required to relate academics to Krishna have higher satisfaction
- Teachers whose students have home media guidelines have higher satisfaction
- Teachers in schools where Vaisnava festival observation is required have higher satisfaction
- Teachers in schools where any aspect of Vaisnava dress is required for teachers and/or students have lower satisfaction
- Teachers whose students are required to learn Krishna scripture philosophy have higher satisfaction
- Teachers whose students are required to memorized Krishna scripture verses have higher satisfaction
- Teachers whose students are required to learn and practice Vaisnava etiquette have

higher satisfaction

Policy suggestions:

- Have an inclusive/dialogic attitude toward alien cultures
- Align school culture with a culture native to Krishna religion

As noted in chapter four and the previous sections of this chapter, a strong relationship between culture and Krishna teacher job satisfaction emerges from both the teacher demographics and school characteristics data in a total of five areas. The relevant teacher demographics are: (a) whether the teacher's family is Hindu, Vaisnava, or ISKCON members; (b) whether the teacher is a member of ISKCON; and (c) whether the teacher was raised in a region where Hindu or Vaisnava culture is dominant. The relevant school characteristics are the percentage of students from families who are ethnic Indian Hindus (who may or may not also be ISKCON members) and whether or not the school is located in a region where Hindu or Vaisnava culture is dominant. Before considering implementing policies or further research based on these findings, a brief review of the theory of inculturation (Anthony, 2003), as discussed in chapter two, will most likely be helpful.

Anthony (2003) states that each religion has its native culture, which corresponds to the culture of the region in which that religion came to dominance. Each religion and its native culture develop, over time, a kind of synergy of nourishing and supporting each other. Parts of the religion, such as holidays, symbols, and even laws, become part of the region's culture. Language, customs, food, and behavioral norms of the region may become integrated into religious practice. All other world cultures then become, to each religion, alien cultures. In addition, the presently evolving global secular culture is alien to most religions.

The data in this study indicates that Krishna teachers' satisfaction, both in terms of overall satisfaction and in relationship to many of the ten satisfaction factors, is significantly

greater when the Krishna school is in a region of its native culture, the students' families are of the native culture, or the teachers' childhoods were in families or regions where the culture was native to Krishna consciousness. Teaching may be, in a sense, more natural and therefore more satisfying for Krishna teachers in such conditions. In contrast, when the culture of the region, the teachers, the students, or any combination of these, are alien to Krishna consciousness, teachers may feel as if their task involves swimming against the current.

Implementing policies based on these data in Krishna schools can focus on how to deal with teachers, students, or regions that have a culture alien to Krishna consciousness so as to mitigate the negative effect on Krishna teachers' satisfaction. Religious leaders and practitioners can take three different approaches to alien cultures (Anthony, 2003). They can be exclusive and aggressive, isolating themselves and condemning alien cultures. They can be inclusive and dialogic, trying to maintain identity and internal cohesion while both giving to and taking from the alien culture. Or they can be relativistic and syncretistic where their practices and beliefs become one of many equally valid choices for their members, and many or most aspects of the alien culture permeate the religion.

First, school leaders can reflect about their attitude and policies toward alien cultures. An exclusive/aggressive attitude closes the school organizational form and may give teachers at least a temporary sense of camaraderie and even euphoria (White, 1997). Yet it can also lead to the members being culturally isolated from alien cultures. The early Krishna schools took this stance toward alien cultures which created a problem for Krishna school students when they entered the larger society (Rochford, 1999b).

On the other hand, a relativistic/syncretistic attitude allows an organization to take anything considered valuable from the alien culture while it allows its members to function without a sense of cultural awkwardness. It also tends to make the organization so porous that it loses its identity (White, 1997) and distorts both philosophy and practice of the religion (Anthony, 2003).

A Krishna school that maintains a flexible structure is more likely to remain healthy (White, 1997) since a dialogic approach allows for both staff and students to have harmony of both their social roles and their religion (Anthony, 2003). However, it is very difficult to maintain such an attitude as there will constantly be forces within the religion pulling toward exclusivity and forces in the alien culture pulling toward relativity. In addition, the right balance of an inclusive/dialogic attitude is hard to define. Rather than feeling comfortable and satisfied in each world, students and teachers may conclude that they belong nowhere.

Taking this study's data and the above theory into consideration, school leaders can make an intentional, sustained effort at a dialogic attitude between the school and alien cultures. This strategy to enhance Krishna teachers' satisfaction may become more important worldwide as global secularization increasingly affects both India and ethnic Indian Hindus who live in any country.

Second, Krishna teachers can have policies and programs that create a school culture with as many elements as possible in harmony with that of traditional Vaisnavas. Those elements of Vaisnava culture that emerged in this study as significantly related to higher teacher satisfaction are: (a) having Vaisnava festivals as part of school programs, (b) norms of interaction based on Vaisnava etiquette, (c) requiring students to have early morning spiritual practices of sadhana, and (d) studying scripture, both the memorizing of verses and

philosophy. Krishna leaders should carefully note that requiring early morning sadhana was significantly related to higher teacher satisfaction, while having that same sadhana during the school day was significantly related to lower teacher satisfaction. It may be that the cultural emphasis on the early morning as a time for spiritual practices is important. While each of the above cultural and religious practices are not in and of themselves related to more than a few satisfaction factors, they help to create Vaisnava culture within the school.

To further develop the above policies, the creation of educational materials based on Vaisnava scriptures, staff development in harmony with Vaisnava culture, and regular interaction between Krishna school leaders and teachers from various schools may also create a sense of common cultural identity.

Finally, to both have a solid base of Vaisnava culture in the school while fostering an inclusive/dialogic attitude toward alien cultures (Anthony, 2003), school leaders can use non-Krishna educational materials that support and complement Vaisnava culture, while being grounded in different external norms. For example, there is much in the way of literature, educational film, and textbooks available from Christian publishers which can be used in Krishna schools. These materials show both teachers and students how those outside of their religion and culture hold to many of the same principles and ideals, while using different symbols, language, and ways of human interaction. Teachers can thus get, and give students, both a solid foundation in their own culture and an ability to function in alien cultures. Secular and national holidays can be noted in the curriculum, or even observed, but from the perspective of a devotee of Krishna (Urmila, 1998).

Applying Findings to Schools of Faiths Other than Krishna

Some of the findings here regarding Krishna teachers might be applicable for school leaders in primary or secondary schools of other religions. First, policies based on the motivational framework of Herzberg et al (1959/2004) could also help recruit and retain teachers in other faith schools. Additionally, if such policies increase those teachers' job satisfaction, school effectiveness, particularly student achievement, may also increase.

Second, the relationship between Krishna teachers' job satisfaction and culture may apply to religious schools in general. If so, suggestions to have the school climate as close as possible to the religion's native culture may aid teachers' sense of belonging and make their job of teaching feel more natural. Also, school leaders in other faith schools can carefully consider their attitude toward alien cultures. That attitude will manifest in the behavioral norms of teachers and students in relation to alien cultures, as well as what holidays are celebrated, what types of educational materials are used, and even what food is served. It is likely that inclusive and dialogic attitudes will be welcoming to students and teachers who do not share the religion's native culture while preserving cultural support. An inclusive stance may also best nourish the native culture without simultaneously making it difficult to function outside of it.

Future Research that Involves Schools in Remote Locations in Developing Countries

In general, any further research on Krishna schools, or any schools located in remote areas of developing countries—or even cities in developing countries—should include a plan for unavoidable pitfalls. For example, survey research over the Internet is not generally possible, even when schools have Internet connections. Even in large cities, such connections are often through dial-up modems and subject to frequent disconnections. Reaching people

by email, and even by phone, is often unpredictable. Phone contact is sometimes only possible at times very inconvenient to a researcher in America. Phone connections are often poor and unreliable. Inefficient postal services, corrupt customs officials, unstable government conditions, and no mail or parcel delivery system at all in some very remote locations, can cause extreme delays and additional cost when using paper surveys. Schools in diverse countries have extended school vacations at various times of the year, not corresponding to seasons or holidays in America. What appears to be an excellent English capability for a teacher in Africa in an English medium school may not be sufficient for that teacher to understand and respond to an English survey.

Taking all the above into consideration, any such research should include very advanced planning, a flexible timeline, and many contingency plans. Finally, relying on school leaders in far distant places to oversee research procedures is likely to result in uneven procedures over which the researcher has no control, and sometimes no knowledge. For example, although a principal may be emphatic that all teachers can complete an English survey, some translation may have to be done at the school, without the researcher being able to check the accuracy of the translation. Teachers who need translations may then complete the survey as a group, which may lead to some collaboration on responses. Any future studies on populations such as these should be designed with such inevitabilities in mind.

Concluding Words

Mintzberg (1992) writes that power for a decision process in an organization tends to rest at the level where the necessary information can best be accumulated (chap. 5). He further explains that whatever is actually done in an organization comes from what is authorized to be done, which solidifies from what intends to be done, based on what can be

done. And, to learn what can be done, one must first gather information. Without data, nothing can be analyzed rationally. Decisions without data, or without comprehensive and accurate data, are based on rumor, personal experience, intuition, and so forth. The data collected and analyzed in this study can form the base for rational decisions about Krishna schools.

This researcher aims to disseminate the results of this study to those involved in Krishna primary and secondary education, leaders in the Krishna Movement, and to academics who are interested in education, religious education, and the sociology of religion. Appropriate periodicals include: (a) *ISKCON Communications Journal*, (b) *Journal of Vaishnava Studies*, (c) *International Journal of Education and Religion*, (d) *International Journal of Children's Spirituality*, (e) *Journal of Empirical Theology*, (f) *Journal of Education and Religion*, (g) *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, (h) *First Things*, (i) *Sociology of Religion*, (j) *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, (k) *Review of Religious Research*, and (l) *Back to Godhead*. *Back to Godhead* is the most widely read Krishna periodical in ISKCON, with writing geared to a general, not academic, audience. There are also Krishna related websites that would probably welcome publication of this study's results.

In addition to publications, this researcher is often invited to various Krishna centers worldwide to deliver seminars and presentations. The hope is that an attractive audio-visual presentation of this study, in simplified form, will be presented to ISKCON leaders and members on a large scale.

This study, filling a gap in the knowledge base, will serve a variety of uses for the future. It has value in the general study of teacher job satisfaction, in considering faith

schools in general, and specifically for the leaders and members of the Hare Krishna Movement as they work towards an exemplary primary and secondary educational program. As Prabhupada wrote, “Please take care of the children. They are our future hope” (letter to Hayagriva, Nov. 7, 1969).