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Janice Peronto

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Walden University
2013

Abstract

The Relationship Between Teacher Perceptions of Administrative Support and Teacher

Retention

by

Janice L. Peronto

MA, Tarleton State University, 2001

BA, Purdue University, 1991

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Administrative Leadership

Walden University

December 2013

Abstract

A continued loss of teachers from the already limited supply of those entering the field is likely to create a teacher shortage as student populations continue to rise. Because the supply of teachers does not meet the demand, it is necessary to consider the reasons that teachers leave the profession. The problem addressed in this research study was a national shortage of teachers. The purpose of this quantitative, cross sectional study was to identify the relationship between teacher perceptions of administrative support and teacher decisions to either remain in or leave the teaching profession. Teachers from varying certification pathways and the relationship between their perceptions of administrative support and certification pathway were investigated. The theoretical foundation of the research study was Vygotsky's social constructivism. A 2-part survey, The Teacher Support Survey: Dimensions of Support Leading to Retention, assessed a representative convenience sample of elementary teachers across a Texas school district (N=34). A paired sample Wilcoxon-Signed Rank test was conducted on each of the Likert-type survey items to determine if there was a statistically significant difference between certification routes and the perceptions of administrative support. To determine if there was a relationship between teacher perceptions of administrative support practices and teacher attrition, the chi-square test for independence was used. Analyses indicated that there was a significant difference between certification route and teacher perceptions of the administrative support practices. Social change may be achieved by propelling new policies and curriculum focused on fostering administrative support strategies for teachers from all certification pathways.

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Dedication

This study is dedicated to my family. To my husband, Karl Peronto, who stood by my side unselfishly as I spent hours completing this journey. For all the nights that he served as both mom and dad to our wonderful children, prepared meals, oversaw homework, cleaned and did the dishes, or transported them from one activity to another. He did so without complaint, and instead, offered words of encouragement, celebrated my mini accomplishments along the way, and listened to me, even when I rambled on about material he knew little about. Most cherished is how he helped take care of my mom in my absence. I thank God daily for being blessed with such a wonderful husband.

To my three boys, Kolton, Kolby, and Konnor who encouraged me to keep working. They provided "mommy study time," willingly, and kept at-bay when I was working. They showed pride in my efforts and constantly asked when they can call me "Dr. Mommy". I thank them for enduring "daddy's cooking" and for their understanding when I occasionally missed a sporting event or school activity. And even though I am done, they will continue to hear me say, "If mommy did her homework, you can too".

This study is also dedicated to my parents, Richard and Bonnie Sinkenbring. My life has been inspired and guided by their values, morals, and strong beliefs. From my father, although no longer with me, he encouraged me to pursue my doctorate. I shared my dream with him at one time, and he held me accountable to reach for that dream. From my mother, she believed that I could do it and would do it. My mom has a progressive form of Muscular Schelorisis and perseveres over her handicaps on a daily basis. Her strength kept me in check to forge on. Finally I can say, "I'm done mom"!

Acknowledgement

I am blessed to have gone on this journey with the support and love by so many friends and colleagues. First and foremost, I thank God for his wisdom in helping me reach this goal and for his continued support in helping me keep my focus and dedication to finish this journey. Extraordinary thanks goes to my best friend and colleague, Laura Dunnells, who began this journey with me and stayed by my side until the end. For the countless hours she gave as my assistant to verify my data collection, reading rough draft after rough draft, looking for APA styling concerns, providing encouragement, and celebrating with me at various benchmarks. A true friend that sat by my side during my oral review with the URR board. Her journey toward her Ed. S ended earlier, yet she continued to check in on me to make sure that I was staying on course. When things were rough, she was a shoulder to lean on and made this journey a little easier. Thank you Laura for being a genuine friend and supporter. I would not be here without you.

To my wonderful sisters, Sherri Seefeldt and Joy Sinkenbring, that let me know many times how proud they were of me and how excited they were about my goals and accomplishments. Thank you for listening to me and being excited for me. Thank you for helping me with my survey distribution. And thank you for believing in me. I am blessed to have sisters that believe in me and motivate me to be a better person each and every day! Sherri, you were my driving force behind this paper. May we retain more teachers than lose exceptional ones, such as yourself, due to the lack of support they are given. The school system took a huge loss when you left!

A special thanks to colleagues and friends who tolerated me through this trying task and who are very special to me. To name a few, I personally thank: Connie Morris, Karrie Judd, Ernestine Morgan, Brandi Carroll, Alisha Graham, Lori Feeney, Marie Mercado, the teachers and staff at Cedar Valley Elementary, JoAnn Strauss, Ruth Prosser, Janet Wyrick, Lucille Husung, Dr. Patterson, Jennifer Sullivan, my Delta Kappa Gamma sisters, and my Pokeeno friends. I would not be here without your continued support and belief in me. At some point, you were all key to my professional growth that led me where I am today. Thanks for being there! A special thanks to Anna Adam, my campus technologist and friend, that helped me with those dot leaders and the techy stuff associated with this paper. You always came to my aide, even when it wasn't "school-related". Thank you for making that part of this paper easier.

To Dr. Pamela Harrison, my committee chair, I do not know how to ever thank you for helping me to get from point A to point B. Thank you for the countless email correspondences filled with guidance, support, and encouragement. For your continued assurance when l felt that life was pushing my paper on the back burner, and your assurance that my children will persevere when I felt conflicted with my absence in their activities. Thank you for taking time from your busy day to meet face to face with me in Temple. I am blessed that I had that option, as I know many do not. Thank you for truly caring and believing in me that I would meet this goal. To Dr. Poplau, my second committee member, I am grateful for your contribution in helping me to reach a successful end. Thank you for your advice, suggestions, expertise, and taking time from your day to visit with me via phone to work out my methodology.   The both of you made

a scary process a little less scary and gave me the encouragement to finish this journey.

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Section 1: Introduction to the Study

Background of the Study

Forty percent of teachers leave the profession within the first 5 years of teaching (Ingersoll & Smith, cited by Flynt & Morton, 2009). Horng (2009) stated, that of teachers that leave each year, only 16% of the teacher turnover can be attributed to retirement. According to the U.S. Department of Education, 8% of the teacher turnover rate is due to teachers transferring to different schools and another 8-10% leave the profession altogether (Aud et al., 2011). In fact, "nearly 1,000 teachers leave the field of teaching every school day" (Sharking, 2008, p. 1). The reasons teachers leave the field of teaching fluctuate around job dissatisfaction, difficulties with classroom management, inadequate administrative support, weak mentoring programs, and low pay scales (Connors-Krikorian, 2004). Researchers show that in order for good teachers to be retained in teaching and supported in doing their best work with students, they must have a workplace that promotes their efforts (Johnson, 2006). Without this support, novice teachers may feel "overwhelmed, disoriented, and frustrated when they find themselves totally on their own in their classrooms" (Normore & Loughry, 2006, p. 25). Novice teachers are at a critical point in their careers, and the success and sustainability of their teaching is dependent on how well they transition into the classroom. A smooth transition into the classroom and sustainability after the first year requires a planned effort between the administrators and the teachers assigned to work with the new teachers (Normore & Loughry, 2006).

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Effective teacher preparation, comprised of field based experiences, supervisory support, and effective pedagogy practices, has been found to reduce first year teacher attrition (Ingersoll, 2003). Over the past decade and across the nation, the attrition rate of unprepared teachers increased 25%, whereas the attrition rate of teachers who received coherent preparation that is, with extensive clinical experience and new teacher support, increased only 12%. Based on these findings, recommendations have been made to principals and administrators to make new teacher support a priority and to better understand the needs of new teachers (Copeland, 2007). Principals and administrators appear to have a strong impact on the quality of new teachers' experiences. In a study on reasons teachers leave the profession, Gonzalez, Brown and Slate (2008) found that, "Administration was one of the biggest influential factors in not returning to the profession" (p.6). Wood (2005) also stated, "Principals need to give regular, systematic feedback to novice teachers on their pedagogical approaches, content knowledge, and classroom management strategies" (p. 48). These findings illustrate the importance of collaboration between new teachers and principals or administrators in order to sustain teachers in the field of education.

School districts and school campuses provide a variety of support programs for new teachers. Programs such as mentoring, induction programs, and administrative support are vital to new teacher development (Darling-Hammond, Chung, & Frelow, 2002). A mentoring and induction program models best teaching practices and provides an opportunity for teachers to learn from and share with one another. Researchers have found that participation in an induction program doubles the likelihood of teachers

remaining in the teaching profession (American National Education Research

Association, 2005; Kapadia, Coca, & Easton, 2007). These programs, coupled with open

communication with the principal or administrator, can further contribute to a teacher's

decision to remain in the profession (Kapadia et al., 2007). Regardless of the variety of

support provided to new teachers from campuses and districts, research acknowledges the

importance and need.

The building principal's role is to oversee the development of new teachers by

lending support, providing feedback, and ensuring support is available (Heckman, 2011).

The overall goal of the administrative support is retention of teachers in the classroom.

To accomplish this, new teachers need time, opportunity, and resources from the

administration in order to become proficient teachers (Black, 2004). Specifically, new

teachers need organizational support to understand the day-to-day operations of the

school as well as campus policies and procedures. Additionally they need adequate

supplies and materials, interpersonal support, and continuous feedback on classroom

management, pedagogy, and lesson delivery (Dumler, 2010). With support programs in

place, teachers can learn all aspects of teaching as long as the gatekeeper of the

development of the novice teacher is the building administrator. Having a supportive

relationship with the building principal helps new teachers to learn from their mistakes as

well as their successes (Wood, 2005). Principals need to model high expectations while

being visible and accessible. As a result, principals can endorse collegiality and provide

support and guidance when needed. Byrum (2008) identified that being proactive with

teachers in nurturing relationships and being visible and available are effective leadership traits and effective strategies to promote student achievement.

Ultimately, the burden lies on the school principals, not only to supervise teachers and sustain them in the field but also to ensure student achievement is maximized. Heck (2007) conducted a study examining the relationship between teacher quality and student achievement. Heck indicated that certification, content knowledge, and performance criteria were directly associated with student achievement levels in reading and math. Boyd, Grossman, Lankford, Loeb, and Wyckoff (2008) concluded that teachers leaving teaching after their first teaching experience yielded lower achievement gains for their students.

The purpose of this quantitative study was to identify the relationship between the independent variable, teacher perceptions of administrative support, and the dependent variable, teacher decisions to either remain in or leave the teaching profession. In this research study, I considered teachers from varying certification pathways and investigated the relationship between their perceptions of administrative support and their certification pathway.

Problem Statement

The problem that I addressed in this research study was a national shortage of teachers. "An estimated 2.2 million public school teachers are needed to serve the growing enrollment of students and to fill a record number of vacancies as the first baby boomers begin to retire" (Algozzine, Gretes, Queen, & Cowan-Hathcock, 2007, p. 137). Forty percent of teachers leave the profession within the first five years of teaching

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(Ingersoll & Smith, cited by Flynt & Morton, 2009). Horng (2009) stated that of teachers

that leave each year, only 16% of the teacher turnover can be attributed to retirement and

that the remaining percentage is due to teachers transferring to different schools or

leaving the profession altogether. A failure to support new teachers and address

weaknesses appears to create a cycle that leads to higher levels of teacher attrition

causing districts to spend money to recruit and hire additional new teachers (Sharking,

2008). Because the supply of teachers, new or returning to the profession, does not meet

the demand, it is necessary to consider the reasons that teachers leave the profession.

Costly consequences such as increased spending and student achievement are

directly linked to these statistics. According to the Alliance for Excellent Education

(2005), Texas ranks first among the states in costs associated with teacher attrition. The

state of Texas spends an estimated average of $214,509,448 dollars per year to replace

teachers that have retired, and a combined total of $504,917,385 for retired teachers and

those dropping out or transferring schools or districts. Darling-Hammond (2003) stated

that the state of Texas has an annual teacher turnover rate of 15% and 40% within the

first three years. The cost to recruit, hire, and train public school teachers in America due

to attrition is well over $7 billion each year (Sharking, 2008). These dollar amounts do

not include the negative impact teacher attrition has on student achievement.

Heck (2007) found that students increased their learning rates by 15% in math

when the teacher quality increased. In their study on teacher quality and achievement

within 16 countries, Akiba, LeTendre, and Scribner (2007) found that student

achievement was directly linked to quality teachers with full certification and

accumulated teaching experience of more than 3 years. A similar study on teacher preparation and student achievement revealed that teacher preparedness and consistency of instructional practices influenced academic achievement (Gimbert, Bol, & Wallace, 2007). These findings illustrate a consensus among researchers and educators linking student performance with teacher quality (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2005).

Further inquiry is needed to examine the role the administrator plays in sustaining new teachers. Support is needed to lay the foundation for professional growth as well as teaching and pedagogy and to ensure it is meaningful and transferable from teachers' learning into their own teaching (Stanulis, Burrill, & Ames, 2007). The building administrator facilitates that support, and the students are the ultimate benefactors. Zientek (2007) concluded from a study on the quality of teacher preparation that teachers within their first years of teaching need a strong support system as well as instruction on curriculum design, lesson planning, and designing assessments.

Nature of the Study

In this quantitative, cross sectional research study, I identified the relationship between the independent variable, teacher perceptions of administrative support, and the dependent variable, teacher decisions to either remain in or leave the teaching profession. This design allowed me to make inferences from a sample of teachers about the assistance administrators provided during their first year of teaching. Because I used a self-administered questionnaire the survey design approach allowed me a rapid turnaround of the data collection (Creswell, 2003). The data for this design were collected at one point instead of over a period of time, which lent itself to a cross-

sectional design instead of a longitudinal design. Because no experiment was involved in

this research and only teacher perceptions were measured, a cross-sectional survey

yielded valuable results to answer the research questions.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

The purpose of this quantitative study was to identify the relationship between the

independent variable, teacher perceptions of administrative support, and the dependent

variable, teacher decisions to either remain in or leave the teaching profession. H_o

represents the null hypothesis and H_1 represents the alternative hypothesis for each of the

research questions. The research questions and hypothesis were:

Research Question 1: Is there a significant difference between teacher licensure

routes and teacher perceptions of the effectiveness of administrative support practices

provided?

H_o1: There is no significant difference between teacher licensure routes and

teacher perceptions of the effectiveness of administrative support practices.

$H_1 1$: There is a significant difference between teacher licensure routes and teacher

perceptions of the effectiveness of administrative support practices.

Research Question 2: Is there a significant relationship between teacher

perceptions of the effectiveness of administrative support practices and teacher decisions

to leave or remain in the teaching profession?

$H_o 2$: There is no significant relationship between teacher perceptions of

effectiveness of administrative support practices and teacher decisions to leave the

teaching profession.

$H_1 2$: There is a significant relationship between teacher perceptions of effectiveness of administrative support practices and teacher decisions to leave the teaching profession.

The alpha level that I used to determine the significance of the hypothesis in Research Question 1 was .05 on the Wilcoxon Signed-Ranks Test. To determine if there was a relationship in Research Question 2 an alpha level of .05 was used on the chi-square test for independence.

For this study, I selected the participants for this research study from a district that was representative of the state's teacher turnover rate, 11.9% (Texas Education Agency [TEA], 2011a). I determined the attrition rate by using the most current, 2010-2011, turnover statistic, released from the TEA Snapshot report. The Snapshot Report provided an overview for a particular school district during a particular year (Texas Education Agency, 2011b). The teacher rate for Texas school districts, excluding charter schools, was 11.9% for the 2010- 2011 school year. I used a convenience sampling to identify a local district as the sample for the study. According to Fink (2006), a convenience sample is used when a sample is needed out of convenience. For the purpose of this research, District A was chosen due to the convenience of reflecting the state's teacher turnover rate. Based on the TEA (2011b) district snapshot report, the teacher turnover rate for District A was 10.7%. A stratified approach was applied within the convenience sample. Participants were categorized based on four strata: traditional certification pathway and alternative certification pathway, and returning or not returning after the 2010-2011 school year.

With assistance from the human resource department in District A, surveys were sent to all elementary teachers initially employed by the district for the 2010-2011 school year. This population included teachers who returned and teachers who did not return to the district for the 2011-2012 school year. The population, 20,507, for this research study consisted of all teachers initially hired to teach in Texas elementary school in 2010-2011 (Texas Education Agency, Snapshot, 2011). According to District A, 34 elementary teachers were employed for the 2010-2011 school year.

The random purposeful sampling of participants responded to an electronic or paper survey regarding their views about the campus support offered by campus administrators to teachers (see appendix A). The *Teacher Support Survey: Dimensions of Support Leading to Retention* created and validated by Schindewolf (2008) was used to measure teacher perceptions regarding principal support. With permission from Schindewolf, the 45, four-point Likert-type survey responses were modified to attach a descriptor for each numerical response in the survey. The Likert-type survey included: 1-Never, 2-Almost Never, 3-Almost Always, 4- Always. Statistical analysis using a conclusion validity test was conducted to determine the validity of the data.

To evaluate the mean difference between the four stratified samples, I used a paired sample Wilcoxon Signed-Rank test for independent samples . The Wilcoxon paired sample Signed-Rank test is a nonparametric statistical test for testing a hypothesis on median and used when the sample size is too small (Choudhury, 2009). According to Brown and Schainker (2008), the Wilcoxon Signed Ranks test is designed to test a hypothesis about the location (median) of a population distribution. To determine if there

was a relationship between teacher perceptions of administrative support practices and teacher attrition, I used the chi-square test for independence. Using the chi-square test, I examined frequency data in order to determine if there is a relationship between certification routes and teacher attrition (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2008).

The reliability of the instrument by Schindewolf (2008) was established using Cronbach's alpha coefficient. Cronbach's alpha estimates the consistency of the instrument among the items in a single test (Gay & Airasian, 2000). According to Schindewolf's (2008) research, the instrument provided a result of .96, which indicated internal consistency and therefore a reliable instrument. I present additional discussion regarding the study design and methodology in Section 3.

Purpose of the Study

The problem that I addressed in this research study was a national shortage of teachers. The purpose of this quantitative, cross sectional study was to identify the relationship between the independent variable, teacher perceptions of administrative support, and the dependent variable, teacher decisions to either remain in or leave the teaching profession. Further inquiry was needed to examine the role the administrator plays in order to sustain new teachers and promote social change.   Currently, theorists debate over whether or not preparation programs are efficient at producing highly qualified teachers and whether or not campus support contributes to developing successful novice teachers (Ingersoll, 2003; Darling-Hammond, Chung, & Frelow, 2002; Zientek, 2006). As Cohen-Vogel and Smith (2007) stated, "This issue of teacher quality has taken its place at the top of the reform agenda for America's school" (p. 732).

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Chapman (2005) concluded from a study on certification routes and attrition rates that alternative certification programs will continue to add to the teaching field, but the reasons teachers leave the profession need to be understood before the various certification routes can keep up with attrition rates.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical foundation of this research study was Vygotsky's social constructivism. Social constructivism stresses the fundamental role of social interaction in the development of cognition (Vygotsky, 1978). Vygotsky theorized that social interaction was an integral part of learning (Powell & Kalina, 2009). According to Vygotsky (1978), social constructivists see motivation as both extrinsic and intrinsic and learning as a social phenomenon where learners are partially motivated by rewards provided by the knowledge community. Because the learner actively constructs knowledge, learning also depends, to a significant extent, on the learner's internal drive to understand and promote the learning process. A constructivist approach focuses on learning and the learner, constructing and connecting knowledge, diversity, and authenticity; teachers today meet these criteria by coming from other lines of work and a variety of certification pathways (Smagorinsky et al., 2004).

Understanding the social context of this framework provides a deeper understanding of how change can emerge. The social concept of preparing, supporting, and studying teachers can transform our understanding of teaching (Chubbuck & Zembylas, 2008). Also, constructivism can be applied to virtually all disciplines and can be used with students of varying ages, therefore including a novice teacher (Maypole &

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Davies, 2001). Vygotsky's theoretical framework provided a foundation for

understanding how higher psychological processes emerge out of social interaction

(Wertsch, 1979). To retain teachers in the field of education, administrators must

understand the teachers' perceptions of administrative support before they can transform

or craft the support to be authentic to teachers.

The conceptual framework for this research study reflected a synthesis of

research over the past decade on teacher support, teacher attrition, and student

achievement by leading theorist Darling-Hammond. Her body of work emphasizes

teacher education and educational equity and that "Keeping good teachers should be one

of the most important agenda items for any school leader" (Darling-Hammond, 2003, p.

7). Darling-Hammond asserted that there are several practices needed in order to keep

teachers in the classroom: good working conditions, hiring better-prepared teachers, and

mentorship and induction programs. Good working conditions encompass adequate class

size, availability of materials, teacher participation, strong supportive leadership, and

collegial learning opportunities. Through research, Darling-Hammond et al. (2005)

found that the amount of teacher preparation is directly linked to teacher attrition rates.

Through this same study, teacher preparation and certification Darling-

Hammond et al. (2005) examined routes to determine teacher effectiveness. In an earlier

study, teacher perceptions of their preparation routes were examined and found to vary

across programs and pathways (Darling-Hammond et al., 2002). Strong preparation

programs make a difference in children's learning and improve student achievement, and

teachers need opportunities to collaborate, have mentors to observe and be observed by,

and network with other teachers in order to be sustained in the field of education

(Darling-Hammond & Scan, 1996).

In this research study, I bridged social constructivism and Darling-Hammond's

work by exploring how to develop teachers so that they stay in the classroom. I also

expanded on the social construct of administrative support on the development of

teachers and on the practices necessary to retain teachers in the profession.

Definition of Terms

For this research study, I used the following definitions:

Administrative support: The administrative support personnel consist of the

principal, assistant principal, and any one that serves as an administrator or appraiser for

a novice teacher. For the purpose of this paper, a campus instructional specialist will be

included as administrative support, but assigned mentors or mentor coordinators will be

excluded. According to the U.S. Department of Education, some of the strategies the

building administrator may use to support new teachers include:

Spend time with teachers, visiting their classrooms and looking at their lesson

plans; Be available for individual conferences; Set up a mentor program and

arrange meetings for first-year teachers; Make professional development

opportunities available; Enable teachers to work closely with one another, through

meetings and team teaching assignments; Allow for planning time; Avoid

assigning all the most challenging children to the new teacher; Hold an orientation

to the school; Provide adequate supplies, and clarify what items teachers will have

to buy; Advocate for teachers to parents and students; Create a disciplined

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environment; and Help teachers with difficult situations with parents (Ed. Gov., n.d).

Alternative certification: This certification route refers to a program of study outside the traditional four-year university programs. This pathway includes teacherbuilder.com, emergency certification routes, the Teacher Education Alternative Certification (TEACH) program, the Alternative South Texas Educator (A-Step) program, Excellence in Teaching (EIT) program, A Career in Teaching (EPP) program, university based alternative programs, and Texas Education Service Center Programs (SBEC, Educator Certification Online System, n.d). Alternative certification is defined as "programs or licensing routes that allow people to enter the teaching profession without completing a traditional four-year undergraduate teacher education program. Alternative certification programs are all similar in one respect: they must be authorized by the state. Beyond that, programs vary greatly on many dimensions" (Westchester Institute for Human Services Research, 2004, p.1).

Attrition: For the purpose of this research study, attrition and attrition rate are synonymous with Martinez's (2005) definition that referred to attrition as the number of new teachers leaving the teaching profession within five years.

Novice teacher: According to the Cochran-Smith (2005), Graham (2004), and Wong (2002), novice teachers are those teachers in their first three years of teaching.

Teacher turnover: Barnes, Crowe, and Schaefer (2007) identified teacher turnover to include teachers who leave the field of teaching, teachers who change teaching assignments within the same school district, and those who move to other school districts.

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Traditional certification: Traditional certification is defined as a teaching certificate obtained from a four year accredited university where student teaching and observation hours are a part of the required curriculum. The State Board of Educator Certification in Texas (SBEC) refers to the traditional program as, "colleges and universities offering programs for training teachers. Candidates will receive a degree in an academic major, as well as the training needed to be an effective teacher" (SBEC Online, n.d., para. 2).

Assumptions

In this research study, I made the following assumptions. First, novice teachers from differing certification routes may have different needs for administrative support during their first teaching assignment and to sustain them in the field of education. Novice teachers' self-efficacy and life experiences vary. Some novice teachers will come to the position having many outside experiences dealing with teaching and children. These may include experiences in daycares, motherhood, working with children in religious settings, tending to younger siblings, or a natural innate tendency to nurture and groom children. Other novice teachers may join the profession with little or no experience other than what was learned or required for certification. The drives and motives behind an individual are abstract and dimensional. To say that all teachers have equal self-efficacy would be to assume that all teachers teach exactly alike. A teacher's self-efficacy may negate the need for administrative support. For example, a new teacher entering the classroom may have a strong self-efficacy and therefore need very little

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support, whereas another new teacher with inadequate self-efficacy may need and desire more.

Additional assumptions were that the respondents replied honestly to the survey questions, that the participants willingly participated in the study, and that the questions were completely understood before responding. A final assumption of mine was that there may have been differences in the amount of clinical experiences novice teachers had coming into their first teaching assignments. Clinical experiences may include classroom observations, student teaching, and tutoring. Some novice teachers entering the field as a second career may have experiences working with children in these ways. Other novice teachers, however, enrolled in the traditional college preparation program immediately upon graduation from high school. The only clinical experiences for these teachers may be the ones derived from the preparation program's requirements.

Limitations

This research study had the following limitations that I considered when I interpreted the results. One limitation for the study was the variety of reasons teachers may not return to the classroom after their first teaching year. According to Smits (2009), several things affect teacher attrition, which include: teacher age, teaching experience, teacher quality, working conditions, salary, and student characteristics. Of these contributors, some factors are directly linked to teacher attrition; others, such as marriage and family issues, should not be factored into teachers leaving the field (Smits, 2009). These teachers chose to leave based on a change in personal direction, but those

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that left due to a lack of support or inadequate preparation deserve the most attention for teacher attrition.

Another limitation was that campus and administrative support may vary from campus to campus as well as the teacher preparation programs may vary in quality of preparation provided to the teachers. For the research study, the perceptions of the teachers were revealed but the perception of the principal was not established. An additional limitation was the lack of knowledge about the principal's leadership preparation and instructional leadership experience, which could affect the quality and quantity of the administrative support provided (Belding, 2008). The convenience sampling procedure posed a limitation as well. This form of sampling can be biased due to the nature of the sampling, convenience (Fink, 2006). To improve the credibility of the sampling technique, I sampled both participants leaving the district and staying in the district for the 2011-2012 school year.

Scope and Delimitations

I focused the scope of the research study on a comprehensive understanding of the principal's role in supporting teachers. I concentrated on a convenience sampling that was used to identify a local district as the sample for the study and one in which mirror's the state's teacher turnover rate. Teachers returning and not returning to teaching after the 2010-2011 school year from this district participated by completing a survey. The survey was conducted on-line or by mail. Since I used an electronic survey as a means of collecting and gathering data, spam may have excluded potential participants. While the study can be generalized to Texas schools, it may not be generalized outside of Texas

because each state may differ on new teacher expectations and expectations of

administrative support.

Significance of the Study

This research study was significant for three reasons. First, I addressed a

current problem with teacher attrition and teacher turnover in a local school district in

Texas. Second, I assisted researchers, principals, preparation programs, and school

districts understand the importance of principal support on new teacher development and

retention. Third, I provided research that led to positive social change by understanding

the role principals have in reducing teacher attrition.

Local Application

Teachers are dropping out of the classrooms and adding to the existing teacher

shortage. Algozzine et al. (2007) noted, "An estimated 2.2 million public school teachers

are needed to serve the growing enrollment of students and to fill a record number of

vacancies as the first baby boomers begin to retire. The number of elementary and

secondary teachers is expected to increase to 3.65 million by 2011" (p. 137). According

to the Texas Education Agency's PEIMS data for 2011-2012, the attrition rate for new

teachers was 7.6% and 10.5% overall. (TEA, 2013). Alexander (n.d.) cited that 77% of

the teacher demand in Texas was directly linked to the attrition rate. This problem

impacts the students, teachers, and the school district. Inadequately prepared teachers,

hired under emergency certifications or with lack of training, impact student

achievement. Experienced educators are continuously sought out to mentor and train

novice teachers, and there is a financial burden to recruit and retain highly qualified

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teachers. According to the Department of Labor and the National Education

Association's Estimates of School Statistics, as cited by the Alliance for Excellent

Education Issue Brief (2005), Texas's total cost for teacher turnover is $504,917,385.

This research may impact districts at the local level by providing to principals,

district induction programs, and preparation programs a knowledge base of what teachers

need to be sustained in the field of education. With the information discussed from this

study, those empowered to groom, nurture, and retain teachers will have the tools

necessary to understand what is needed.

Professional Application

Beginning teachers come to the profession with many needs and questions, and

a principal's response to these needs may have a significant influence on the level of

teachers' job satisfaction and their decisions to remain in the teaching profession. As a

result, principals are regarded as the most important stakeholder in the school (Wilson

2009). This study adds to the scholarly literature available regarding the role

administrative support plays in developing a teacher and retaining teachers. Previous

researchers have examined certification programs, new teacher support programs,

leadership styles and leadership traits, teacher shortages and attrition, but relatively few

studies have compared administrative support and teacher attrition and administrative

support and certification route. For example, Wood (2005) acknowledged a need for

continued research examining the role a principal plays in the development of novice

teachers and that few studies explore relational aspects between teacher perceptions and

principal support. Wood also stated, "More research is needed to explore the kinds of

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influence principals, especially secondary ones, have on novice teachers' classroom

performance and subsequently on K-12 student achievement" (p.60). Learning what

school leaders do to support and retain better teachers would contribute to a more

complete understanding about teacher retention.

The results from the research study will help principals understand new teachers'

needs in order to sustain them in the classroom. I will provide an analysis of teacher

perceptions on the administrative support provided and if there was a correlation to

certification route. The results of this research can be used to make principals aware of

the importance of support. With the information gathered from this study, principals can

analyze their own support behaviors to determine if the support rendered is important to,

as well as needed by, teachers.

Preparation programs also can use this information as they learn what additional

support principals provided new teachers and how to embed those needs in their

programs' designs. Russell (2006) stated, "As states increasingly hold their teacher

preparation programs accountable for the success of new teachers, higher education

institutions need to work with school districts to ensure that induction is high quality and

well-designed" (p.4).

School districts can also benefit from this research study by providing principals

the training necessary to assist new teachers and by strengthening induction and

mentoring programs within the district. Tillman (2005) supported this notion by stating,

"The literature is less clear, however, about the role of the principal in facilitating

mentoring and arrangements that help to meet the professional and personal needs of

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beginning teachers" (p. 613). The limited research related to new teachers' perceptions of administrative support with comparison to certification routes and student achievement indicated the need for research in this area. Information and findings learned from the study will be shared with districts and preparation programs so that teachers are better prepared for the reality of teaching.

Social Change

Social change is possible when teachers remain in the classroom, providing a stable educational environment for students. Grant and Gillette (2006) found that principal support is directly linked to teacher retention and that teacher retention improves student achievement. If principals address teachers' needs for support and attrition decreases, teachers become vital, contributing members to their students and campus. With an estimated cost of $7 billion each year to recruit, hire, and train teachers, the community would benefit from a decrease in attrition rates and an increase in teacher retention (Sharking, 2008). Darling-Hammond (2003) stated that "substantial research evidence suggests that well-prepared, capable teachers have the largest impact on student learning" (p. 7). Improvement in instructional practices can be directly linked to academic achievement, and teacher quality can be linked to reduced gaps in student learning (Kelly, 2004; Heck 2007). As a result, the recruitment of highly qualified teachers can provide the best education for student learning, and ultimately social change is reached when student learning increases, producing skilled graduates who are positioned to enter the workforce and impact the community, the economy, and the nation.

Summary

A current problem in education is a national shortage of teachers (Scherer, 2003). Because the supply of teachers, new or returning to the profession, does not meet the demand, it was necessary to consider the reasons that teachers leave the profession. In this quantitative, cross sectional study, I identified the relationship between the independent variable, teacher perceptions of administrative support, and the dependent variable, teacher decisions to either remain in or leave the teaching profession. I considered teachers from varying certification pathways, and investigated the relationship between their perceptions of administrative support and certification pathway. The theoretical foundation of the study was Vygotsky's social constructivism. Understanding the social context of this framework provided a deeper understanding of how change can emerge. Further inquiry was needed to examine the role the administrator plays in order to sustain new teachers and promote social change.

In Section 2, I provide a review of literature consisting of perspectives on teacher development programs for novice teachers, mentoring and induction programs, review of administrator support for teachers, and the effects of teacher attrition on student achievement. In Section 3, I describe the specific methodology, analysis plan, population, and surveying instruments that were used. Results will be presented in Section 4. Section 5 includes a discussion of the results, conclusions, implications, and recommendations for further study.

Section 2: Literature Review

Introduction

According to the Alliance for Excellent Education (2005), almost 5 billion dollars is spent yearly on replacing teachers that leave or transfer in public schools. Teachers entering the field have a desire to teach and to be effective teachers. However, the reality of teaching and all that encompasses it with pedagogy, classroom management, paperwork, and schedules can be overwhelming and over powering; often these things become the cause for new teachers to leave within three years (Bernshausen & Cunningham, 2001).

Teachers leave the classroom for various reasons. Gonzalez, Brown, and Slate (2008) asserted that teachers left the field because they felt overwhelmed by the scope of the job, unsupported and isolated, underpaid, or undervalued. Although teachers leave the profession for several different reasons, one of them is lack of professional support (Pech, 2009). Darling-Hammond, Chung, and Frelow (2002) indicated that mentoring, induction programs, and campus support are vital to the development of new teachers. As a result, there is substantial support for the need of strong mentoring and induction programs coupled with strong administrative support for current and future educators. With this support, novice teachers can learn about best practices, school policies and routines, make data driven decisions, use technology, adapt lessons, and understand and groom cultural competencies (Berry, 2005).

For this review, I accessed several different databases in order to grasp the depth and breadth of this topic. Databases such as Sage, ERIC, ProQuest Central, ProQuest

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Dissertations and Theses database and the Walden Library were searched for articles

dating from 2005 or after using terms such as *novice teacher*, *principal support*,

administrative support, *attrition rate*, *retention rate*, *mentoring*, *induction programs*,

preparation programs, and *student achievement* which yielded extensive results for this

topic. Older articles were used to establish a historical and theoretical perspective of the

topic.

The primary purpose of this review is to provide an overview of teacher support

programs by looking at the various types of support available to novice teachers. The

first part of this review provides a more detailed discussion of the theoretical framework

behind this research study. Subsequently, I examined new teacher support programs, to

include the impact of mentoring, new teacher induction, and administrative support on

teacher attrition. I conclude the review with a discussion of research exemplifying both

the methodology and alternative methodologies used to study the problem.

Theoretical Framework

Social constructivism provides the theoretical framework for this research study.

Vygotsky was a pioneer of the sociocultural perspective and the origins of social

constructivism. His work focused on the development of cognitive competencies and

that these competencies increased as novices and masters interact. According to

Vygotsky (1962), "Primitive man learns from experience" (p. 23). Vygotsky also

believed that masters in society acted as tutors or mentors during an apprenticeship

(Berger, 1998). Constructivist learning is commonly identified in the literature as

learner-centered teaching that encompasses all levels of learning (Almala, 2006; Fox,

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2001; Guk & Kellogg, 2007; Levykh, 2008; Maypole & Davies, 2001; Powell & Kalina, 2009; Vygotsky, 1962).

Henze (2008) studied the various common elements of constructivism and constructivist theorists, which included Kant, Dewey, Piaget, Kuhn, Vygotsky, and Von Glasersfeld. Henze's intent was to better define constructivism and the context in which it is used. Henze revealed suggestions to help educators understand constructivist theories and pedagogies. Henze's suggestions included understanding constructivism as a term, knowing that the learning process is constructed from the prior learning of others, distinguishing when rote and facts are needed versus investigation and development of knowledge, and understanding that the teacher's role is to help students through the learning process.

Fox (2001) identified commonalities found among the popular constructivist theorists. These commonalities included: learning is an active process, knowledge is constructed, knowledge is invented, knowledge is personally and socially constructed, learning is a process of making sense of the world, and learning requires meaningful problems for the learner to solve. Conclusions from Fox's study stated that pedagogical constructivism may be helpful for developing effective teaching practices.

Kumar (2006) discussed the key concepts of the constructivist learning theory model with the attempt to bridge the gap between theory and practice and teaching and learning. Kumar provided flowcharts to capture the key concepts of constructivist learning. Kumar maintained that learning is an active process, instructions need to be linked to experiences and contexts that motivate students to learn, and instructional

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strategies need to facilitate learning. Maypole and Davies (2001) conducted a study on college students' perception of the learning experience using constructivist theories to guide the teaching. The results of the study indicated that students learned more because they constructed new knowledge themselves. The researchers stated the participants, "Began to trust their own intellect rather than depending on the ideas of others for all of their knowledge" (p. 75). This idea is even more important as online learning becomes readily available and accessible.

According to Almala (2006), "e-learning has taken center stage in higher education and is being developed by many national and international colleges, universities, and organizations" (p. 33). E-learning allows for interactive learning, learner-controlled exploration of ideas, and active collaboration. Today, e-learning, an Internet-based instructional system, serves as a viable learning alternative as well as a plausible approach for constructivism learning (Almala, 2006). Constructivism has provided great contributions to the quality of e-learning in which interactive learning, learner controlled exploration of ideas, teamwork, and collaboration are used to construct knowledge. The e-learning process is consistent with constructivist learning in which "learning is a social activity in which learners interact and collaborate with peers and content experts to construct knowledge and arrive at plausible solutions to real-life problems" (Almala, p. 38). E-learning provides prospective teachers an additional pathway to earn a degree.

A study on fifth grade public school students in New York City was conducted by Vianna and Stetsenko (2006) to analyze what children actually do when they learn a constructivist curriculum in math and its impact on their learning and development. The

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findings demonstrated that the curriculum successfully engaged students in constructing

their knowledge. However, the students failed to connect their learning across other

contexts or failed to apply correct procedures to solve the mathematical problems. Vianna

and Stetsenko (2006) asserted that the importance lies with going beyond present day

practices of immersing learners in activities. These researchers argued that the

constructivist learning theory can be expanded by immersing learners in cultural-

historical practices that help shape, develop, and make meaning of their learning.

For this study, I reviewed many articles on constructivist theory and some

quoted constructivism learning as the buzzword of the decade (Colburn, 2007). A novice

teacher relies on constructivist learning to teach problem solving and critical thinking to

the students of today who thrive on convenience and technology (Almala, 2006). The

foundation for teaching such students begins with the preparation programs in which

novice teachers enroll, whether the program is traditional or non-traditional. According

to Almala (2006), constructivist learning provides the necessary theoretical support to

develop and implement quality courses and programs. Maypole and Davies (2001)

conducted a study on college students to determine their perceptions of their learning

experience in a constructivist centered classroom. Findings included statements from the

participants that: the learning was more interesting and enjoyable, a greater

understanding of the content was gained, sharing understandings encouraged students to

work harder, and their trust of their own knowledge versus depending on others to gain

knowledge increased.

Overview of Preparation Programs

The review of the literature indicated substantial interest in teacher preparation programs and the novice teacher's first teaching experience. A historical analysis that ranged from 1839 to 2007 examined the trends and patterns in teacher preparation programs (Helton, 2008). Based on the findings, teacher education has always been driven by supply and demand. As a result, doors opened to alternative certification programs and different teacher preparation programs, ultimately resulting in inconsistency in programs and discussions about effective teacher training. Helton (2008) concluded that voids in teacher preparation programs, including pedagogical knowledge and real-world application, created a consistent historical problem.

Good et al. (2006) sought to answer this through their study on the impact of preparation programs on first year teachers. Thompson (2005) conducted a similar study to identify the characteristics of a teacher preparation program that successfully prepares teacher candidates. Masci and Stotko (2006) examined a teacher preparation program to determine the program's effectiveness of outputting highly qualified teachers. Hiebert, Morris, Berk, and Jansen (2007) studied teacher preparation programs that help teachers learn how to teach. The various studies by Darling-Hammond (2003, 2005, 2006) and Zientek (2006, 2007) have added extensive research to the literature in the area of preparation programs and teacher effectiveness.

Lunenburg and Ornstein (2004) suggested that the success of a new teacher is centered on many variables:

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To argue that good teaching boils down to a set of prescriptive behaviors, methods, or proficiency levels, that teachers must follow a "new" research based teaching plan or evaluation system, or that decisions about teacher accountability can be assessed in terms of students passing some standardized or multiple-choice test is to miss the human aspect of teaching-the "essence" of what teaching is all about. (p. 547)

The literature I reviewed expressed a need for new teachers to obtain curriculum that prepares them to teach, but is also applicable to the teaching experiences in the classroom. Preparation programs are tasked with providing content knowledge, but also knowledge on lesson planning, pedagogical preparation, classroom management, and daily paper shuffling responsibilities (Algozzine, Gretes, Queen, & Cowan-Hathcock, 2007; Berry, 2005; Black, 2004; Darling-Hammond, 2003; Heath, 2005; Johnson, 2006; Sleppin, 2009; & Wong, 2004).

Zientek (2007) replicated Darling-Hammond et al.'s (2002) study to explore the quality of teacher preparation and differences in certification routes. Zientek (2007) also investigated teachers' prior experiences in teaching, mentoring, classroom, career, and commitment. The participants in this study were in their first three years of teaching in the state of Texas. Results of the study indicated that teacher certification pathways impact teacher perceptions of preparedness. Alternatively, certified teachers felt they had a more positive mentoring experience than the traditionally certified teacher; traditionally certified teachers felt more prepared than alternatively certified teachers. The final

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conclusion from this study is that alternatively certified teachers required additional

professional development to promote and understand student learning (Zientek, 2007).

Another study regarding teacher quality was conducted by Akiba, LeTendre, and

Scribner in 2007 across 46 countries. The study revealed that higher achieving countries

had a higher percentage of students taught by teachers that met the country's certification

standards. According to the authors, the study provided "Evidence that investing in

teacher quality is a good way to improve student learning outcomes" (p. 381). Darling-

Hammond and Baratz-Snowden (2005) stated:

> Effective teachers engage students in active learning—debating, discussing,
>
> researching, writing, evaluating, experimenting, and constructing models, papers,
>
> and products in addition to listening to and reading information, watching
>
> demonstrations, and practicing. They make their expectations for high-quality
>
> work very clear; and they provide models of student work that meets those
>
> standards. They also provide constant feedback that helps students improve as
>
> they continuously revise their work." (p. 112)

Heckman (2011) supported the need for highly quality teachers and appealed to

legislators and educational administrators to make sure teacher preparation programs

would prepare teachers to guide students in meeting the achievement standards of today.

Berry (2005), when researching the future of teacher education placed preparation

programs into two camps: the professional track (traditional) and fast track (alternative).

The professional track consists of programs centered on social justice, academic

achievement, extensive teacher preparation, and standardized assessments. This track

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primarily consists of standard certification routes through 4-year universities. Those

wishing to deregulate teaching advocate the fast-track programs and alternative

certification routes.

Darling-Hammond (2006) provided a distinction between the two pathways,

where alternative programs rely heavily on content knowledge and traditional programs

tend to balance both pedagogy and content. Berry (2005) pointed out that the debate is

not about alternative certification versus traditional preparation, but centered on political

and economic factors. Programs, of both natures, revealed that teachers can be recruited,

prepared, and retained (Darling-Hammond, Chung, & Frelow, 2002; Darling-Hammond,

Holtzman, Gatlin & Heilig, 2005; Nagy & Wang, 2007; Warmacak, 2008; Wong, 2004;

Zientek, 2006).

Traditional Certification

America's schools are among the most unequal in the world regarding teacher

quality (Darling-Hammond, 2006). Inadequately prepared teachers are less skilled at

providing higher levels of instruction and deeper understanding; less capable of

identifying student learning styles and student needs; and, rely more on rote and

autocratic classroom methods (Darling-Hammond, 2006). Teachers prepared in a

traditional setting felt more prepared than those who were trained in an alternative setting

(Darling-Hammond, Chung, & Frelow, 2002; Zientek, 2006). In another study on the

Teach for America program and alternative certification programs, Darling-Hammond,

Holtzman, Gatlin, and Heiling (2005) concluded that "relative to teachers with standard

certification, uncertified teachers and those in other substandard certification categories

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generally had negative effects on student achievement" and that "alternatively certified teachers had negative effects on achievement" (p. 19). Findings also yielded that student achievement depended greatly on the amount of preparation the teachers were provided. In both studies, the traditional setting classroom environment provided field experiences throughout the program coursework whereas the alternative setting provided only the first field experience (Darling-Hammond et al., 2002; Darling-Hammond et al., 2005; & Zientek, 2006).

Good et al. (2006) found that traditionally trained teachers scored higher on measures of classroom management and measures of teaching than alternatively certified teachers. On the other hand, this study also revealed that both types of preparation programs trained teachers that could teach at normative standards for first year teachers.

Crocco and Costigan (2007) conducted a 5-year longitudinal study interviewing teachers about their induction into teaching. Findings from this study suggested that traditionally prepared teachers were able to cope with state and district guidelines which kept them working in the field. Alternative candidates struggled more, causing them to leave the district or the field all together.

Wayne and Youngs (2003) examined the relationship between student achievement and teaching characteristics. The interpretations of the findings confirmed that students learn more from teachers that are traditionally certified; however, there was no significant relationship found between student achievement and teacher test scores.

Gimbert, Bol, and Wallace (2007) studied beginning middle school and high school Algebra I teachers to determine the influence of teacher preparation and

instructional strategies on student achievement. The researchers compared traditionally certified teachers with nontraditionally certified teachers. The findings from this study indicated that teacher training pathway influences academic achievement of students.

A study on16 third grade teachers was conducted to correlate academic achievement and teacher qualifications. Graham (2004) concluded that students of certified teachers performed significantly higher than students with non-certified teachers. The findings also suggest that teacher experiences are directly linked to student performance. Graham stated, "teacher preparation makes a difference in student achievement (p. 96).

Warmack (2008) conducted a study using El Paso, Texas's data from 2003-2007 on student achievement and teacher preparation routes. Although there was not a significant difference in reading achievement for either preparation route, there was a difference in the area of mathematics where traditionally certified teachers' students performed better on the state assessment.

Alternative Certification

Beginning in the mid-1980s, states introduced alternative certification programs as another means of attaining licensure that requires less pre-service preparation. States developed these programs to alleviate teacher shortages by attracting other professionals interested in teaching but discouraged by the rigorous and extensive requirements of the traditional programs (Johnson, Birkeland, & Peske, 2005). "Unlike traditional programs, alternative certification programs move candidates directly into the classrooms and provide simultaneous mentoring and support" (Nagy & Wang, 2007, p. 98).   According

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to the Westchester Institute for Human Services (2004), The National Center for

Education Information (NCEI) stated that alternative education programs produce one

third of the teachers hired annually, making a total of 200,000 receiving certification

through this route since 1985. Zientek (2006) concluded that alternative certification

programs were somewhat diversifying the teaching population by bringing in more

minorities and science majors, but were having no significant impact on the teacher

shortage. Teacher preparation programs are no longer the exclusive property of four-year

institutions and more and more assistance is needed from the campuses doing the hiring

to build upon teacher preparation (Woullard & Coats, 2004).

Current research questions if alternative certification serves as a suitable

substitute to traditional certification routes. Humphrey, Wechsler, and Hough (2005)

interviewed and surveyed participants experiencing various alternative programs for the

course of three semesters between 2003 and 2004. The findings of this study suggest that

an effective program puts candidates in schools with strong leadership, a collegial

atmosphere, and adequate supplies and materials. "Only the most exceptional candidates

can succeed in dysfunctional schools" (p. 41). A conclusion to this study also suggest

that key characteristics such as backgrounds, program support, and placement can

produce effective teachers on the very first day of school, and that the idea that new

teachers must struggle can be prevented and is harmful to the students and teacher.

Owings et al. (2006) conducted a study to explore alternative certified teachers'

perceptions about their preparation and student achievement outcomes. Principals were

also surveyed to share their observations of classroom effectiveness between traditionally

certified and alternatively certified teachers. The findings from this study described both

alternative and traditionally certified teachers being perceived as equally effective. The

alternative certification teachers perceived themselves as well prepared and in some areas

more effective than traditionally certified teachers. Based on the classroom observations,

ninety percent of the principals working with the alternative certified candidates agreed

that they would continue to seek out candidates from this certification route. Owings et

al. (2006) stated that principals viewed alternative certified teachers as effective teachers

that exhibit best instructional and classroom management practices that are correlated to

promoting student achievement.

To assess the effectiveness of alternative certification programs, Bowen (2004)

surveyed 131 principals from a large metropolitan area in Texas. Ninety-four percent of

the principals surveyed reported that alternative certification programs are in fact

effective; however the principals also realize that, "Teachers with limited preparation

may not be as effective as those teachers from more comprehensive preparation

programs" (p. 97). Bowen's (2004) study also revealed that the principal's perceptions of

instruction, assessment, and classroom management significantly favored the traditionally

certified teachers. The majority of principals (79%) reported that they would hire

teachers who were trained in traditional programs, where only 52% reported they would

hire teachers certified in alternative programs. Additionally, and of particular interest to

this research study, the principals felt the support factors accompanying an alternatively

certified teacher (support and supervision) are related to the effectiveness of the

alternatively certified teacher (Bowen, 2004).

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The Carnegie Corporation of New York also conducted a study on alternative certified teachers (Humphrey, Wechsler, & Hough, 2005). For the purpose of the study, seven different alternative certification programs were followed with 10 to 13 participants representing each program of study. The conclusions suggested that "Educational background, school context, previous teaching experience, coursework, and mentoring all contribute to a new teacher's success" (p. 41). The findings also suggested that a school's support program and placement practices are factors that help a new teacher to be successful from the very first day of teaching (Humphrey et al., 2005).

Johns Hopkins University and a Maryland public school district partnered to produce fully certified teachers through a two year program to meet the growing need for classroom teachers and demand for quality accountability and instruction (Masci & Stotko, 2006). The components of this cohort program include graduate coursework, field experiences, internships, and the presentation of an electronic portfolio. This program has been successful based on exit surveys and pedagogy exam scores. According to Masci and Stotko (2006), the program offers a high-quality program for prospective teachers and opens a pathway into teaching.

Pace (2010) conducted a study to determine the effectiveness of mentoring and induction programs for alternatively certified teachers in South Carolina school districts. The findings of the study indicated that the alternatively certified teachers relied on other sources beyond the mentoring and induction programs because these programs alone did not meet their needs regarding teacher effectiveness. The alternative teachers felt

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ineffective in classroom management and pedagogical issues and sought out additional resources to improve the negative feelings they had toward their teaching abilities.

Dai, Sindelar, Denslow, Dewey, and Resenberg (2007) considered alternative education programs and explored the effectiveness of program location, candidate selection, program costs, program requirements, and mentorship. The basis of their findings identified the importance of candidate selection and support to defray attrition and teacher ineffectiveness. Evidence suggested that better teacher preparation reduces attrition and that under-prepared teachers have a strong negative effect on student achievement. Humphrey, Wechsler, and Hough (2005) found that school placement, program support, mentorships, and tailored preparation can produce new teachers that are effective on the first day.

New Teacher Support Programs

Wong (2004) referred to induction as a process: "A comprehensive, coherent and sustained professional development process that is organized by a school district to train, support and retain new teachers" (p.42). Wong also stated that, "Mentoring is an action, it is what mentors do" (p. 42). According to Tillman (2005), mentoring programs were established in the early 1980s to reduce teacher attrition and to provide teachers a smooth transition into teaching. Mentoring, as defined by Tillman, is a "collaborative partnership in which individuals share and develop mutual interests" (p. 611). Tillman also described several functions of a mentor which include: teaching, sponsoring, encouraging, counseling, and role modeling. In the 1990s, policy makers initiated formal induction and mentoring programs (Carver & Feiman-Nemser, 2008). According to Algozzine,

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Gretes, Queen, and Cowan-Hathcock (2007), Texas formed The Texas Beginning

Educator Support System in 1999 to support new teachers. Zeichner (2003) cautioned

that induction and mentor programs are constantly endangered by budget cuts and Padilla

(2005) stated that, prior to 2005, only 19 states in the United States had mandated

induction and mentoring programs for beginning teachers, and of those, only 10 provided

even partial funding, with the funding burden on the uncertain shoulders of the local

districts (as cited in Heath, 2005).

Mentoring and induction programs were heavily promoted during the 1990s as a

factor to sustain and retain teachers (Carver & Feiman-Nemser, 2009; Kelly, 2004; &

Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). The literature also provided caution, however, that the

program must be implemented correctly to be effective (Wang, Odell, & Schwille, 2008;

Carver & Katz, 2004; Kelly, 2004; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). Mentors must be willing to

work with new teachers and be responsive to the novice teacher's needs. Instilling a

sense of safety to gain trust and open communication between the mentor and mentee

must be established. One way teachers can get this feed back is through learning

communities which will provide the support needed in sustaining them in the classroom

and help them strengthen their teaching abilities (Eaker, Dufour, & Dufour (2002). In

addition, the administrators are a part of the learning community; therefore the evaluation

role is placed on their shoulders in lieu of the mentor. Principals need to create a learning

community in which teachers collaborate and learn from one another in order to become

more effective. New teachers need time for collaboration and support from many

learning communities to guide in their development as a master teacher (DuFour &

Eaker, 1998).

Mentoring

Signed into law in 2002, The No Child Left Behind Act required that there would

be highly qualified teachers staffed in all classrooms by 2005 (USDE, 2001). Darling-

Hammond (2003) stated, "unless we develop policies to reduce attrition through better

preparation, assignment working conditions, and mentor support, we cannot meet the

goal of ensuring that all students have qualified teachers" (p.9). Darling-Hammond

argued that the most important resource for continuing improvement is the knowledge

and skill of the school's best-prepared and most committed teachers and identified

mentoring support as a strong influence on teacher retention, mainly because teachers felt

better prepared and more adequate in their teaching.

Kent, Feldman, and Hayes (2009) acknowledged through their study of

elementary schools over a two year period that many mentoring programs lack the

authority to ensure that knowledgeable mentors have both the time to conduct clinical

supervision and the appropriate content knowledge necessary for the beginning teacher.

However, determining which specific mentoring attribute contributes to the success of

first-year teachers is difficult to uncover. Sixty-eight first-year teachers participated in a

study by responding to a mentor survey and a novice teacher interview. The results of

the study failed to link the impact of mentoring on classroom effectiveness (Harris,

2008).

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Stanulis and Floden (2009) conducted a study consisting of 12 first and second year teachers that were assigned to an intensive mentoring program. A comparison group of 12 other beginning teachers was established without the intensive program. Participants were evaluated using the Atmosphere, Instruction/Content, Management, and Student Engagement (AIMS) instrument that produces outcomes covering classroom atmosphere, instruction and content, management, and student engagement. The data from the study indicated that the intensive-mentoring induction intervention had an effect on teacher effectiveness for the treatment group. This study showed that, "intensive mentoring focused on balanced instruction improved teaching practice" (p. 116).

Carver and Katz (2004) conducted a case study over the course of two years to shadow and interview mentor teachers with the hope of learning what mentors do to help a struggling novice teacher. The case study followed one mentor teacher that was assigned three novice teachers that all came from an alternative certification pathway and who were also struggling in their teaching. The results of the study provided implications for mentoring programs. According to Carver and Katz (2004), mentors need clear and useable mentoring strategies, ongoing training in the skills needed to guide new teachers, opportunities to learn how to give direct feedback to teachers, and a unity within the professional community that expects accountability from all members.

Randall (2009) also studied the impact a mentor has on the retention of first-year teachers. The effectiveness of the mentor was evaluated and measured through interviews with 67 first-year high school teachers. The findings of this study indicated that mentors provided a sense of support in pedagogical and content knowledge, but the

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mentor did not hold an important role in keeping the first year teacher in the classroom.

Participants in the study acknowledged that their reason to stay in the classroom stemmed

from "their intrinsic love of teaching and desire to work with children" (p. 116). From

this study, Randall (2009) reported that effective mentors required more training, better

utilization by first-year teachers, and more support by administration in terms of

collaboration time and access to available resources.

Nagy and Wang (2007) conducted a study of novice high school teachers in New

Jersey. The results indicated that only 50% of the participants studied were exposed to a

formal mentoring program and that 8% to 12% of those identified admitted that they

would not be returning to the classroom after completing the year.

A study by Berry (2009) examined 12 secondary novice teachers and their

abilities to make sense of entry-level frustrations of being a new teacher. The teachers

were classified as teachers that planned on staying in the field of education (a stayer) and

teachers planning on leaving the field (a leaver). Findings from the study revealed that

induction programs need to focus on empowering teachers in the area of management and

instructional delivery. Stayers also viewed mentors as the most significant factor for job

satisfaction; stayers however, also formed bonds with other teachers that served as non-

threatening insiders to help guide them through the new teacher experience. Berry (2009)

suggested that administrators establish elaborate mentoring programs where connections

between veteran teachers and new teachers are fostered to provide the type of support

needed.

Induction

According to Martinez (2005), induction programs are a means to alleviating attrition rates, providing support and helping transition teachers to ensure their needs are met. Martinez refers to an effective induction program as one that holds on to new teachers, grooms their talents, and helps them become more successful.

Zientek (2006) found that new teachers who participate in an induction program are nearly twice as likely to remain in the teaching profession as those who do not participate in an induction program (as cited by the National Education Association, 2005).   However, "Few schools see that creating a quality induction program can make a tremendous difference in teacher satisfaction, growth, retention, and impact on students" (Stanulis, Burrill & Ames, 2007, p. 143). According to Algozzine et al. (2007), matching beginning teachers with mentors from the same subject area and providing collective activities such as planning and collaborating on teaching units are likely to produce very positive outcomes related to staying in teaching.

Homewood-Flossmoor High School District, Flossmoor, IL, three-time winner of the National School of Excellence award, attributes their success to the strong induction program established within the district. Newly hired teachers are immersed into the educational goals, missions, and beliefs of the district. Homewood-Flossmoor School district improved teacher attrition rates from 64% in 1999 to 0% in 2002 (Wong, 2004). Wong (2004) also studied several school districts across the United States to analyze the attrition rates of school districts employing an induction and mentoring program. Findings from this analysis showed that attrition rates in these districts were less than

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4.5% with some schools only losing five teachers out of 148 hired. The implementation

of a sound induction program was a common thread found within these districts (Wong,

2004).

Wang, Odell, and Schwille (2008) reviewed the literature, dating back to the late

90s, on the effects of teacher induction on beginning teachers. The review of literature

revealed that the components of teacher induction do not independently influence the

success of a beginning teacher. The school's social, cultural and organizational context,

however, can directly influence a novice teacher. Other findings revealed that mentoring

relationships influenced the development of a first year teacher when the school

administrator actively supported the relationship. The review acknowledged that the

effectiveness of the teacher is directly linked to their knowledge of effective teaching

practices and pedagogical content knowledge. With strong content and pedagogical

preservice preparation and similarly based criteria in induction programs, beginning

teachers are more likely to acquire the teaching skills necessary to meet the demands of

teaching (Wang et al., 2008).

In partnership with the University of Colorado, Kelly (2004) tracked novice

teachers from six Colorado school districts that were using a mentoring induction

program, Partners in Education, over the past 10 years. The induction program focuses

on reflective teaching practices, mentoring assignments with an expert teacher, frequent

networking, and professional development opportunities. During the ten years that the

program was in use, cohorts of inductees were tracked to calculate the retention statistics

after four years. The longitudinal data revealed that in the induction program participants

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are retained in the field at much higher rates; 94% of the participants were still teaching after four years.

To reduce attrition rates in North Carolina, Algozzine et al. (2007) conducted a study to examine beginning teachers' perceptions of induction programs and support given during the first two years of employment. Third year teachers across 14 of the North Carolina school systems were selected to participate with 451 useable responses. Algozzine et al. revealed that effective induction programs include components of experienced mentoring assignments, release time to observer peers and sharing experiences. The study revealed positive acclaims to formal evaluations and observations by the building principal.

After establishing a lack of standard norms between districts and states for teacher induction programs, Collins, Deist, and Riethmeier (2008) developed a set of standardized norms. The standards for their induction program include: administrative support, professional development and networking, instructional coaching, mentoring, and program evaluation. The overall goal of the standards is to "assist administrators in providing the best possible induction program for their new teachers" (Collins et al., 2008 p. 58). The standards were created based on administrator need to create a program or evaluate the current program established on the campus. According to Collins et al. (2008), "teachers who are included in a comprehensive induction process can go on to be teacher leaders" (p. 10). Once the standards were created, an expert panel reviewed the product and evaluated its effectiveness. By creating this tool, administrators can provide learning opportunities that aid in new teacher development and effectiveness. According

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to Collins et al. (2008), the effectiveness of an induction program directly affects the development of new teachers.

Mentoring and induction programs cannot address all problems a novice teacher may encounter, but they do help strengthen the knowledge base and competencies of teaching which ultimately increases student achievement, job satisfaction, and teacher retention (Normoe & Loughry, 2006). Mentors must be willing to work with new teachers and be responsive to the novice teacher's needs. The needs of a new teacher vary from day to day, and providing the pertinent information they crave prevents the continuation of attrition (Mandel, 2006). One way for new teachers to get this much needed and desired information is through the administrative support and communities of practice on their campuses.

Administrative Support

Students deserve highly qualified and effective teachers teaching in their classrooms and highly effective leaders leading them. As stated by Rotherham, Mikuta, and Freeland (2008), "addressing teacher effectiveness is a national responsibility that other nations have already taken seriously" (p. 242). Dating back in the early 1980s, Andrews and Soder (1987) conducted a two year study in 33 elementary schools. Findings included that the role of the principal as an instructional leader is critical to student achievement. "Scores of students in strong-leader schools were significantly greater in both total reading and total mathematics than those of students in schools rated as having average or weak leaders" (p. 10).

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Being a first year teacher is exhausting and draining (Richards, 2007). According to Wong (2004), outstanding principal leaders know the teachers and the students they lead. They demonstrate the attitude that all teachers have the potential to be effective teachers and take time to collaborate and teach them themselves. The gatekeeper to the development of the novice teacher is the building administrator. Support and feedback is needed, on a regular basis, regarding their teaching, content knowledge, and classroom management strategies (Wood, 2005). In a study of schools with principals that communicated a clear vision, teachers felt more positive about their teaching (Humphrey, Wechsler, & Hough, 2005).

Tillman (2005) conducted a case study of mentoring experiences for first year African American teachers in an urban school. Based on the study results, Tillman (2005) provided recommendations for principals in mentoring novice teachers. These recommendations include making decisions about the program and policies that guide the mentoring program, knowing the background of the first year teachers to justify the program design used, isolating the first year teacher by setting aside time to interact with them, and having a thoughtful and proactive approach when assigning and choosing mentors. The findings also showed that first year teachers were conscientious about their relationship with the principal. According to the data, the new teachers questioned their role, the principal expectations, and their worth (Tillman, 2005).

Principal support plays an important role in beginning teacher retention (Hernandez, 2006). One hundred thirty-nine first and second year teachers responded to a questionnaire to determine the importance of principal support on their development.

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Participants ranked in order of importance the characteristics deemed most important to them regarding principal support. The findings indicated that principal respect, principal competencies, and the supportive nature of the principal ranked the highest in importance to new teachers. When new teachers perceive their principals as open, approachable, honest and trustworthy, the new teacher most likely will remain in the teaching profession (Hernandez, 2006).

In a study conducted by Nagy and Wang (2007), 90% of the alternative certified population surveyed indicated that their principal gave them opportunities to meet within their departments, and 81% indicated that they were given opportunities to meet with other new teachers in the building. From this study, 90% of the novice teachers surveyed were satisfied with the administrative support provided on campus, and 89% of those surveyed were moderately satisfied with the principal support during their first year and would remain teaching.

Youngs (2007) provided data on how administrators can directly affect the development of new teachers. This research corresponds with the findings in Burch and Spillane (2003) and Stein and D'Amico (2002) in which principals promoted the professional growth in novice teachers through their direct interactions with them through individual attention and communities of practice. As a result, principals understand the need for a positive relationship with their new teachers to support and positively impact their success (Merkel, 2009).

The problem with teacher attrition stems from the "isolation" syndrome where novice teachers feel left out, on their own, and without guidance. Black (2004) stated

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that, "it is up to the principals and other administrators to find ways in which they can support new teachers" (p. 51). Black provided suggestions to administrators that would help new teachers succeed. These suggestions include: committing funds for an induction program, making correct assignments based on their experience and certification, providing orientation on school policies and procedures, making resources available, giving new teachers access to their students' information and assessment data, and inviting new teachers to visit with administrators on a weekly basis. Providing time, opportunity, and resources to novice teacher is imperative for success (Black, 2004).

Principals and new teachers differ in their perceptions of administrative support provided. Principals often feel that they are providing sufficient support whereas new teachers indicate that the support provided is minimal (Powell, 2004). In a study examining perceptions of principal support provided to first-year teachers, results indicated that a significant difference exists between principals and first-year teachers in their perceptions of the type and amount of administrative support provided (Powell, 2004). The principals scored the amount of support they provided to new teachers at 96%, while first-year teachers viewed the amount of support provided at 50%-80% (Powell, 2004). The results indicated that principals and first-year teachers have different views on the support provided. Principals think they are doing a good job whereas teachers feel improvements can be made.

Normore and Loughry (2006) acknowledged that the success of transitioning novice teachers is dependent on the administration to provide an avenue of coaching, guidance, advising, assistance, and sharing. "Without support and supervision, novice

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teachers often feel overwhelmed, disoriented, and frustrated when they find themselves totally on their own in their classrooms" (Normore & Loughry, p. 25). This collaboration between administrator and novice teacher facilitates both in the development and grooming of successful teachers (Normore & Loughry, 2006).

Wood (2005) conducted a study on the importance of the principal's role in the novice teacher's induction. Findings suggested that principals are involved as a cultural builder, instructional leader, and coordinator of mentors. "When a site administrator organizes and/or supports institutional activities that promote professional relationships among novice teachers and experienced teachers, morale is greatly improvised and beginning teachers' self concept is strengthened" (p. 45). Wood acknowledges several roles of the instructional leader which include providing systemic feedback about teaching, classroom management, and curriculum concerns.

Angelle (2006) conducted a study to examine if novice teachers' intent to stay in the field is based on the involvement and monitoring of the campus principal. Participants in their second year of teaching and from four middle schools were selected and volunteered to participate in interviews about the administrative support provided. Findings from this study suggested that instructional leaders, who advocated for positive social and collaborative environments and emphasized student centered instruction produced novice teachers that followed that belief. Interviews from these schools highlighted teacher loyalty and strong desires to remain in the classroom. According to Angelle (2006), these instructional leaders had frequent and positive interactions with

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new teachers by making formal and informal class visits, providing feedback, and evoking discussions on teaching and curricular pedagogy.

Millennials, born between 1980 and 2000, have begun entering the workforce. According the Walker (2009), they are eager to be successful unlike any other generation. However, if strong support programs are not put into place, they will leave the profession. It cannot be business as usual. Walker (2009) stated that this generation wants personal contact with support from the principal. They want school administrators to visit them in their classroom and desire feedback. The millennials need to form a personal connection with them. Administrators working with this new generation need to meet the demands before the millennial moves on to other career choices.

The principal's role in attracting, retaining, and developing new teachers is a priority (Watkins, 2005). "The stakes for children are too high to do otherwise" (p. 83). Watkins (2005) stated that, in order to retain and sustain new teachers, principals must make a connection with the new teachers and be involved in their professional development. Principals have an obligation to create a supportive environment that attracts and retains teachers throughout their career.

Two thousand three hundred fifty five teachers within 80 middle schools participated in a quantitative study that explored the faculty's perception of the school leader and the faculty's trust. According to Tschannen-Morgan (2009), the evidence suggested that teachers were more likely to take their work seriously and remain in the classroom when the leadership facilitated their learning and growth. Also, the faculty placed greater trust in the school administrator when the school administrator treated

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them with professional respect. Tschannen-Morgan (2009) suggested that trust is needed

so that teachers feel comfortable conversing about areas of weakness or areas in need of

growth.

Bartell (2004) emphasized the importance of principals acknowledging their role

to support both the mentor and the professional development activities in which novice

teachers engage during the induction program. Site administrators who understand this

role work more effectively with novice teachers and earn the level of trust needed to

mold and groom them into successful teachers.

To fulfill these identified roles, administrators would need to have a

collaborative, democratic, and approachable rapport with the novice teacher that

welcomes them to the school and guides them into leadership roles. Wahlstrom and

Louis (2008) revealed that, "expanding the decision-making arenas in schools to include

non-administrators is an important step that leaders can take in long-term efforts to

improve instruction," and "Increasing teachers' levels of trust in administrators, a

somewhat 'softer' leadership goal, may have positive effects on a school's climate but

may be a less direct way of improving classroom practice" (p. 479). The results also

suggested that, collaboration between principal and teacher provides a positive influence

on instruction.

Youngs (2007) examined ways in which principals influenced novice teachers at

six elementary campuses. The findings yielded that "elementary principals can promote

new teachers' professional growth in their direct interactions with them and by

facilitating their work with mentors and other colleagues" (p. 126). In another study by

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Bickmore, D., Bickmore, S., and Hart (2005) researchers notated several support programs that principals can oversee to ensure new teacher support. These support programs include: mentorships, administrative assistance, professional development opportunities and content meetings. Martinez (2005) surveyed 11 urban school district principals to understand the role the school principal plays in the development of new teachers. Martinez notes that, "principals want to be more engaged in the induction process of new teachers but are limited due to time constraints and other responsibilities of the job" (p. 76). Findings from the study included that principals agree that support, assisting teachers with lessons plans and lesson plan delivery, providing professional development, modeling teaching practices, and helping teachers understand student achievement data are strategies to help new teachers become more effective. Martinez (2005) also reminds new teachers that they should seek advice from their principal and that principals can help facilitate their development and growth.

Conversely, Gonzalez, Brown, and Slate (2008) surveyed eight teachers that left the teaching field after their first year of teaching. Seven of the participants agreed that the administration was the biggest factor for not returning to the teaching profession. The former teachers cited disrespect, pressure, poor morals, and a lack of professional courtesy by the administrators as several factors for not returning to the classroom.

Wilson (2009) conducted a study to analyze the relationship between principal support and new teacher attrition. The findings yielded a positive relationship between principal support and retention; a significant relationship emerged between novice teachers and the need for emotional support from their principal. Another positive

correlation emerged with new teachers desiring appraisal support from their principal, which consisted of frequent and constructive feed-back about their work. Schindewolf's (2008) study of 348 teachers with one to five years of teaching experience yielded similar results in which traditionally certified teachers emphasized a need for emotional, instructional, appraisal, instrumental (resources), and moral administrative support.

Dumler (2010) examined principals' support actions that influence teachers to remain in the field of teaching. Twenty-five first-year teachers responded and agreed that honest and positive feedback from the principal and support in discipline and classroom management issues ranked highly as a needed support from principals. Dumler's (2010) findings acknowledge that new teachers welcome and want principal support and guidance, but also realize that many new teachers feel dissatisfied with the support provided.

Keyne-Michaels (2007) conducted a study to identify key strategies principals should do when providing support to first-year teachers. These ideas included principals bestowing personal recognition, providing regular communication, getting to know them on a personal level, being visible and available, and visiting their classrooms. Findings from the study also indicated that new teachers questioned their teaching abilities and never really understood if they were meeting the job expectations.

With the attempt to understand how school leaders can improve job satisfaction and teacher retention, Denton (2009) conducted a study on the factors that determine job satisfaction and lead to teacher retention through the perception of leadership styles and its effect on teacher retention. The study included that teachers respond best to

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transformational leaders who include them in the decision-making process and make them feel valued. Establishing a positive relationship with the principal was identified as another important factor in determining job satisfaction.   Of the participants studied, eleven out of twelve agreed that a positive relationship with their principal was an important factor with job satisfaction.   An overarching theme identified through this research is the importance of relationships between teachers and administrators. Darling-Hammond (2003) stated, "Great school leaders create nurturing school environments in which accomplished teaching can flourish and grow" (p. 13). According to Denton (2009), principals are crucial in facilitating nurturing relationships between the adults in their building, and teachers need principals that listen to them, respect them, and fight for them.

A study conducted by Mota (2010) examined the relationship between leadership style and teacher job satisfaction. Participants in the study consisted of 45 teachers from Swiss international schools. Respondents completed two surveys, one on job satisfaction and one on perceptions of leadership styles. The results of study indicated that there was a correlation between leadership style and teacher job satisfaction in Swiss international schools. Study participants preferred a transformational leadership style, with results indicating that a laissez-faire leadership style had a negative correlation to job satisfaction (Mota, 2010).

Campus and district administrators' fundamental role is to support new teachers and understand what they need in order to keep them in the field of teaching. Campus administrators have a profound influence on new teachers, yet little research identifies

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how important their role is in developing the novice teacher. "We must move from

passive discourse and involvement to conscious, deliberate, and proactive practice in

educational leadership that will produce a socially just outcome for all children"

(Marshall & Oliva, 2006, p. 27). In order to do this, campus leaders must become

actively involved through support and learning communities so that new teachers can

grow and develop in their field. It is more than just relying on an induction program or

an assigned mentor. Richards (2007) stated, "in a time when you are all stressed with the

demands of the principal's job, you need to remind yourselves that you have great power

to make a difference in your teachers' lives. Teachers who feel encouraged and

comfortable with your support will stay with you in a positive climate of learning" (p.

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ready and open to accept new ideas for new teachers entering the profession.

Impact on Teacher Attrition

Teacher shortages and educator attrition are an on-going problem (Talka, 2009).

Fourteen percent of teachers leave the field after the first year and as many as 50% leave

within the first five years of teaching (Stanulis & Floden, 2009). Research provides

various reasons for teacher attrition such as administrative issues; student discipline;

salaries; lack of support; and, poor preparation programs (Gonzalez, Brown, & Slate,

2008). Woullard and Coats (2004) conducted a study with 30 freshman and sophomore

preservice teachers to see if a preservice mentoring/field experience program at the

university level can affect changes in the emotions, attitudes, and anxieties of students

entering the teaching field. The findings indicated that changes do occur and anxieties

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diminish. "The first hand experience they receive is valuable toward solidifying their decision about their career choices and may in effect yield and retain more qualified teachers in the classroom" (p. 621).

Attrition rates for alternatively and traditionally certified teachers are about the same, however teacher assignments strengthen the longevity a teacher remains in the profession. One conclusion in a study by Humphrey et al. (2005) stated that, "alternative certification participants who worked in a school with strong leadership, adequate supplies and materials, and a collegial work environment were more likely to plan to stay in teaching and had more confidence in their teaching skill" (p. 39). Those that were placed in a challenging school with the absence of support planned to leave at the end of the school year. A similar study, of 134 teachers in a suburban elementary school, by Swars, Meyers, Mays, and Lack (2009) yielded the same results regarding the importance of teacher relationships with administrators and teacher retention.

To look at whether attrition rate correlated to certification pathway, Warmack (2008) surveyed over 1,000 first year teachers over the course of five years to determine if a difference existed in attrition rates between teachers who were traditionally and alternatively certified. The results indicated that there were no significant differences between the two groups regarding teachers leaving after the first year of teaching. In another study by Connors-Krikorian (2004) 47 middle school teachers with less than five years experience were surveyed regarding their views on what factors sustain and retain teachers in the classroom. Findings from the research included that retention rates increase when: "School districts focus on collegiality and cooperation among teachers;

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positive working conditions; administrative support; higher salaries; culture building; and effective mentoring and induction program" (p. 125). This study also yielded that administrative support fell highest among the categories to help in retaining new teachers, specifically positive communications and interactions between administration and teachers (Connors-Krikorian, 2004).

The principal's involvement with teachers is essential for teachers deciding whether or not to stay in the teaching profession. Byrum (2008) surveyed 271 teachers from kindergarten through twelfth grade about their perceptions of the leadership support and their intent to remain in the field of education. The results of this study indicated that there is a significant relationship between administrative support provided and teacher intent to remain in the classroom. Byrum (2008) concluded that a principal's dedication to supporting teachers can make a positive impact on a teacher's intent to remain in their school.

Heckman (2011) conducted a correlational study to determine the factors that influence teacher attrition. The study results indicated that there was a positive correlation between administrative support and teacher attrition. Heckman (2011) also stated that administrative support had the most significant impact on whether a teacher decides to stay in or leave the profession.

Latham and Vogt (2007) provided conflicting data to previously reviewed literature regarding teacher attrition and certification route. Findings from their longitudinal study of 1,000 graduates concluded that alternatively certified teachers stayed in the field longer than traditionally certified teachers, which differs from previous

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literature reviewed where there is no significance difference between certification route and attrition rates. An additional finding from their research concludes that the higher the GPA of the teacher candidate, the longer they stay in the classroom.

Talka (2009) conducted a study to examine the relationship between teacher turnover rate and five characteristics often associated with schooling: student-teacher ratios, student absentee rate, student drop out rate, student graduation rate, and percentage of Limited English Proficient students enrolled in the classroom. The results indicated that the teacher turnover rates and schooling characteristics are significantly related. According to Talka, knowing these predictors in advance could help educators prevent teacher drop-out and increase teacher retention rates.

Horng (2009) conducted a study in a California school district to identify the characteristics of schools that teachers favor for teaching jobs. Five hundred thirty one teachers participated in the on-line survey. The study yielded several results, which include: having a clean and safe facility, strong administrative support, and small class sizes. Other findings included that teachers are more concerned with building working conditions than student demographics. In other words, teachers would rather work in a safe, collaborative environment with support regardless of the student demographics.

Stotko, Ingram, and Beaty-O'Ferrall (2007) highlighted strategies to retain urban teachers. Findings indicated that teachers less likely to stay in teaching come from schools with classroom discipline problems, low levels of student interest, and low levels of respect for teachers. Findings also indicated that teacher attendance, teacher morale, and a sense of efficacy are dependent on the working conditions in a building. Teacher

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collaboration is also an important factor in teacher retention. For novice teachers it provides essential support and for experienced teachers it reduces burn-out (Stotko et al., 2007). Another common retention strategy identified by Stotko et al. (2007) was the use of induction and mentoring programs. These programs bring novice and master teachers together to hone their teaching craft.

Copeland (2007) examined influences that impact teacher retention. Participants consisted of public school educators at elementary, middle and high school levels who had taught for at least a period of six years for the regional area studied. Study results indicated that principals believe new teacher support programs have an impact on new teacher development. For the survey question about workplace variables that support teachers to remain in the classroom, common planning time was ranked highest. According to Copeland, "this study proves that teacher retention problems continue to exist in those schools that provide limited support for teachers" (p. 72).

Robertson's (2004) research indicated a strong need for administrative support, specifically in training of classroom management techniques. Other strategies of effective administrative support found were: providing a collegial environment, reducing the demands for paperwork when possible, longer induction periods to help alleviate new comer stress, and ongoing teacher education. The study revealed the needs of new teachers in order for them to be sustained in the classroom. Novice teachers require focused attention in order for them to reach their teaching potential (Robertson, 2004).

Sleppin's (2009) study correlated teachers' perceptions on classroom isolation and attrition rates. Findings from the study included that mentoring and support

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programs reduce feelings of isolation, a factor often associated with attrition. Another finding included that isolation is experienced in a variety of ways depending on teaching assignments, teaching teams, and campus support. A lack in any of these areas might lead to a teacher not returning to the field. According to Sleppin (2009), support and guidance by the administration is needed in order to move beyond merely welcoming new teachers to the campus.

According to Connor-Krikorian (2004), determining the reasons for attrition rates is crucial in increasing the retention rate and subsequently the quality of education, teacher morale, building relationship and trust, and team collegiality. Connor-Krikorian (2004) conducted a case study with teachers who voluntarily left the district. Results of the study showed that teaching assignment, teacher burn-out, and lack of personal time were the top three reasons for leaving. Salary and class size were also significant. The study also interviewed teachers that were retained in the district. One hundred percent of the teachers returning with five years or more of experience recognized the building principal as the primary factor for staying. Sixty-six percent of the teachers with five or less years of experience cited the principal as their primary reason. As a result, work place conditions, induction and mentoring programs and administrative support are directly correlated to teacher retention. (Connor-Krikorian, 2004).

In a study by Harper (2009) to determine what influences a teacher's decision to leave or remain in the classroom, findings included that a teacher's self efficacy and demographic factors such as ethnicity and education had little influence on the population's intent to remain in or leave the classroom. Additionally, teachers who

received their licenses through a traditional certification route remained in the classroom longer than teachers with an alternative certification, and teachers with graduate level degrees remained in the classroom and taught longer. The author suggested that a teacher holding a graduate degree has a greater investment in their career and therefore is less willing to leave it (Harper, 2009).

The factors determining whether to remain in the classroom or to leave teaching altogether vary. Johnson (2010) conducted a study to identify the factors perceived as significant to teachers when deciding to remain in the teaching profession. Working conditions, principal support, and college support ranked the highest in terms of factors to remain in the classroom. The next highest ranking factors were mentoring programs, professional development, instructional assistance, and salary. Overall, college support had a mean of 3.80 and principal support had a mean of 3.38 indicating a positive impact on teacher's decisions to remain in the classroom (Johnson, 2010).

As reported in National Education Association (NEA) policy brief (2005), "research shows that teacher quality is the single most important school-related variable affecting student achievement" (p. 3). Much of the research shows a vital link between these imperative issues. Consequently, the relationship between certification route, leadership support, and student performance may be an important one that greatly affects student outcomes and teacher retention rates.

Methodological Approaches

I based this research study on a quantitative, cross sectional survey design in order to provide a numeric description of trends, attitudes, or opinions of a population and to

rapidly collect data from a sample population at one particular data collection time

(Creswell, 2003). Other studies on the problem mirror this form of research. Johnson

(2010) conducted a similar quantitative study on teachers' perceptions of factors that

contribute to attrition and stated that the research design was chosen to provide a numeric

description of trends, attitudes, or opinions of the population.

Sorapuru (2005) used a quantitative research design to find the opinions of

alternatively certified teachers about the support their principal provided and the impact

of the support on determining whether they remain in the teaching field. Similarly, Mota

(2010) used a quantitative methodology to identify the relationship between principal

leadership and teacher job satisfaction.

Grantham (2006) researched teachers' perceptions of administrative support on

teacher retention. Although this research is similar to this research study, Grantham

(2006) used a qualitative methodology and conducted a case study at one high school

where he served as an assistant principal and was able to conduct focus groups to gather

the data. Similarly Harper (2008) conducted a case study to determine why teachers stay

in the classroom and what causes them to leave. As a member of the community where

the data was collected, he was able to provide thick, rich descriptions, and this

methodology provided the best avenue for the study. Randall (2009) also conducted a

multi-case study to determine the effects mentoring had on the retention of first year

teachers, focusing on the effectiveness of a district's mentoring program across eight

campuses.

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This research study was based on a quantitative, cross sectional survey design in order to provide a numeric description of the relationship between teacher perceptions of administrative support and teacher decisions to either remain in or leave the teaching profession.

Summary

The literature I reviewed provided an overview of teacher support programs by looking at the various types of support available to novice teachers. First, I reviewed the theoretical framework of social constructivism. Subsequently, I discussed current research related to new teacher support programs, focusing on the impact of mentoring, new teacher induction, and administrative support on teacher attrition. A discussion of research exemplifying both the methodology and alternative methodologies used to study the problem concluded the review of literature. In Section 3, I defined the methodology, including the instrumentation, the participants for the study, and the data collection and analysis.

Section 3: Research Method

Introduction

The problem that I addressed in this research study was a national shortage of teachers (Talka, 2009). Forty percent of teachers leave the profession within the first 5 years of teaching (Ingersoll & Smith, cited by Flynt & Morton, 2009). Horng (2009) stated that of teachers that leave each year, only 16% of the teacher turnover can be attributed to retirement. According to the U.S. Department of Education, 8% of the teacher turnover rate is due to teachers transferring to different schools and another 8-10% leave the profession altogether (Aud et al., 2011). A failure to support new teachers and address weaknesses appears to create a cycle that leads to higher levels of teacher attrition causing districts to spend money to recruit and hire additional new teachers (Sharking, 2008). Because the supply of teachers, new or returning to the profession, does not meet the demand, it was necessary to consider the reasons that teachers leave the profession.

The purpose of this quantitative, cross sectional study was to identify the relationship between the independent variable, teacher perceptions of administrative support, and the dependent variable, teacher decisions to either remain in or leave the teaching profession. For this research study, I considered teachers from varying certification pathways and investigated the relationship between their perceptions of administrative support and certification pathway.

This research study concentrated on a convenience sampling that I used to identify a local district as the sample for the study and one in which was reflective of the

state's teacher turnover rate. Additionally, teachers from various preparation pathways were selected.   For the purpose of this study, I categorized preparation pathways as traditional 4-year university programs or alternative certification programs, which included on-line programs. Alternative certification refers to teachers certified outside a four-year university such as: teacherbuilder.com, emergency certification routes, the Teacher Education Alternative Certification (TEACH) program, the Alternative South Texas Educator (A-Step) program, Excellence in Teaching (EIT) program, A Career in Teaching (EPP) program, university based alternative programs, and Texas Education Service Center Programs (SBEC, Educator Certification Online System, n.d).

This section contains a description and justification of the research design, including details on the setting, sample, sampling method, sample size, and participants for the research study. I will discuss the instrumentation and materials used to gather data, including processes established to ensure validity and reliability. Data analysis, including variable scales, hypotheses, and analytical tools used will also be explained. To conclude this section, I will provide information on the measures that I took to protect the participants' rights.

Research Design and Approach

A quantitative survey design provides a numeric description of trends, attitudes, or opinions of a population (Creswell, 2003). To gain a better understanding in these areas, I used a postpositivist approach, which focuses on cause and effect thinking. According to Creswell (2003), a theory is tested by collecting data to support or refute a hypothesis.

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In this research study, I used a cross-sectional quantitative survey design to rapidly collect data from a sample population at one particular data collection time in order to answer the research questions. For the study, teacher perceptions of administrative support served as the independent variable and teacher decisions to leave the teaching profession served as the dependent variable. H_o represented the null hypothesis and H_1 represented the alternative hypothesis for each of the research questions. The research questions and hypothesis were:

Research Question 1: Is there a significant difference between teacher licensure routes and teacher perceptions of the effectiveness of administrative support practices provided?

H_o1: There is no significant difference between teacher licensure routes and teacher perceptions of the effectiveness of administrative support practices.

$H_1\ 1$: There is a significant difference between teacher licensure routes and teacher perceptions of the effectiveness of administrative support practices.

Research Question 2: Is there a significant relationship between teacher perceptions of the effectiveness of administrative support practices and teacher decisions to leave or remain in the teaching profession?

$H_o\ 2$: There is no significant relationship between teacher perceptions of effectiveness of administrative support practices and teacher decisions to leave the teaching profession.

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$H_1 2$: There is a significant relationship between teacher perceptions of effectiveness of administrative support practices and teacher decisions to leave the teaching profession.

The alpha level that I used to determine the significance of the hypothesis in Research Question was .05 on the Wilcoxon Signed-Ranks Test. To determine if there was a relationship in Research Question 2 an alpha level of .05 was used on the chi-square test for independence.

I used a survey approach, also known as descriptive research, for this research study. According to Gay and Airasian (2000), "typically descriptive studies are concerned with the assessment of attitudes, opinions, preferences, demographics, practices and procedures" (p. 275). Survey studies are used widely by schools to collect data for certain information or on certain variables. "School surveys can provide necessary and valuable information to both the schools studied and to other agencies and groups whose operations are school-related" (Gay & Airasian, 2000, p. 277). This approach involves collecting data in order to answer questions about the current status of a topic of study.

In this research study, the topic of study was teacher perceptions of administrative support practices. In addition, the survey approach is designed to collect data using questionnaires that can be completed individually and with the flexibility of using various delivery approaches such as the Internet or the United States Postal system. Questionnaires are typically more efficient than interview methods. They require less time, are less expensive, and accommodate a collection method that reaches a larger

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sample (Zhang, 2000). Statistical-analysis is the final reason for utilizing the survey design. Statistical-analysis is an approach to summarize the results of the study by providing a numerical way of expressing the survey outcomes (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2008).

I used the descriptive survey, The *Teacher Support Survey: Dimensions of Support Leading to Retention* (Schindewolf, 2008), to collect data from a school district that mirrored the state's teacher turnover rate. The survey I used provided data regarding the perceptions of administrative support services provided to teachers in the district. The stratified population represented varying certification routes. The survey design was also cost effective, where travel would not be needed to visit the district being polled and the survey method expedited the data collection methods.

Setting and Sample

The population of the study consisted of all certified teachers initially hired to teach in Texas elementary schools in 2010-2011, regardless of certification pathway. I used a stratified approach from a convenience sample in a district in the state of Texas to examine teacher perspectives on the administrative support services provided. I surveyed Teachers from a district reflective of the state's teacher turnover rate. For the purpose of this research study, I determined the state average attrition rate by using the most current, 2010-2011, *Turnover* statistic report from the TEA Snapshot. The Snapshot Report provided an overview for a particular school district during a particular year (Texas Education Agency, Snapshot, 2011). Based on the Snapshot report, Texas's average teacher attrition rate was 11.9% for the 2010-2011 school year. District A was reflective

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of the state's teacher turnover rate and aligns with the local problem. Based on the TEA (2011b) district snapshot report, the teacher turnover rate for District A was 10.7%.

According to the TEA (2011a), District A serviced a student body of slightly more than 7,183 students. District A met adequate yearly progress (AYP) per the Texas Education Agency's accountability system and had an 86% passing rate for all tests taken in all grades. I compared student, staff, and demographical information between the state and District A in Table 1. District A reported a teaching staff of 448 teachers and a student to teacher ratio of 15.0:1.

Table 1

State and District Comparison

		State	District A
Student Ethnicities	African American	12.9%	11.0%
	Hispanic	50.3%	19.5%
	White	31.2%	62.5%
	Native American	0.5%	0.6%
	Asian/Pacific Islander	3.5%	4.8%
Student Special Populations	Economically Disadvantage	59.2%	29.7%
	LEP	16.9%	3.0%
	At-Risk	46.3%	29.4%
Staff Information	Average years of experience	11.4 years	13.0 years
	Average years of experience within the district	7.7 years	7.3 years
	Teacher Turnover Rate	11.9%	10.7%
Teacher Years of Experience	Beginning Teachers	6.0%	0.8%
	1-5 years of experience	30.0%	34.0%
	6-10 years of experience	21.1%	13.8%
	11-20 years of experience	25.0%	24.7%
	Over 20 years of experience	17.9%	26.6%

According to Table 1, District A closely reflects the State's demographics in the areas of Native American populations, the average years of teaching experience, teacher turnover rate, and most years of experience. However, there are some contrasts between the State and District A. The biggest discrepancies lie between the economically disadvantaged populations, the White population, the LEP population, the Hispanic population, and beginning teachers. In some areas nearly a 50% difference between the state and district A.

A single-stage, random purposeful, and stratified approach from a convenience sample was used to gather data from four populations within District A: traditionally certified, returning teachers; alternatively certified, returning teachers; traditionally certified, non-returning teachers; and alternatively certified, non-returning teachers. For the purpose of this study, traditional certification refers to teachers certified through a traditional four-year university program. Alternative certification refers to teachers certified outside a four year university program.

With assistance from the human resource departments in District A, I sent surveys to all elementary teachers initially employed by the district for the 2010-2011 school year. This population included teachers who returned and teachers who did not return to the district for the 2011-2012 school year. I used a stratified approach for a convenience sample across the campuses in the selected district. To identify a local district as the sample for the study, I used a convenience sampling and conducted a random sample to ensure that each certification route was represented equally. According to Fink (2006), a convenience sample is used when a sample is needed out of convenience. For the

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purpose of this research, I chose District A due to the convenience of reflecting the state's

teacher turnover rate. Based on the TEA (2011) district snapshot report, the teacher

turnover rate for District A was 10.7%.

I selected participants for this study based on four strata (Table 2): traditional

certification pathway and alternative certification pathway, and returning or not returning

after the 2010-2011 school year. Selected to participate in this research project were

participants who fall into the four categories from District A. According to the

convenience sample, District A, employed 34 new to the district elementary teachers for

the 2010-2011 school year. I used this sampling technique to ensure that both

certification routes were represented equally, and that returning and non-returning

teachers were included and within a district reflective of the state's teacher turnover rate.

Table 2

Stratified Sampling

	Returned to Teaching	Did not Return to Teaching
Certification Pathway		
	Traditional Certification Route: Teachers returned to the teaching profession	Traditional Certification Route: Teachers did not return to the teaching profession.
	Alternative Certified Route: Teachers returned to the teaching profession	Alternative Certified Route: Teachers did not return to the teaching profession

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The sample for this study consisted of seven traditionally certified teachers and seven alternatively certified teachers. Of the traditionally certified teachers, all participants returned to the field of teaching. For the alternatively certified teachers, two participants did not return to teaching after their first year of teaching.

Instrumentation and Materials

In order to determine the frequency of support provided to traditionally certified and alternatively certified teachers either returning to the classroom or not returning to the classroom, I used a two-part survey to assess teacher perceptions on the frequency of the support provided to the population by administrators. The *Teacher Support Survey: Dimensions of Support Leading to Retention* created and validated by Schindewolf (2008), was used to measure teacher perceptions regarding principal support (see Appendix A). Schindewolf's survey reflects teacher's perceptions of importance regarding teacher support and was chunked into 4 effective leadership qualities; personable and professionalism, instructional leader, school climate and community relations, and organization and management. According to Schindewolf's (2008) research, the instrument provided a coefficient result of .96 using Cronbach's alpha coefficient. To determine the reliability of the instrument, a score of .80 is required. A result of .96 indicated internal consistency and therefore a reliable instrument. With permission from Schindewolf, the 45 item, four-point Likert-type survey responses were modified to attach a descriptor for each numerical response (see Appendix D).

The survey was electronically administered through email by FormSite.com to those teachers in the identified sample currently employed in District A and mailed to

those that did not return to the district after the 2011-2012 school year. I secured addresses for the non-returning teachers from the participating district's human resource department. Part one of the survey obtained demographic data, and part two of the survey consisted of 45 four-point Likert-type survey items. I used FormSite.com since it generated a report that summarized survey responses and tracked respondents.

Participants responded to the background information by selecting the answers in a drop down menu or by circling it on a paper survey. Information obtained included: certification path, number of years teaching, certification standing, returning teacher and whether their decision to return was due to the administrative support provided. In part two of the survey, I used a Likert-type survey to quantify the importance of the administrative support provided. The response choices of the Likert-type survey included: 1-Always, 2-Almost Always, 3-Almost Never, 4- Never. I used descriptive statistics to analyze the demographic section of the survey, and I used the Wilcoxon Signed-Ranks test and the chi-square test for independence to analyze the 45 Likert-type survey items.

Validity

Validity is defined as the degree to which a test measures what it is intended to measure (Gay & Airasian, 2000). According to Schindewolf (2008), the survey instrument was proven valid and reliable by the developer. Schindewolf (2008) established validity for the items by conducting field-tests and used experts to verify the findings (Schindewolf, 2008).

Reliability

Reliability is the degree to which a test consistently measures whatever it is measuring (Gay & Airasian, 2000). The more reliable a test is, the more confidence we can have that the scores obtained from the test are essentially the same scores that would be obtained on repeated administrations of the test to the same participants. Cronbach's alpha coefficient established the reliability of the instrument. Cronbach's alpha estimates the consistency of the instrument among the items in a single test (Gay & Airasian, 2010). According to Schindewolf's (2008) research, the instrument provided a Cronbach's alpha result of .96 which indicated internal consistency and therefore a reliable instrument.

Data Collection and Analysis

For this research study, I was the person responsible for collecting and analyzing the data. Prior to collecting data for the study, letters of cooperation from the participating district were solicited and received (Appendix C). The sample population received an introductory communication through either email or the U.S. Postal Service with a cover letter, an explanation of the survey, the survey, the purpose of the survey, how the results will be shared, and with assurances that the responses from the survey will remain anonymous by the removal of all names or identifiers. Participants without e-mail capabilities received a self-addressed, stamped envelope included in the introductory packet. I obtained e-mail addresses and contact information through the human resource department in the district.

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After initial contact was made with a cover letter and the survey link or survey, participants had one month to submit their responses. After the duration of a month, another e-mail or letter was sent to all participants to request participation with a reminder of their anonymity and a thank you to those that have already responded. I allowed two additional weeks for responses and submissions. A third opportunity was provided when all participants received a survey via the United States Postal System. At the conclusion of the data collection period, I coded the nominal data for data analysis purposes.

I utilized an Excel spreadsheet to monitor the correspondence to the district, schools, and participants. All correspondence was personalized to the participating campuses and participants. I logged the date and return of the survey into the Excel document.

The data analysis for this study included quantitative methodologies. Creswell (2003) explained that, "the process of data analysis involves making sense out of text and image data" (p. 190). This methodology encompasses the demographic data and the Likert-type survey items. I used descriptive statistics to analyze the demographic data, and frequency charts to gather data on the participants' certification route, certification standing, number of years teaching, and intent to stay in the classroom. To determine if there was a statistically significant difference between certification routes and the perceptions of administrative support (research question one), I reported findings using the Wilcoxon paired sample Signed-Ranks test.

To find the ranked means, the responses of each of the Likert-type survey items were averaged and compared to the mean of the other item responses to determine the support that teachers identified as always provided or never provided. The Wilcoxon paired sample Signed-Ranks test was conducted on each category of the Likert-type survey items. The Wilcoxon Signed-Ranks tests is a non-parametric statistical test for testing a hypothesis on median and used when the sample size is small (Choudhury, 2009). The Wilcoxon test was developed to analyze data from studies with a matched-subjects design. The purpose of matched-subjects designs is to evaluate whether the pairs of participants differ significantly (Green & Shalkind, 2008). The Wilcoxon procedure computes a test statistic W_{STAT} that is compared to an expected value. W_{STAT} is computed by summing the ranked differences of the deviation of each variable from a hypothesized median above the hypothesized value (Choudhury, 2009). The Wilcoxon paired sample Signed-Ranks tests assessed whether there is a ranked difference between the four stratified samples to determine if there was a statistically significant difference between traditionally certified teachers and alternatively certified teachers. A p-value of .05 was used to determine if a relationship exists. On the SPSS software, the p-value is represented as the asymptotic significance, Asymp Sig.

Research question two was correlational because it described in quantitative terms the degree to which two variables were related.   The variables in this study were the teacher perceptions of administrative support practices and teacher decisions to leave the teaching profession. To determine if there was a relationship between teacher perceptions of administrative support practices and teacher attrition, I conducted the chi-

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square test for independence for each Likert-type survey item and for each stratified

population. To determine if a positive relationship exists, a decimal close to +1.00 is

obtained. A correlation does not exist if the outcome is close to 0.0 and an inverse

correlation is made if the coefficient is near -1.00. I entered information from the survey

into the SPSS software to compute correlations between administrative support and

teacher's intent to remain in the classroom or leave the classroom.

Participants' Rights

Many efforts were put into place in order to ensure the rights of the participants

were protected before, during, and after the study. Prior to collecting data for this

research study, I received letters of cooperation from the participating district (Appendix

C). Approval from the Institutional Review Board of Walden University (IRB 05-29-12-

0072775) and a signed consent by the participants was one way assurance was provided

to protect the participant's anonymity and rights prior to the study. There were no known

risks to the participants or ethical issues associated with the study. The consent form

provided information about the study, the timeline of the study, procedures, and

safeguards. Participants were informed of the safeguards in place to ensure that their

participation was voluntary and that withdrawal from the study could be done at any time

without coercion. Additional participant rights included the right to receive a copy of the

results and question the results of the study, the right of privacy and the respect of their

privacy, and signatures of the participant to acknowledge agreement to these rights. Prior

to agreeing to participate in the study, participants had the opportunity to review the

questionnaire in order to understand what was agreed upon. Appropriate measures such

as pseudonyms and numbers were used to protect the participant and the identity. The

data will be stored for five years.

A possible personal bias includes the fact that I am currently employed as an

administrator in a public school district in Texas. I attempted to limit any personal bias

by selecting a district with which I have no affiliation.

Summary

In Section 3, I provided an overview of the research method for this research

study. First, I identified the research design and approach. I used a quantitative, cross

sectional study to identify the relationship between the independent variable, teacher

perceptions of administrative support, and the dependent variable, teacher decisions to

either remain in or leave the teaching profession. Subsequently, I established the setting

and sample. A stratified approach to a convenience sampling was used across a district in

the state of Texas to examine teachers' perspectives on the administrative support

services provided. Teachers were sampled from a district reflecting the state's teacher

turnover rate. After that, I described the instruments and materials.   A two part survey,

The *Teacher Support Survey: Dimension of Support Leading to Retention* was used to

assess teacher perceptions of administrative support. Next, I reviewed the data collection

and analysis plan. The data analysis for this study included quantitative methodologies.

Descriptive statistics were utilized to analyze the demographic data. To determine if

there was a statistically significant difference between certification routes and the

perceptions of administrative support, I conducted the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank test on

each of the Likert-type survey items. To determine if there was a relationship between

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teachers' perceptions of administrative support practices and teacher attrition, I used the

chi-square test for independence for statistical analysis. To conclude section 3, I

identified the participant's rights. Many efforts were put into place in order to ensure the

rights of the participants were protected before, during, and after the study. Section 4

will discuss the results, findings, and conclusions for both research questions.

Section 4: Results

Introduction

The problem that I addressed in this research study was a national shortage of teachers. The purpose of this quantitative study was to identify the relationship between the independent variable, teacher perceptions of administrative support, and the dependent variable, teacher decisions to either remain in or leave the teaching profession. The population of this research study consisted of all certified teachers, from varying certification pathways, hired to teach in Texas elementary schools in 2010-2011, from which a convenience sample was identified from a local district which was reflective of the state's teacher turnover rate.

The forthcoming discussions present the research findings from the demographic data and research questions. For the demographic data, participants responded to the background information by selecting the answers in a drop down menu or by circling it on a paper survey. Information obtained included: certification path, number of years teaching, certification standing, returning teacher, and whether their decision to return was due to the positive administrative support provided. I utilitzed descriptive statistics to analyze the demographic data, and frequency charts to present data on the participants' certification route, certification standing, number of years teaching, and intent to stay in the classroom

For the survey questions, the *Teacher Support Survey: Dimensions of Support Leading to Retention* created and validated by Schindewolf (2008) measured teacher perceptions regarding principal support. A paired sample Wilcoxon Signed-Rank test for

independent samples was used to evaluate research question one. To determine if there was a relationship between teacher perceptions of administrative support practices and teacher attrition in research question two, I used the chi-square test for independence.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

The research questions and hypotheses were:

Research Question 1: Is there a significant difference between teacher licensure routes and teacher perceptions of the effectiveness of administrative support practices provided?

H_o *1*: There is no significant difference between teacher licensure routes and teacher perceptions of the effectiveness of administrative support practices.

H_1 *1*: There is a significant difference between teacher licensure routes and teacher perceptions of the effectiveness of administrative support practices.

Research Question 2: Is there a significant relationship between teacher perceptions of the effectiveness of administrative support practices and teacher decisions to leave or remain in the teaching profession?

H_o *2*: There is no significant relationship between teacher perceptions of effectiveness of administrative support practices and teacher decisions to leave the teaching profession.

H_1 *2*: There is a significant relationship between teacher perceptions of effectiveness of administrative support practices and teacher decisions to leave the teaching profession.

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The *Teacher Support Survey: Dimensions of Support Leading to Retention* created

and validated by Schindewolf (2008), measured teacher perceptions regarding principal

support (see Appendix A). In Section 4, I present the results of the study, organized by

the research questions. These are followed by consistencies and inconsistencies found

from the study and a discussion of alternative interpretations.

Data Collection and Analysis

The purpose of this study was to collect and analyze data to determine if there is a

relationship between teacher perceptions of administrative support and teacher decisions

to either remain in or leave the teaching profession. I used the *Teacher Support Survey:*

Dimensions of Support Leading to Retention (Schindewolf, 2008 to collect data from a

school district, District A, that mirrored the state's teacher turnover rate. The survey

provided data regarding the perceptions of administrative support services provided to

teachers in the district. I selected participants based on four strata: traditional

certification pathway and alternative certification pathway, and returning or not returning

after the 2010-2011 school year. Participants who fell into the four categories from

District A participated in the research project. According to the convenience sample, 34

elementary teachers new to the district were employed for the 2010-2011 school year in

District A. This sampling technique ensured that both certification routes were

represented equally, and that returning and non-returning teachers were included and

within a district reflective of the state's teacher turnover rate.

I analyzed the data from this study using Statistical Package for Social Sciences

(SPSS) 16.0 Statistical Software Package. To analyze and interpret the responses to the

survey, I entered the data into a frequency distribution table. To calculate the mean of each question, I assigned a numerical value according to the following: 1-Always, 2-Almost Always, 3-Almost Never, 4- Never. To find the ranked means, the responses of each of the Likert-type survey items were averaged and compared to the mean of the other item responses to determine the support that teachers identified as *always provided* or *never provided*. Descriptive statistics analyzed the demographic data. Frequency charts displayed the data on the participants' certification route, certification standing, number of years teaching, and intent to stay in the classroom.

Demographic Data

The first section on the survey involved background information. Participants responded to the background information by selecting the answer in a drop down menu or by circling it on a paper survey. Table 3 includes the results of the demographic data obtained: certification path, number of years teaching, certification standing, returning teacher, and whether their decision to return was due to the administrative support provided. Less than 1%, 2, of the respondents had taught for 1 year; 11 (79%) of the respondents had taught for 2-5 years; and 1 (<1%) of the respondents had taught for 6-10 years.

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Table 3

Demographic Data

	Alternatively certified	Traditionally certified
Years of teaching experience		
• 1st year of teaching	2	0
• 2-5 years of teaching	4	7
• 6-10 years of teaching	1	0
Returned to the classroom	5	6
Did not return to the classroom	2	1
My principal **HAD** a significant impact on my decision to remain or leave the teaching profession.	5	4
My principal had **NO** significant impact on my decision to remain or leave the teaching profession.	2	3

Survey Responses:

For data dissemination purposes, the 45 Likert-type questions were chunked into five categories. I used chunking categories for no other purpose than presenting the data from the survey. Table 4 highlights the frequency distribution for the questions that centered on the principal being "personable and professional" (seven questions).

Table 4

Personable and Professional

		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q27	Q41
N	Valid	14	14	14	14	14	14	14
	Always	7.1	7.1	7.1	7.1	7.1	0.0	0.0
	Almost always	57.1	50.0	71.4	42.9	35.7	35.7	64.3
	Almost never	14.3	21.4	7.1	35.7	42.9	42.9	21.4
	Never	14.3	21.4	14.3	14.3	14.3	21.4	14.3
	Mean	2.21	2.50	2.21	2.50	2.57	2.85	2.50
	Std. error of mean	.28	.29	.26	.27	.27	.20	.20
	Median	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.50	3.00	3.00	2.00
	Std. deviation	1.05	1.09	.97	1.015	1.01	.77	.75

Survey questions pertaining to Category 1, the principal as personable and professional: the principal acts friendly toward me (Question 1); the principal is easy to approach (Question 2); the principal gives me undivided attention when I am talking (Question 3); the principal is honest and straightforward with me (Question 4); the principal gives me a sense of importance (Questions 5); the principal is available to help me when needed (Question 27); and the principal models universally held values and beliefs (Question 41). The mean for questions on personable and professional support ranged from 2.21 to 2.85, which indicated that teachers responded, on average, as *almost always* and *almost never* to the questions in this category. Mean responses close to ± 3.00, such as 2.85 on question 27 indicated that participants selected *almost never* more frequently than questions with a lower mean. Questions 1 and 3 had a lower mean, 2.21, which means more participants selected *almost always* as a response. Question 41 had

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the smallest standard deviation, .75, which means that the participants' responses most

resembled the mean, 2.50, or split responses of *almost always* and *almost never*. Table 4

shows the frequency distribution for questions related to the principal being an

"instructional leader" (Fourteen questions).

Table 5

Instructional Leadership

		Q7	Q13	Q14	Q15	Q16	Q20	Q21	Q22	Q23	Q26	Q28	Q42	Q44	Q45
N	Valid	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14
	Always	7.1	7.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	14.3	14.3	0.0	0.0	7.1	0.0	14.3	0.0
	Almost always	7.1	7.1	64.3	21.4	21.4	21.4	64.3	57.1	21.4	57.1	78.6	57.1	28.6	0.0
	Almost never	64.3	57.1	21.4	57.1	50.0	50.0	7.1	14.3	57.1	28.6	0.0	28.6	35.7	78.6
	Never	21.4	28.6	14.3	21.4	28.6	28.6	14.3	14.3	21.4	14.3	14.3	14.3	21.4	21.4
	Mean	2.92	3.00	2.50	3.00	3.07	3.07	2.21	2.28	3.00	2.57	2.21	2.57	2.64	3.21
	Std. error of mean	.26	.27	.20	.18	.19	.19	.23	.24	.18	.20	.21	.20	.26	.11
	Median	3.00	3.00	2.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	2.00	2.00	3.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	3.00	3.00
	Std. deviation	.99	1.03	.75	.67	.73	.73	.89	.91	.67	.75	.80	.75	1.00	.42

Survey questions pertaining to Category 2, the principal as an instructional

leader included: the principal maintains a visible presence in my classroom (Question 7);

the principal serves as a resource for my reflection and deliberation on instructional

issues (Question 13); the principal encourages my participation in instructional decisions

(Question 14); the principal offers constructive feedback to me after observations

(Question 15); the principal provides me with up-to-date instructional techniques

(Question 16); the principal provides me with knowledge of current legal policies and

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administrative regulations (Question 20); the principal provides me with opportunities to

attend workshops, conferences, and to take courses (Question 21); the principal

encourages my professional growth (Question 22); the principal provides me with

suggestions for instructional improvement (Question 23); the principal assists me with

proper identification of special education students (Question 26); the principal

encourages teacher and student engagement in learning (Question 28); the principal

provides me with standards for performance (Question 42); the principal participates in

child study/eligibility/ARD meetings/parent conferences (Question 44); and the principal

provides me with frequent feedback about performance (Question 45). The mean for

questions on instructional leadership support ranged from 2.21 to 3.00 which indicated

that teachers responded, on average, as *almost always* and *almost never* to the questions

in this category. Mean responses of ±3.00, such as 3.00 on question 13, 3.07 on question

16, and 3.21 on question 45 indicated that participants selected *almost never* more

frequently than questions with a lower mean. Questions 21 and 28 had a lower mean,

2.21, which means more participants selected *almost always* as a response.   Question 45

had the smallest standard deviation, which means that the participants' responses most

resembled the mean of 3.21 or *almost never*. Table 6 displays the frequency distribution

for questions relating to the principal's role with "school climate" (twelve questions).

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Table 6

School Climate

		Q6	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q12	Q17	Q18	Q19	Q24	Q31	Q33	Q43
N	Valid	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14
	Always	7.1	7.1	7.1	7.1	7.1	7.1	7.1	0.0	7.1	0.0	0.0	7.1
	Almost always	42.9	42.9	42.9	57.1	28.6	64.3	57.1	7.1	71.4	42.9	35.7	28.6
	Almost never	35.7	35.7	35.7	21.4	50.0	14.3	21.4	71.4	7.1	42.9	42.9	50.0
	Never	14.3	14.3	14.3	14.3	14.3	14.3	14.3	21.4	14.3	14.3	21.4	14.3
	Mean	2.50	2.50	2.50	2.35	2.64	2.35	2.42	3.14	2.28	2.71	2.85	2.35
	Std. error of mean	.27	.27	.27	.26	.26	.22	.22	.14	.22	.19	.20	.22
	Median	2.50	2.50	2.50	2.00	3.00	2.00	2.00	3.00	2.00	3.00	3.00	2.00
	Std. deviation	1.01	1.01	1.01	1.00	1.00	.84	.85	.53	.82	.72	.77	.84

Survey questions pertaining to Category 3, the principal and school climate

included: the principal considers my ideas (Question 6); the principal allows me to have

input in decisions that affect me (Question 8), the principal supports me on decisions

(Question 9); the principal shows genuine concern for my program and students

(Question 10); the principal notices what I do (Question 12); the principal trusts my

judgment in making classroom decisions (Question 17); the principal shows confidence

in my actions (Question 18); the principal provides information for improving my coping

skills (Question 19); the principal displays knowledge of and respect for societal needs

and expectations (Question 24); the principal establishes channels of communication

between myself and other teachers (Question 31); the principal helps me develop a sense

of social and civic responsibility (Question 33); and the principal treats me as one of the

faculty (Question 43). The mean for questions on school morale ranged from 2.35 to

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3.14 which indicated that teachers responded, on average, as *almost always* and *almost*

never to the questions in this category. Mean responses of ± 3.00, such as 3.14 on

question 19 or 2.85 on question 33, indicated that participants selected *almost never* more

frequently than questions with a lower mean. Questions 24 had a lower mean, 2.28,

which means more participants selected *almost always* as a response.   Question 19, the

principal provides information for improving my coping skills, had the smallest standard

deviation of .53 which means that the participants responses most resembled the mean of

3.14 or *almost never*. Table 7 accounts for the frequency distribution on questions

regarding the principal's "organization and management" (twelve questions).

Table 7

Management and Organization

		Q11	Q25	Q29	Q30	Q32	Q34	Q35	Q36	Q37	Q38	Q39	Q40
N	Valid	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14
	Always	7.1	0.0	7.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Almost always	57.1	57.1	57.1	42.9	35.7	28.6	35.7	57.1	71.4	21.4	7.1	21.4
	Almost never	21.4	28.6	14.3	35.7	42.9	50.0	42.9	21.4	14.3	64.3	57.1	57.1
	Never	14.3	14.3	21.4	21.4	21.4	21.4	21.4	21.4	14.3	14.3	35.7	21.4
	Mean	2.35	2.57	2.50	2.78	2.85	2.92	2.85	2.64	2.42	2.92	3.28	3.00
	Std. error of mean	.26	.20	.25	.21	.20	.19	.20	.22	.20	.16	.16	.18
	Median	2.00	2.00	2.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	2.00	2.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
	Std. deviation	1.00	.75	.94	.80	.77	.73	.77	.84	.75	.61	.61	.67

Survey questions pertaining to Category 4, the principal and management and

organization included: the principal gives me clear guidelines regarding my

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responsibilities (Question 11); the principal identifies resource personnel to contact for

specific problems that he/she is unable to solve (Question 25); the principal helps me to

establish my schedule (Question 29); the principal helps me to solve problems and

conflicts that occur (Question 30); the principal helps me with classroom discipline

problems (Question 32); the principal helps me during parent conferences when needed

(Question 34); the principal provides me with time for non-teaching responsibilities

(Question 35); the principal provides me with adequate planning time (Question 36); the

principal provides me with materials, space, and resources (Question 37); the principal

works with me to plan specific goals and objectives for my program (Question 38); the

principal provides me with extra assistance when I become overloaded (Question 39);

and the principal equally distributes resources and unpopular task (Question 40). The

mean for questions on school management and organization ranged from 2.35 to 3.28

which indicated that teachers responded, on average, as *almost always* and *almost never*

to the questions in this category. Mean responses of ± 3.00 such as 3.00 on question 40,

3.28 on question 39 or 2.92 on question 38 indicated that participants selected *almost*

never more frequently than questions with a lower mean. Questions 11 had a lower

mean, 2.35, which means more participants selected *almost always* as a response.

Question 38, the principal works with me to plan specific goals and objectives for my

program, and 39, the principal provides me with extra assistance when I become

overloaded, had the smallest standard deviation of .61 which means that the participants

responses most resembled the mean of 2.92 or 3.28 or *almost never*. Using a mean of

2.75 or higher, the data indicated that the participants responded *almost always* on 1 out

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of 7 questions for the category of personable and professional, 7 out of the 14 questions on instructional leadership, 2 out of 12 questions for school climate, and 7 out of 12 on organization and management.

Findings

Research Question One

Research question one asked if there was a significant difference between teacher licensure routes and teacher perceptions of the effectiveness of administrative support practices provided. The hypotheses for Research Question 1 were:

$H_o 1$: There is no significant difference between teacher licensure routes and teacher perceptions of the effectiveness of administrative support practices.

$H_1 1$: There is a significant difference between teacher licensure routes and teacher perceptions of the effectiveness of administrative support practices.

A Wilcoxon Signed-Rank test for independent samples evaluated the mean difference between the four stratified samples. The Wilcoxon paired sample Signed-Rank test is a non-parametric statistical test for testing a hypothesis on median and used when the sample size is too small (Choudhury, 2009). According to Brown and Schainker (2008), the Wilcoxon Signed Ranks test is designed to test a hypothesis about the location (median) of a population distribution. A p-value of .05 was used to determine if a relationship exists. On the SPSS software, the p-value is represented as the asymptotic significance, Asymp Sig. For a sample size greater than 30, the Wilcoxon Signed-Ranks statistic follows the z distribution (Green & Salkind, 2008). For this research study, I

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used p-value since the sample size is below 30. As displayed in table 8, the p-value

equals 0.00, which is less than the .05 significance level.

Table 8

Traditional Versus Alternative Survey Responses

	Traditional - Alternative
Z	-6.829[a]
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.000

Results from the Wilcoxon-Signed Ranks tests concluded that the null

hypothesis was rejected and that there was a significant difference between teacher

licensure routes and teacher perceptions of the effectiveness of administrative support

practices. The results indicated a significant difference, $P = .000$, $p < .05$. Table 9 shows

the mean of the ranks for traditional certification was 105.37, while the mean of the ranks

for alternative certification was 76.52.

Table 9

Mean Ranks for Traditional Versus Alternative Survey Responses

		N	Mean rank	Sum of ranks
Traditional – Alternative	Negative ranks	137[a]	105.37	14436.00
	Positive ranks	56[b]	76.52	4285.00
	Ties	122[c]		
	Total	315		

a. Traditional < Alternative

b. Traditional > Alternative

c. Traditional = Alternative

The data indicated that there was a significant difference between certification route and teacher perceptions of the administrative support practices. Teachers from the traditional certification pathway provided positive responses on the survey regarding administrative support services provided whereas the teachers from the alternative certification pathway viewed the administrative support as less supportive during their first three years of teaching.

Research Question Two

Research question two asked if there is a significant relationship between teacher perceptions of the effectiveness of administrative support practices and teacher decisions to leave or remain in the teaching profession? The hypotheses for Research Question 2 were:

H_o *2*: There is no significant relationship between teacher perceptions of effectiveness of administrative support practices and teacher decisions to leave the teaching profession.

H_1 *2*: There is a significant relationship between teacher perceptions of effectiveness of administrative support practices and teacher decisions to leave the teaching profession.

Research Question 2 was correlational because it described in quantitative terms the degree to which two variables were related. To determine if there was a relationship between teacher perceptions of administrative support practices and teacher attrition, the chi-square test for independence was conducted for each stratified population and the decision to leave or remain in the classroom. To determine if a positive relationship exists, a p-value close to +1.00 was needed. A correlation does not exist if the outcome was close to 0.0 and an inverse correlation was made if the coefficient is near -1.00. Information from the survey was entered into the SPSS software to compute correlations between administrative support and teacher's intent to remain in the classroom or leave the classroom. As displayed in table 10, the p-value equals 0.127, which is less than the +1.00 value and aligned closer to 0.0.

Table 10

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson chi-square	2.333[a]	1	.127		
Continuity correction[b]	.583	1	.445		
Likelihood ratio	3.107	1	.078		
Fisher's exact test				.462	.231
N of Valid cases	14				

a. 2 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.00.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

Results from the chi-square test for independence concluded that the null hypothesis was rejected and that there was a significant relationship between teacher perceptions of effectiveness of administrative support practices and teacher decisions to leave the teaching profession. The results indicated a significant difference, $P = .127$, $p < +1.00$.

The data indicated that there was a significant relationship between teacher perceptions of effectiveness of administrative support practices and teachers decisions to leave the teaching profession. Based on the data, teachers from the traditional certification pathway are more likely to remain in the classroom when effective classroom support is provided than alternatively certified teachers.

Consistencies and Inconsistencies

The usefulness of a measurement tool is reliant on the extent to which it can be considered reliable and accurate (Gray & Airasian, 2010). The reliability of the survey

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instrument, the *Teacher Support Survey: Dimensions of Support Leading to Retention,*
was established using Cronbach's alpha coefficient. Cronbach's alpha estimates the
consistency of the instrument among the items in a single test (Gay & Airasian, 2010).
According to Schindewolf's (2008) research, the instrument provided a Cronbach's alpha
result of .96 which indicated internal consistency and therefore a reliable instrument.
Since the survey instrument is considered reliable, then the results of the survey would be
considered reliable as well. The null hypotheses for both research questions have been
rejected, therefore, the data support that there is a significant difference between teacher
licensure routes and teacher perceptions of the effectiveness of administrative support
practices, and that there is a significant relationship between teacher perceptions of
effectiveness of administrative support practices and teacher decisions to leave the
teaching profession.

Alternate Interpretations

Data collection was monitored to ensure adherence to the data collection
protocol and to minimize and resolve missing data analysis and interpretation.
Monitoring procedures were instituted at the outset and maintained throughout the study.
Despite these efforts, the data could be skewed and form an alternate or inaccurate
interpretation if the participant responded as a result of a personal biasness toward their
administrator, regardless of the support they had been provided. Assurances, such as
participant anonymity, were put into place at the onset of the research study to encourage
accurate survey responses. In the state of Texas, many campuses/districts were
undergoing a reduction in force (RIF) situation due to budget cuts during the data

collection period. The teachers not returning, 3 or 11% of the participants, may have

been products of the RIF and responded negatively as a result of job loss and not because

of the support the administrator did or did not provide. Forty-four percent of the

surveyed participants stated that the administration had no impact on their decision, and

55% stated that the administration had an impact on their decision to remain or leave the

classroom.

Conclusion

The purpose of this quantitative study was to identify the relationship between

teacher perceptions of administrative support and teacher decisions to either remain in or

leave the teaching profession. I examined two research questions in this study:

1. Was there a significant difference between teacher licensure routes and

    teacher perceptions of the effectiveness of administrative support practices

    provided?

2. Was there a significant relationship between teacher perceptions of the

    effectiveness of administrative support practices and teacher decisions to

    leave or remain in the teaching profession?

Regarding the frequency distribution of the 45 Likert-type survey questions, the

data indicated that participants were less favorable of the principal's support in the area

of instructional leadership and organization and management. Also, participants

responded favorably toward the principal being professional and personable and the

principal provided a positive school climate.

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In regard to the first research question, data indicated that there was a significant difference between certification route and teacher perceptions of the administrative support practices. Teachers from the traditional certification pathway provided positive responses on the survey regarding administrative support services provided whereas the teachers from the alternative certification pathway viewed the administrative support as less supportive during their first three years of teaching.

Regarding the second research question, data indicated that there was a significant relationship between teacher perceptions of effectiveness of administrative support practices and teachers decisions to leave the teaching profession. Based on the data, teachers from the traditional certification pathway are more likely to remain in the classroom when effective classroom support is provided than alternatively certified teachers. Section 5 provides a discussion of the results, conclusions, implications for social change, and recommendations for further study.

Section 5: Discussion, Conclusion, and Recommendations

Overview

The problem that I addressed in this research study was a national shortage of teachers. The purpose of this quantitative study was to identify the relationship between the independent variable, teacher perceptions of administrative support, and the dependent variable, teacher decisions to either remain in or leave the teaching profession. The population of this research study consisted of all certified teachers, from varying certification pathways, hired to teach in Texas elementary schools in 2010-2011, from which a convenience sample was identified from a local district which was reflective of the state's teacher turnover rate.

The random purposeful sample responded to an electronic or paper survey regarding their views about the administrative support offered by campus administrators to teachers. To measure teacher perceptions regarding principal support, I used the *Teacher Support Survey: Dimensions of Support Leading to Retention,* created and validated by Schindewolf (2008). Once surveys were returned, I stratified the random sample to ensure that each certification route was represented equally.

A paired sample Wilcoxon Signed-Rank test for independent samples evaluated the mean difference between the four stratified samples. To determine if there was a relationship between teacher perceptions of administrative support practices and teacher attrition, I used the chi-square test for independence. I also performed a chi-square test on the frequency data to determine if there was a relationship between certification routes and teacher attrition.

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The findings for Research Question 1 indicated that there was a significant difference between certification route and teacher perceptions of the administrative support practices. Teachers from the traditional certification pathway provided positive responses on the survey regarding administrative support services provided whereas the teachers from the alternative certification pathway viewed the administrative support as less supportive during their first three years of teaching. For Research Question 2, results from the chi-square test for independence indicated that there was a significant relationship between teacher perceptions of effectiveness of administrative support practices and teachers decisions to leave the teaching profession. When Teachers from the traditional certification pathway received effective classroom support, they were more likely to remain in the classroom than alternatively certified teachers.

Interpretation of Findings

Research Question 1

Research question one asked if there was a significant difference between teacher licensure routes and teacher perceptions of the effectiveness of administrative support practices provided. A paired sample Wilcoxon Signed-Rank test for independent samples evaluated the mean difference between the four stratified samples. Results from the Wilcoxon-Signed Ranks tests concluded that the null hypothesis was rejected and that there was a significant difference between teacher licensure routes and teacher perceptions of the effectiveness of administrative support practices. The results indicated a significant difference, $P = .000$, $p < .05$. The mean of the ranks for traditional certification was 105.37, while the mean of the ranks for alternative certification was

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76.52. Teachers from the traditional certification pathway provided positive responses on the survey regarding administrative support services provided whereas the teachers from the alternative certification pathway viewed the administrative support as significantly less supportive during their first three years of teaching.

The theoretical foundation of this research study was Vygotsky's social constructivism. Social constructivism stresses the fundamental role of social interaction in the development of cognition (Vygotsky, 1978). To retain teachers in the field of education, administrators must understand the teachers' perceptions of administrative support before they can transform or craft the support to be authentic to teachers. Based on the research data, teachers entering the teaching field from traditional pathways felt more satisfied with the administrative support provided than alternatively certified teachers.

These findings aligned with Crocco and Costigan's (2007) findings from a 5-year longitudinal study interviewing teachers about their induction into teaching. Findings from this study suggested that traditionally prepared teachers were able to cope with state and district guidelines which kept them working in the field. Alternative candidates struggled more, causing them to leave the district or the field all together. Based on the findings from this research and the literature review, principals that oversee teachers from the alternative program will need to be cognizant that alternative certified teachers may need more administrative support to help them be successful and to remain in the field of education. Specific areas identified from this study include: the principal being available to help when needed; the principal being a resource for reflection and deliberation on

instructional issues; the principal provides up to date instructional techniques; the

principal provides frequent feedback on performance; the principal provides information

on how to improve coping skills; the principal helps develop social and civic

responsibilities; the principal works with teachers to plan specific goals; and the principal

provides extra assistance when a teacher is overloaded. Failure to attend to their need of

support may influence their decision to leave the field within the first three years of

teaching.

Research Question 2

Research question two asked if there was a significant relationship between

teacher perceptions of the effectiveness of administrative support practices and teacher

decisions to leave or remain in the teaching profession. To determine if there was a

relationship between teacher perceptions of administrative support practices and teacher

attrition, the chi-square test for independence was conducted for each stratified

population and the decision to leave or remain in the classroom. Results from the chi-

square test for independence concluded that the null hypothesis was rejected and that

there was a significant relationship between teacher perceptions of effectiveness of

administrative support practices and teacher decisions to leave the teaching profession.

The results indicated a significant relationship between the two variables, $P = .127, p <$

$+1.00$. The data indicated that there was a significant relationship between teacher

perceptions of effectiveness of administrative support practices and teachers' decisions to

leave the teaching profession.

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This research aligned with Vygotsky's social constructivist theory in which Darling-Hammond et al. (2005) found that the amount of teacher preparation is directly linked to teacher attrition rates. Bowen (2004) surveyed 131 principals from a large metropolitan area in Texas. Ninety-four percent of the principals surveyed reported that alternative certification programs are in fact effective; however the principals also realize that "teachers with limited preparation may not be as effective as those teachers from more comprehensive preparation programs" (p. 97). Previous researchers who examine new teacher support have indicated that teachers wanted face-to-face support from their colleagues and supervisors rather than electronic mentoring. Additionally, teachers reported that classroom visits from supervisors, education courses, and clinical experiences were helpful (Warsame, 2011). Warsame also concluded that teachers who left the field cited that school-based support was insufficient for helping them navigate through the first year of teaching. Teachers who had a difficult time relating to their colleagues or who had little access to resources from the district were unlikely to continue in the profession. Other previous research identified that leadership effectiveness was an important predictor of teachers' decision to leave or remain at their current school (Melvin, 2011). The conclusions from this research study corroborate the findings in these earlier studies. Teachers who were supported were more likely to remain in the profession.

Implications for Social Change

This research study is significant for three reasons. First, the research addresses a current problem with teacher attrition and teacher turnover in local school districts in

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Texas. Second, the research assists researchers, principals, preparation programs, and

school districts to understand the importance of principal support of new teacher

development and retention. Third, the research can lead to positive social change by

providing understanding of the role principals have in reducing teacher attrition.

According to the Texas Education Agency's (TEA) PEIMS data for 2011-2012,

the attrition rate for new teachers was 7.6% and 10.5% overall, and by the fifth year of

teaching, the traditional certification route experienced less attrition than the alternative

certification pathway (TEA, 2013). According to the Public Schools of North Carolina

(2102), the teacher turnover rate in North Carolina for the 2010-2011 school year was

12.13%. Currently, North Carolina does not break their attrition rate down by

certification route. A 5-year longitudinal study in the Oakwood County District of

Florida was conducted and revealed that alternatively certified teachers are more likely to

exit than the traditional certified teacher (Ingle, 2007).

The data from this research study indicated that there was a significant

difference between certification route and teacher perceptions of the administrative

support practices. Teachers from the traditional certification pathway provided positive

responses on the survey regarding administrative support services provided whereas the

teachers from the alternative certification pathway viewed the administrative support as

less supportive during their first three years of teaching. The results from this research

study can help principals understand new teachers' needs in order to sustain them in the

classroom. Principals can also have a better understanding that teachers coming from

different certification pathways may have different needs. According to Powell (2004),

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the principals surveyed scored the amount of support they provided to new teachers at

96%, while first-year teachers viewed the amount of support provided at 50%-80%.

Based on these data and the data from this research study, teachers coming from the

alternative certification route will need additional support, and principals will need to

analyze their own support behaviors to determine if the support rendered is enough to

reduce teacher attrition.

The findings in this study have the potential to impact social change in several

ways. One implication for social change derived from this study is an improved

understanding of the administrative support needed for new teachers to remain in the

classroom. Administrators are encouraged to review the survey results for consideration

and implementation in order to better understand what teachers need. The

understandings of the results are important so that administrators can provide the

necessary support system that fosters teacher retention. The guided support, from

administrators and colleagues, will prepare teachers for expected and unexpected

challenges and give them the tools necessary to be sustained in the classroom. Changes

within schools must ensure that teachers have a positive environment and appropriate

support from administrators and colleagues. Administrators need to know that new

teachers will have different needs based on the experiences they were or were not

provided through the preparation program and should create and sustain a proper

infrastructure that allows teachers to focus most of their time and energy on teaching. By

knowing that new teachers need administrative support, school leaders can assist by

minimizing the teachers' additional responsibilities and duties to the extent they can

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legally do so, allowing them to concentrate on their classrooms and students. Principals

also must ensure that new teachers have adequate resources and materials to do their jobs.

Sufficient common planning time should also be built into the schedules of novice

teachers so they can address instructional needs and classroom concerns while having the

support of a team of colleagues.

Teachers and students will do their best work in a healthy, pleasant environment

(Price, 2003). School leaders need to ensure a positive school climate by a climate where

there is laughter, teachers smiling, teachers wanting to be there, new teachers feeling

welcomed and where mistakes are regarded as learning opportunities. If teachers are

connected to their school and are part of it, they may be more likely to identify with it

and stay, even in the tough times (Colley, 2002). The school leader needs to develop and

nurture a schools culture and share it with new teachers so they can gain a sense of

membership and participation. Tschannen-Morgan (2009) stated that teachers were more

likely to take their work seriously and remain in the classroom when the leadership

facilitated their learning and growth. This is also supported by Keyne-Michaels (2007)

who identified key strategies principals should use when providing support to first-year

teachers. These ideas included principals bestowing personal recognition, providing

regular communication, getting to know them on a personal level, being visible and

available, and visiting their classrooms. With these practices in place, teachers will have

a better understanding of their job expectations and will hopefully be more likely to

remain in the classroom.

Another implication for social change is the impact of administrative support on

new teacher development, not only on teacher attrition, but also on the stakeholders within the school, students, parents, and community members. Teacher retention can affect student learning. In schools with high teacher turnover, students may be more likely to have inexperienced teachers who may also provide less effective instruction than a tenured teacher. Ronfeldt, Lankford, Loeb, and Wyckoff (2011) found that teacher turnover has a significant and negative effect on student achievement in both math and ELA. In addition, teacher turnover is connected to instability in schools, making it more difficult to have coherent instruction and build school-wide reform (Tickle, 2008).   High teacher turnover can also be costly in that time and effort is needed to continuously recruit teachers.

According to Hull (2012), school leaders can reduce teacher turnover and control their costs by measuring teacher turnover and understanding its consequences. A reduction in teacher turnover can be achieved by increasing the effectiveness of the teachers. This is done by retaining and recruiting effective teachers and by providing teachers the resources and support they need to maximize their impact on student achievement (Hull, 2013). The school will then be the kind of place where teachers want to be, and a school where all stakeholders will be impacted in a positive way. This study's findings should also add to a growing literature on the importance of administrative support in retaining a strong teacher workforce.

Recommendations for Actions

Based on the findings, this study may have a significant impact on policy and procedure for increasing teacher retention through administrative support. The results are

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valuable to principals, university teacher and principal preparation programs, and new teacher induction programs. Teacher preparation programs could use the results of this study to strengthen their programs. From the results of this study, preparation programs can learn that new teachers vary in their needs and their needs vary depending on the preparation pathway. Knowing this information, preparation programs should align their program to address these needs so that teachers will be more successful during their first years of teaching.

Principals should also be cognizant of the information from this research study as they work with the new teachers and implement induction programs on their campus. This research study aligns with Darling-Hammond and Sykes (2003) and the National Commission on Teaching America's Future (2013). Darling-Hammond and Sykes stated that, "teaching cannot be learned from books or even from being mentored periodically. Teachers must see expert practices modeled and must practice them with help" (2003). According to the National Commission on Teaching America's Future (2013), a comprehensive induction programs requires a mentor, supportive communication from the principal or other administrators, common planning or collaboration time with other teachers in the field, reduced preparations or help from a teacher's aide, and participation in an external network of teachers. Principals can help facilitate this by strengthening the mentoring program on their campus and by providing opportunities for new teachers to observe and co-teach with expert teachers. Principals should also meet regularly with new teachers.

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The findings of this study will be provided first to the participating district and then prepared for publication in professional journals that appeal to administrators and university program coordinators. Based on the findings of this research study, the data indicated that there was a significant relationship between teacher perceptions of effectiveness of administrative support practices and teachers decisions to leave the teaching profession. Teachers from the traditional certification pathway were more likely to remain in the classroom when effective classroom support is provided than alternatively certified teachers. The results of this study suggest that more research about the effects of principal support on teacher attrition is needed and the following changes should be addressed:

1. Efforts should be made by the principal to determine the level of administrative support that is needed for each of the new teachers hired on the campus. This could be done via a survey or through one-on-one conversation with the teacher. Knowing the teacher's certification route and the result of this research study will help the principal determine the level of support a new teacher needs.

2. Efforts should be made by the principal to communicate to new teachers that the principal is available. Principals need to be visible and accessible to new teachers This help should include: being a resource for reflection and deliberation on instructional issues, providing up to date instructional techniques, providing frequent feedback on performance, providing information to improve coping skills, helping develop social and civic

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responsibilities, helping to plan specific goals, and providing assistance when overloaded.

3. Efforts should be made by districts and universities to provide "high quality professional development" institutes for administrators. The purpose would be to increase administrators' understandings of new teacher's needs and improve their ability to apply their understanding to specific scenarios.

Recommendations for Further Study

Future research in reference to factors that lead to teacher attrition include continued research with a broader population and sample to determine the needs of new teachers and the variance between certification routes. For this research study, the population was limited to one Texas school district, however a broader population and sample can help yield a stronger analysis of teacher's perceptions and certification difference. A broader population can also provide insight and application beyond the state of Texas. Since this study was limited to one district in Texas, a future study could sample districts from each regional center to provide an accurate picture of teachers' perceptions across the state.

Further research is also needed on new teacher support services such as mentoring and induction programs and the perception of how effective they are by teachers from varying certification pathways. For this research study, the survey focused on administrative support services. However, there is much research about additional support practices such as mentoring and induction programs. Although some districts do offer mentoring and induction programs, many do not, forcing teachers to rely solely on

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their principal for the support they need. A correlational study should be conducted to compare teacher attrition with districts that do and do not have a mentoring or induction program.

Additional research on teacher perceptions of principal support and student achievement is needed. This research study did not focus on the pertinent issue of how this affects student achievement. There is much research on teacher effectiveness and student achievement, however, more research is needed on the affects of principal support for teachers on student achievement. In other words, is there a significant difference between strong administrative support for new teachers and student achievement? The population for this study should consist of new teachers that teach at schools with high performing student achievement and correlated to new teachers from schools with low performing student achievement.

Conclusion

As the demands for student achievement increases and teacher attrition decreases, the more essential it is to hire highly qualified teachers. In addition, the demands of schools meeting adequately yearly progress (AYP) or other similar measures is even more important than ever before in keeping quality teachers in the classrooms. Teachers today are given more and more responsibilities to determine ways to differentiate education for students, keep up with the increasing amounts of mandatory paperwork, and provide an educational environment conducive for the 21st classroom learner. When we fail to retain effective, highly qualified teachers, we are essentially failing our students. The quality of the teacher in the classroom is the determining factor

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in the student's achievement and learning. The quality of the principal in the school is the determining factor in the performance of the entire staff. Great principals recruit and develop great teachers; great teachers seek out and remain with great principals (Tourkin et al., 2010). "Strong, high-quality administrative support is vital to successful teacher retention" (Corbell, 2008, p. 5). Lack of administrator support among teachers has been found to have a negative impact on the commitment of teachers, resulting in a tendency to leave the teaching profession. Researchers have indicated that in the presence of administrative support, teachers can be influenced to prolong their teaching careers, thereby reducing teacher attrition rates (Ingersoll & May, 2011). According to Johnson (2010), leaders must maintain standards for teaching quality, develop exceptional teacher retention strategies, and retain their most effective existing teachers. Where there is teacher satisfaction and support, teacher retention is escalated and student achievement is improved.

This doctoral study makes a contribution to the literature in that further inquiry was needed to examine the role the administrator plays in order to sustain new teachers and promote social change. The data from this study may provide educational leaders with the knowledge to select appropriate strategies to support new teachers. Social change is achieved through the reduction of the teacher shortage, propelled by new policies and curriculum in preparation programs, induction programs, and administration preparatory programs focused on administrative support strategies for teachers from all certification pathways.

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Appendix A: Teacher Support Survey

Background Information

Please select one response from each category listed below, identified by the asterisk and in bold. Your responses should be reflective of the 2010-2011 school year.

* Certification Route 🔲

☐ Traditional Certification

☐ Alternative Certification

* Number of years of teaching as of the 2010-2011 school year. 🔲

☐ 1st year of teaching

☐ 2 to 5 years

☐ 6-10 years

☐ 11-15 years

☐ 16-20 years

☐ 21-25 years

☐ 25 or more years of teaching

* Teaching Status

☐ I returned to the classroom for the 2011-2012 school year.

☐ I did not return to the classroom for the 2011-2012 school year.

☐ I returned to the classroom for the 2011-2012 school year but changed schools or school districts

* Administrative Support

☐ The administrative support provided to me HAD a significant impact on my decision to either remain in or not remain in the classroom.

☐ The administrative support provided to me had NO significant impact on my decision to either remain in or not remain in the classroom.

Teacher Support Survey

In the follow section you are asked to rate the level of support for each item that the principal provided to you during the 2010-2011 school year.

* The principal acts friendly toward me.

○ Always ○ Almost Always ○ Almost Never ○ Never

* The principal is easy to approach.

○ Always ○ Almost Always ○ Almost Never ○ Never

* The principal gives me undivided attention when I am talking.

○ Always ○ Almost Always ○ Almost Never ○ Never

* The principal is honest and straightforward with me.

○ Always ○ Almost Always ○ Almost Never ○ Never

* The principal gives me a sense of importance.

○ Always ○ Almost Always ○ Almost Never ○ Never

* The principal considers my ideas.

○ Always ○ Almost Always ○ Almost Never ○ Never

* The principal maintains a visible presence in my classroom.

○ Always ○ Almost Always ○ Almost Never ○ Never

* The principal allows me to have input in decisions that affect me.

○ Always ○ Almost Always ○ Almost Never ○ Never

* The principal supports me on decisions.

○ Always ○ Almost Always ○ Almost Never ○ Never

* The principal shows genuine concern for my program and students.

○ Always ○ Almost Always ○ Almost Never ○ Never

* The principal gives me clear guidelines regarding my responsibilities.

○ Always ○ Almost Always ○ Almost Never ○ Never

* The principal notices what I do.

○ Always ○ Almost Always ○ Almost Never ○ Never

* The principal serves as a resource for my reflection and deliberation on instructional issues.

○ Always ○ Almost Always ○ Almost Never ○ Never

* The principal encourages my participation in instructional decisions.

○ Always ○ Almost Always ○ Almost Never ○ Never

* The principal offers constructive feedback to me after observations.

○ Always ○ Almost Always ○ Almost Never ○ Never

* The principal provides me with up-to-date instructional techniques.

○ Always ○ Almost Always ○ Almost Never ○ Never

* The principal trusts my judgment in making classroom decisions.

○ Always ○ Almost Always ○ Almost Never ○ Never

* The principal shows confidence in my actions.

○ Always ○ Almost Always ○ Almost Never ○ Never

* The principal provides information for improving my coping skills.

○ Always ○ Almost Always ○ Almost Never ○ Never

* The principal provides me with knowledge of current legal policies and administrative regulations.

○ Always ○ Almost Always ○ Almost Never ○ Never

* The principal provides me with opportunities to attend workshops, conferences, and to take courses.

○ Always ○ Almost Always ○ Almost Never ○ Never

* The principal encourages my professional growth.

○ Always ○ Almost Always ○ Almost Never ○ Never

* The principal provides me with suggestions for instructional improvement.

○ Always ○ Almost Always ○ Almost Never ○ Never

* The principal displays knowledge of and respect for societal needs and expectations.

○ Always ○ Almost Always ○ Almost Never ○ Never

* The principal identifies resource personnel to contact for specific problems that he/she is unable to solve.

○ Always ○ Almost Always ○ Almost Never ○ Never

* The principal assists me with proper identification of special education students.

○ Always ○ Almost Always ○ Almost Never ○ Never

* The principal is available to help me when needed.

○ Always ○ Almost Always ○ Almost Never ○ Never

* The principal encourages teacher and student engagement in learning.

○ Always ○ Almost Always ○ Almost Never ○ Never

* The principal helps me to establish my schedule.

○ Always ○ Almost Always ○ Almost Never ○ Never

* The principal helps me to solve problems and conflicts that occur.

○ Always ○ Almost Always ○ Almost Never ○ Never

* The principal establishes channels of communication between myself and other teachers.

○ Always ○ Almost Always ○ Almost Never ○ Never

* The principal helps me with classroom discipline problems.

○ Always ○ Almost Always ○ Almost Never ○ Never

* The principal helps me develop a sense of social and civic responsibility.

○ Always ○ Almost Always ○ Almost Never ○ Never

* The principal helps me during parent conferences when needed.

○ Always ○ Almost Always ○ Almost Never ○ Never

* The principal provides me with time for non-teaching responsibilities (e.g. ARD meetings, parent conferences, etc.).

○ Always ○ Almost Always ○ Almost Never ○ Never

* The principal provides me with adequate planning time.

○ Always ○ Almost Always ○ Almost Never ○ Never

* The principal provides me with materials, space, and resources.

○ Always ○ Almost Always ○ Almost Never ○ Never

* The principal works with me to plan specific goals and objectives for my program.

○ Always ○ Almost Always ○ Almost Never ○ Never

* The principal provides me with extra assistance when I become overloaded.

○ Always ○ Almost Always ○ Almost Never ○ Never

* The principal equally distributes resources and unpopular tasks.

○ Always ○ Almost Always ○ Almost Never ○ Never

* The principal models universally held values and beliefs.

○ Always ○ Almost Always ○ Almost Never ○ Never

* The principal provides me with standards for performance.

○ Always ○ Almost Always ○ Almost Never ○ Never

* The principal treats me as one of the faculty.

○ Always ○ Almost Always ○ Almost Never ○ Never

* The principal participates in child study/eligibility/ARD meetings/parent conferences.

○ Always ○ Almost Always ○ Almost Never ○ Never

* The principal provides me with frequent feedback about performance.

○ Always ○ Almost Always ○ Almost Never ○ Never

Appendix B: Letter of Cooperation with School District

Letter of Cooperation

Dear Mrs. Peronto,

Based on my review of your research proposal, I give permission for you to conduct the study entitled "The Relationship Between Teacher Perceptions of Administrative Support and Teacher Retention" within Midway ISD. As part of this study, I authorize you to obtain data from teachers using the *Teacher Support Survey: Dimensions of Support Leading to Retention*. You have my support to contact the human resource department to acquire email addresses for current employees participating in your survey and for contact information for participants that are no longer employed by the district. I understand that the purpose of this survey is to measure teachers' perceptions regarding principal support. I also understand that teachers' participation will be voluntary and at their own discretion. I understand that the data collected will remain entirely confidential and may not be provided to anyone outside of the research team without permission from the Walden University Institutional Review Board. We reserve the right to withdraw from the study at any time if our circumstances change.

Sincerely,

Midway ISD

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Appendix C: Letter of Permission to Use Survey

Letter of Permission to Use Survey

Schindewolf, Amy ███████████████
Sat 10/23/2010 10:37 PM

Ms. Peronto,
I apologize for it taking me so long to respond. Your topic sounds similar to mine so I believe that the survey would suit you well. You have my permission to use it as is or to modify it in any way that you see fit to use.

My study was a follow-up study to Cordeau as outlined in the dissertation. She gave me permission to modify the survey that she had created by combining items from existing surveys. She had validated the new adapted survey so I used hers as a springboard. So, the one that you see in my study was created by me. I used an online survey tool, formsite.com, which worked very well for me. It was easy to use and did a nice job organizing the data. The survey is found in the Appendix of my dissertation. You are welcome to take the questions and use them to make whatever form of survey you wish to use. As described in the dissertation, I field tested my survey for validation. The qualitative questions at the end were able to be placed in the formsite.com site as well.

I wish you luck in your studies. Please don't hesitate if you have further questions.

Amy Schindewolf

Appendix D: Participation Invitation and Informed Consent Form

Participation Invitation and Informed Consent Form

You are invited to take part in a research study of new teacher perceptions of administrative support. The researcher is inviting all elementary teachers initially employed by the selected district for the 2010-2011 school year to be in the study. This form is part of a process called "informed consent" to allow you to understand this study before deciding whether to take part.

This study is being conducted by a researcher name Janice Peronto, who is a doctoral student at Walden University.

Background Information:
The purpose of this study is to identify the relationship between teacher perceptions of administrative support, and teacher decisions to either remain in or leave the teaching profession.

Procedures:
If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to:
- Complete a thirty-question survey, either on-line or on paper.
- Return the paper survey in the self addressed and postage paid envelope.

Here are some sample questions:
- The principal gives me a sense of importance.

 ○ Always ○ Almost Always ○ Almost Never ○ Never

- The principal considers my ideas.

 ○ Always ○ Almost Always ○ Almost Never ○ Never

Voluntary Nature of the Study:
This study is voluntary. Everyone will respect your decision of whether or not you choose to be in the study. No one at Midway Independent School District or Walden University will treat you differently if you decide not to be in the study. If you decide to join the study now, you can still change your mind later. You may stop at any time.

Risks and Benefits of being in the Study:
Being in this type of study involves some risk of the minor discomforts that can be encountered in daily life, such as fatigue or becoming upset. Being in this study would not pose risk to your safety and wellbeing.

The study's potential benefits include: the study will address a current problem with teacher attrition and teacher turnover in a local school district in Texas, the study will

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assist researchers, principals, preparation programs, and school districts understand the importance of principal support on new teacher development and retention, and the study will provide research that will lead to positive social change by understanding the role principals have in reducing teacher attrition.

Payment:
There will not be any payment for your participation in the study.

Privacy:
Any information you provide will be kept confidential. The researcher will not use your personal information for any purposes outside of this research project. Also, the researcher will not include your name or anything else that could identify you in the study reports. Data will be kept secure in a locked filing cabinet. Data will be kept for a period of at least 5 years, as required by the university.

Contacts and Questions:
You may ask any questions you have now. Or if you have questions later, you may contact the researcher via ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮. If you want to talk privately about your rights as a participant, you can call Dr. Leilani Endicott. She is the Walden University representative who can discuss this with you. Her phone number is 1-800-925-3368, extension 1210. Walden University's approval number for this study is

Please print or save this consent form for your records.

Statement of Consent:
I have read the above information and I feel I understand the study well enough to make a decision about my involvement. By returning a completed survey, either by the United Sates Postal Service or on-line, I understand that I am agreeing to the terms described above.

Printed Name of Participant
_____

Date of consent
_____

Participant's Signature
_____

Researcher's Signature
_____

Curriculum Vitae
JANICE L. PERONTO

EDUCATION

Undergraduate	*Graduate*	*Doctorate*
Purdue University	Tarleton State University	Walden University
West Lafayette, IN	Central Texas, TX	Minneapolis, MN
B.A. Elementary Educ.	M. Ed. Principal Cert.	Ed.D. Doctor of Educ.
May 1991	December 2001	December 2013

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Principal; Cedar Valley Elementary, Killeen, TX   2010-Present

Assistant Principal; Cedar Valley Elementary, Killeen, TX   2005-2010

Campus Instr. Spec.; Clifton Park Elementary, Killeen, TX   2002-2005

4th Grade Teacher; Cedar Valley Elementary, Killeen, TX   1993-2002

4th Grade Teacher; Pershing Park Elementary, Killeen, TX   1992-1993

AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS
- GOAL III Action Research Participant   1998-1999
- GOAL III Action Research Coordinator   2002-2006
- Killeen Daily Herald Teacher of the Year   1998
- Walmart Teacher of the Year   1998
- Education Foundation Grant Recipient   2004 & 2005
- Who's Who of American Woman   2007
- Delta Kappa Gamma International Scholarship recipient 2010

PRESENTATIONS
- Texas Elementary Principals and Supervisors Association   1999-2004
- Texas Association of Secondary School Principals   1999
- Giddings Elementary, Giddings, TX   2003
- Stultz Road Elementary, Richardson, TX   2001
- Calk Elementary, Corpus Christie, TX   2001
- Clifton Park Elementary, Killeen, TX   2000
- Emotional Intelligence, Killeen, TX   1998- 2001
- Excel Trainer, new teacher induction program, Killeen TX   1998-2000
- Spotlight on Reading Institute, Region XII   1997
- Present for the Region XII Reading Initiative Institute   1998
- Effective Team Planning, Killeen, TX   1999

- Campus Trainer on TEKS Assessment for Leaders   2000
- Book study, <u>Who Moved my Cheese</u>, Killeen, TX   2002
- Reading Initiative, Killeen, TX   2003
- 6+1 Writing Traits, Killeen, TX   2003

LEADERSHIP

- SBEC Pilot Review committee for the ESL TExES   2003
- GOAL III Coordinator   2002-2004
- TEA Standard Committee, 3rd & 4th grade TAKS math   2002
- SBEC Pilot Review committee for the Generalist EXCET   2001
- SBEC Advisory Panel, Master Reading Teacher   1999-2000
- Strategic Planning Committee member, Killeen, TX   1999
- Cadre Representative, Killeen, TX   1996-1997
- Supervising Teacher, University of Mary Hardin Baylor   1999-2000
- GOAL III Action Research Participant   1998-1999
- Student Council Advisor   2003-2004

SCHOLARLY ACHIEVEMENT

- Education Foundation Grant, Killeen, TX   2004 and 2005
- Writer for the JFTK/TBEC Honor Roll application   2003
- Killeen ISD Education Foundation Grant, Killeen, TX   2004
- Co-Write 4th and 5th grade Science Curriculum, Killeen, TX   2002
- Co-Write Strategic Planning, Killeen, TX   1999
- Co-Write Blue Ribbon Application, Killeen, TX   1998
- Goal III Action Research, Killeen, TX   1994