Secondary Teachers' Perceptions of the Instructional Evaluation Process

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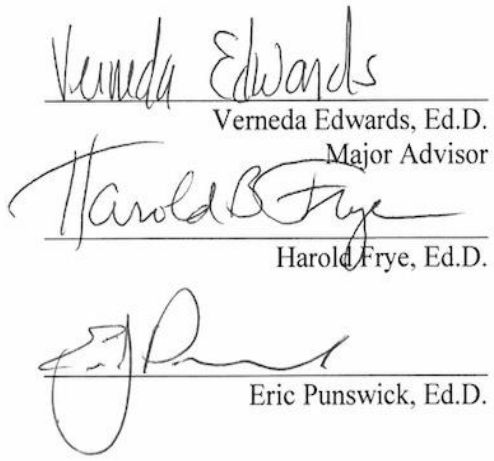

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to determine the extent to which teachers perceive the evaluation process as an accountability tool and a tool to improve instruction. Another purpose of this study was to determine the extent to which teachers use the teacher evaluation process to improve their professional practice and decisions. In addition, the extent of the differences of these perceptions and use of the evaluation process between core and non-core teachers, as well as among teachers based on experience (0-5, 6-15, and 16 or more years) was a purpose of this study. The sample of participants included certified teaching staff employed by a Midwest suburban Kansas school district. This study was a quantitative design using a survey designed by the researcher. The population of interest included high school teachers from the Riverboat School District during the 2018-2019 school year. Multiple chi-square tests of equal percentages and chi-square tests of independence were conducted to address the nine research questions. Results from the survey data indicated teachers had statistically significant perceptions of the teacher evaluation process both as an accountability tool and a tool to improve instruction. The data also indicated teachers use the teacher evaluation process to improve their professional practice and decisions. There was a significant difference between teachers based on experience, where more experienced teachers had an increased likelihood to perceive their evaluation as a tool for improvement and use subsequent feedback to advance their professional practice. It is recommended further more broad, qualitative, and mixed method research is conducted to better understand how instruction decisions are influenced by the teacher evaluation process as a whole or its components.

Dedication

To my wife.

Lori,

I could not imagine being on this journey with anyone else. Thank you for making the sweet sweeter, the tough bearable, and life better.

To my mother.

Mom,

You are the reason I started this journey. Thank you for teaching me how to love life, learning, and the little things.

To my father.

Dad,

I'm proud to be your son. Thank you for being an example for me to live up to, showing me toughness and tenderness, and always being there for me.

Acknowledgements

First, I would like to acknowledge all the teachers in my life who have helped me get to this point in my education and career. The educator I am today is a collective reflection of everything you have given me. My advisor, Dr. Verneda Edwards, has believed in me from the beginning and given me much appreciated encouragement and guidance throughout this process. I will look back on my research and coursework knowing my acheivements are, in part, a direct result of her ability as an educator and exceptional character.

I would also like to acknowledge the district administrators who trusted me with information integral to this study. I believe the data and conclusions resulting from this study can help the district serve our students and community better while creating a more rewarding and collaborative environment amoung certified staff. I look forward to continuing to work together engaging our students, colleagues, and community by instilling excellence in education.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge my colleagues. The supportive classmates in Cohort 14 helped make the coursework fun and inspiring. Thank you to the professionals I work with every day who do so with a passion for educating and doing what is right so students are prepared for their future.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Teachers' perceptions are important to consider when assessing the effectiveness of a district's teacher evaluation process. This consideration involves a teacher's understanding of the information being collected and how it contributes to the perceptions of the evaluation process. An effective teacher evaluation process can both promote growth of teacher pedagogical skills (Marzano, Frontier, Livingston, 2011) and be used as an accountability tool (Hopman, 2008). Teacher understanding could impact the stress levels of educators and their attitudes toward school leadership (Jiang & Sporte, 2014), including how teachers perceive the intentions of school leaders during the evaluation process. Bradley (2014) explained the perception of a "growth" driven evaluation as one in which the teachers' strengths are identified in addition to areas of improvement, where "contrary" evaluations identify only concerns regarding the teacher's performance in the classroom.

Hazi and Rucinski (2009) discussed how state and federal legislation has been a notable reason for the evolution of district teacher evaluation processes. The focus on student achievement, teacher improvement, and other considerations in teacher evaluation has driven changes over time (Hazi & Rucinski, 2009). Teacher evaluations have evolved since the early 1700s, when they had little impact on either teacher professional growth or retention of staff, to the connection of teacher tenure and compensation (Marzano et al., 2011).

Student learning has been a primary focus of the teacher evaluation process since the beginning of the use of scientific methodology in the late 19th century (Marzano et al.,

2011). Waters et al. (2003) noted the correlation between student learning and classroom instruction, which explains the inclusion of data such as teacher instructional decisions along with testing results in the teacher evaluation process. The emphasis put on effective classroom instruction strategies includes how teachers receive information gained from their evaluation regarding their instructional decisions and suggestions for improvement (Marzano et al., 2011). The perceptions teachers have toward the evaluation process could potentially impact how such information is received and considered (Jiang & Sporte, 2014).

Background

Marzano, Waters, and McNulty (2005) explained there are certain school leader responsibilities involved in the teacher evaluation process such as communicating with teachers, ensuring the amount of input teachers have in school practices, and maintaining a focus on effective classroom instructional methods. According to a meta-analysis of 35 years of studies on critical leadership principles completed by Marzano et al. (2005), effective administrative communication with teachers should be considered a common attribute in an effective leader. Administrative communication with teachers concerning the evaluation process includes discussion on the purpose of the evaluation process. Rebore (2004) concluded that the evaluation process could be a way for teachers to improve their effectiveness in helping students meet the learning standards established by the district, as well as guide administration on classroom assignment and retention of teachers. Quality classroom instruction should be a requirement if student learning is a goal of a school district (Dean, Hubbell, Pitler, & Stone, 2012). The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) promotes the importance of high academic standards in preparation

for student success in college or careers (S. Res. 1177, 2015). Building and district leaders have a responsibility to ensure quality instruction is taking place. One way this can be accomplished is through the evaluation process.

If classroom instruction is impacted by teachers' perceptions of the evaluation process, consideration needs to be given to the design and implementation of the process. In a study of the Chicago Public Schools' teacher evaluation program of 2012-13, Jiang and Sporte (2014) surveyed over 19,000 teachers and 700 principals regarding their experiences and perceptions during the first few years the program was implemented. The survey gathered teacher responses on the evaluation process's ability to ultimately promote growth in student learning, and included questions assessing teacher perceptions of effective leadership communication during the evaluation process and the general design of the evaluation tool (Jiang & Sporte, 2014). Jiang and Sporte (2014) found that teachers did have some positive perceptions about the evaluation process. The feedback teachers received from their administrators included fair and unbiased assessment, useful feedback, and promoted growth in their professional development (Jiang & Sporte, 2014). Negative perceptions were also found. These included the weight of standardized testing results, how different instructional methods' impacts were determined, and the way different student growth measures were assessed for teachers (Jiang & Sporte, 2014).

For the current study, the Riverboat School District was sampled. The district is a large Midwestern suburban district with, for the 2018-2019 school year, more than 30,000 enrolled students (67.1% Caucasian, 16.4% Hispanic, 7.3% Afircan American, and 9.1% other ethnicities), over 2,600 certified staff, and 5 high schools containing grades 9 through 12 (RSD, 2017). At the time of the study the certified teachers in the

district had earned a combined 1597 graduate degrees (RSD, 2017). At the high school level, core subjects in English, mathematics, science, and history are offered as well as non-core courses in visual, practical, and performing arts; physical education; foreign languages; and other innovative programs (RSD, 2017). Classroom teachers average 15 years of experience (RSD, 2017). The school district sampled had a teacher evaluation process that included student performance data collection and analysis, as well as, formal administrator observations for teachers who had been with the district one to three years (RSD, 2017). Teachers would actively participate in their appraisal process through self-reflection, response to feedback, and communication with administrators and colleagues (RSD, 2017). The teacher evaluation process in place had been used for 7 years (RSD, 2017).

Statement of the Problem

An important aspect of a teacher evaluation tool is the way teachers are informed of the intent about the process and the tool itself. There is available research for educational leaders to reference when developing teacher evaluation tools (Danielson & McGreal, 2000; Marshall, 2013; Marzano & Toth, 2013; Nolan & Hoover, 2011). Researchers have also analyzed teachers' perceptions of various evaluation tools (Duke & Stiggins, 1986; Jiang & Sporte, 2014; Sheppard, 2013). When explaining their findings regarding teachers' perceptions of effective evaluation processes, Duke and Stiggins (1986) described a process that involved meetings and counseling between administrators and teachers throughout the process. The intent of the process was both purposefully evident and formally explained. The process consisted of both formal and informal sessions (Duke & Stiggins, 1986). A trained administrator completed the

evaluation (Duke & Stiggins, 1986). When comparing several different teacher evaluation processes, Little, Goe, and Bell (2009) recommended the development of the evaluation tool include a focus on intent of the tool and incorporation of teacher opinions of evaluation in the development process itself. Sheppard (2013) found teachers valued the process more when the evaluation feedback focused on the education standards of the district. An effective evaluation tool must be designed to enhance the pedagogical skills of teachers, and consequently enhance student learning (Marzano, et al., 2011). Research should be conducted to increase the understanding of teachers' perceptions of the evaluation process specifically if they perceive the process as an accountability tool, as well as if they perceive it as a tool to improve their instructional practices. Extending beyond Sheppard's (2013) findings of teachers valuing the evaluation process, research should be conducted to increase the understanding of whether or not teachers use the evaluation process to improve their professional practice and decisions.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine the extent to which teachers perceive the evaluation process as an accountability tool and a tool to improve instruction. Another purpose of this study was to determine the extent to which teachers use the evaluation process to improve their professional practice and decisions. In addition, the extent of the differences in these perceptions and the use of the evaluation process between core and non-core teachers, as well as among teachers based on experience (0-5, 6-15, and 16 or more years) were purposes of this study.

Significance of the Study

Studies that address the importance of teacher evaluation (Marzano et al., 2011), teacher understanding of the importance of evaluation (Bülbül, Tunç, Özdem, and İnandi, 2013), and teacher perceptions of the evaluation process (Sheppard, 2013) are available. The knowledge gained from the current study could contribute to the available research because of the examination of two specific teacher perceptions of the evaluation process, the use of the teacher evaluation process to improve teachers' professional practice and decisions, and the differences between teachers of difference subject areas and experience levels. Those who design and administer teacher evaluations potentially could be influenced by knowledge and insight gained from this study. They will gain a better understanding of teacher perceptions and use of the teacher evaluation process to improve teachers' professional practice and decisions. The consideration and comparison of the research to their intended purposes and impacts could potentially influence their approach to the teacher evaluation process.

Delimitations

As described by Lunenburg and Irby (2008), delimitations "are self-imposed boundaries set by the researcher on the purpose and scope of the research study" (p. 134). This study was delimited as follows:

1. The sample for this research was certified high school teaching staff employed by a Midwest suburban Kansas school district during the 2018-2019 school year.
2. Data for this research were collected during the second semester of the 2018-2019 school year.

3. An online teacher survey was used for data collection.

Assumptions

Lunenburg and Irby (2008) defined assumptions as "postulates, premises, and propositions that are accepted as operational for purposes of the research" (p. 135). The following assumptions were made concerning this research:

1. All teachers who participated in the study understood the vocabulary used on the survey.
2. All teachers who participated responded truthfully and accurately.
3. All teachers who participated had been evaluated with the most current evaluation model.

Research Questions

Creswell (2014) described research questions as specific goals of the study used to guide "what will be learned or questions to be answered in the study" (p. 139). The following six questions directed this study:

RQ1. To what extent do teachers perceive the evaluation process as an accountability tool?

RQ2. To what extent do teachers perceive the evaluation process as a tool for improving instructional practices?

RQ3. To what extent is there a difference in the perceptions of the evaluation process as an accountability tool between core and non-core teachers?

RQ4. To what extent is there a difference in the perceptions of the evaluation process as a tool for improving instructional practices between core and non-core teachers?

RQ5. To what extent is there a difference in the perceptions of the evaluation process as an accountability tool among teachers based on experience (0-5, 6-15, and 16 or more years)?

RQ6. To what extent is there a difference in the perceptions of the evaluation process as a tool for improving instructional practices among teachers based on experience (0-5, 6-15, and 16 or more years)?

RQ7. To what extent do teachers use the teacher evaluation process to improve their professional practice and decisions?

RQ8. To what extent is there a difference in the use of the teacher evaluation process to improve their professional practice and decisions among teachers between core and non-core teachers?

RQ9. To what extent is there a difference in the use of the teacher evaluation process to improve their professional practice and decisions among teachers based on experience (0-5, 6-15, and 16 or more years)?

Definition of Terms

The terms used throughout the course of the current study are defined to provide clarity so that the research may be accurately understood and interpreted (Lunenburg & Irby, 2008).

Accountability tool. According to Marzano et al. (2011) an accountability tool is a system providing administration with the ability to retain or dismiss teachers.

Evaluation process. Danielson and McGreal (2000) described the teacher evaluation process as collecting data and making professional judgments about performance for the purpose of decision-making.

Subject. For the purpose of this study, courses will be identified as core and non-core.

Core. Content areas traditionally thought of as academic or core include English, math, science, and history (Kansas State Department of Education (Kansas State Department of Education [KSDE], 2015).

Non-core. Content areas traditionally thought of as support or non-core include music, physical education, and family and consumer science (M. Johnson, personal communication, December 13, 2018).

Organization of the Study

This study is organized into five chapters. Chapter 1 provided an introduction to the study and how it is organized (Lunenburg & Irby, 2008). Chapter 2 is comprised of a review of literature providing rationale for the research (Lunenburg & Irby, 2008). The specific steps used to address the research questions (participant selection, measurement, data collection, data analysis, and hypothesis testing) are addressed in Chapter 3. The results of the hypothesis testing are presented in Chapter 4. Chapter 5 contains a study summary, discussion of the findings related to the literature, implications for action, recommendations for future research, and conclusions of the study.

Chapter 2

Review of the Literature

Throughout the nation's history, the evolution of how educators have been evaluated has reflected the best practices and beliefs of the community they serve. Stakeholders have created, supported, and challenged legislation impacting the teacher evaluation processes in their communities. Mandates, incentives, new precedents, and updated standards have all come from these legislative efforts.

The following review represents literature pertinent to this study. Specifically, Chapter 2 is organized into four sections: (a) theories of motivation, (b) legislation impacting teacher evaluation, (c) teacher evaluation programs, and (d) teacher perceptions of evaluation. A synthesized summary concludes this chapter.

Theories of Motivation

Thorndike (1898) was a researcher and pioneer in the field of psychology in the late-1800s through the first half of the 1900s. As a part of his early experiments, he placed animals in puzzle boxes and observed how they responded when attempting to escape or reach food. Thorndike (1898) concluded consciously satisfying effects in a particular situation lead to more likely occurrences, and consciously discomforting effects in a particular situation lead to less occurrences. He would later refer to this as the Law of Effect (Watson, 1913).

Later, Watson (1913) criticized Thorndike's attribution of consciousness to any behavioral occurrences. In his alternative theory of methodological behaviorism, Watson claimed "thought processes are really motor habits in the larynx (p. 174)." Watson (1913) proclaimed psychology should focus on behavior instead of consciousness, have

prediction and control of behavior as a goal, and only use objective methods of research (p. 158). According to Watson (1913), only external observable behaviors should be considered when researching psychology.

Continuing into the mid-1900s, the field of psychology was dominated by Watson inspired behaviorists and methodological behaviorism, but began to evolve to include the acknowledgement of internal behaviors, such as consciousness, as potential stimulus for external behaviors (Skinner, 1945). The concept of "motivation" was considered a derivative of early-nineteenth century methodological behaviorism theory (Mowrer, 1952). There were researchers who argued motivation should include the less studied ego psychology, which incorporated internal motivators such as interest, self-actualization, and anxiety (Mowrer, 1952). These non-behaviorist researchers argued internal motives (e.g. need for achievement) could potentially drive behaviors (McClelland, Atkinson, Clark, & Lowell, 1953). They described internal motives as subconscious, which required introspection to measure (McClelland et. al, 1953). Those who opposed the inclusion of internal motivators reasoned the use of introspection to quantify aspects of subconscious was not a valid enough method of measuring motivation.

Bahrick (1954) later researched motivation's impact on behavior from a behaviorist's perspective. Using seventy-four subjects, Bahrick (1954) divided the sample into two groups and asked them to complete a task. One group of adult subjects was given a range of potential financial incentives as a motivator for positive achievement behavior. The other group was not given any incentive to complete the task. After the task was completed, the subjects were asked questions about the process and

whether they recognized peripheral information presented during their performance of the task. Results showed subjects receiving the incentive scored higher on their ability to perform the task, but lower on their ability to recognize the peripheral information than the non-incentivized group. Another observation noted was individuals who received higher incentives for completion scored lower on recognition of peripheral information than those who received a lower incentive. Atkinson (1958), a student of McClelland, researched the relationship between task difficulty and the performance of the subject. Atkinson (1958) found a relationship between the two where tasks determined to be moderately difficult had the highest level of performance and effort, and the tasks determined to be either too easy or too difficult had the lowest level of performance and effort.

In the field of psychology, a cognitive revolution started to occur during the late 1960s, where theories were made concerning intentions of human behavior (Ryan, 1970). Decades after the notion of motive for behaviors were attributed to the subconscious, Ryan (1970) argued for a link between the motives of human behavior and intentions such as "conscious purpose, plans, tasks and the like" (p.18). In reviewing the literature at the time, Ryan (1970) also made a connection of motives, and ultimately behaviors, to preferences, social rules, established systems, and generalized needs. Ryan's premise of conscious performance goals affecting action would the basis for goal-setting theories and research (Locke & Latham, 1990).

Locke and Latham (1990) later replicated Atkinson's experiment with the added variable of subject performance goals noted by Ryan (1970). The highest levels of effort and performance were a result of the highest or most difficult goals (Lock & Latham,

1990). As a result, Locke and Latham (1990) found the addition of specific performance goals to be much more beneficial than a singular and generic "task success" goal. When specific performance goals were compared to "do your best" models of effort, Locke and Latham (1990) concluded specific performance goals consistently generated higher levels of effort and achievement.

Ariely, Gneezy, Lowenstein, and Mazar (2009) asserted as education shifted toward teacher motivation for reaching performance goals, there could be a narrowing of attention away from peripheral information and toward a singular performance task or goal, described by Bahrick (1954). Specific performance goals, as noted by Locke and Latham (1990), are better drivers for achievement than generic "task success"; however, a similar narrowing in awareness of factors not directly impacting a formal evaluation of performance could occur (Ariely et al., 2009). Evaluated performance goals should include elements such as classroom culture, physical space, developing positive student/teacher relationships, as well as student achievement (Ariely et al., 2009). If not, the differentiation and creativity of classroom instruction would become secondary to the incentive of a positive evaluation on a narrow set of high-performance goals (Ariely et al., 2009).

As the concept of motivation became more infused with improving performance outcomes in education in the late-1990s, both amongst teachers and students, Murphy and Alexander (2000) recognized the growing lexicon of terms central to the literature of motivation. Murphy and Alexander (2000) described a common terminology supports a community of professionals and efficiently substitutes "complex concepts, extended explanations, or detailed definitions (p. 4)." This near doubling of the lexicon of

motivation terms was attributed to the abundance of motivation studies. In reviewing phraseology referencing motivation in education, they limited their scope to studies of academic achievement or development (Murphy & Alexander, 2000). After reviewing the literature, Murphy and Alexander created an initial list of nine terms they observed in the studies they examined (i.e., achievement, affect, attribution, self-competence, self-efficacy, goals, engagement, motivation, and self-regulation) (Murphy & Alexander, 2000, p.7). The list was then sent to eight recognized scholars in the field of motivation. Those individuals were asked what terms to add or delete, and if they recommended additional information Murphy and Alexander might use or seek out. The resulting list (Figure 1) contained 20 terms and was organized by Murphy and Alexander (2000) in a way to depict relationships between the terms. The list was not displayed to represent a hierarchy. An implication Murphy and Alexander made during the exploration of the various terms was the significance of teachers being trained to identify and address these different motivations in order to impact student learning. These terms concerning academic achievement and development motivation for this study were not organized as a continuum, however, Murphy and Alexander (2000) questioned whether teachers should "expect that students have a consistent motivational profile throughout their schooling, or should students become increasingly more intrinsically motivated, self-efficacious, or individually interested as they moved through grades (p. 44)." This evolution of achievement motivation for students could potentially apply to teachers and all adults across their life span (Murphy & Alexander, 2000). Motivation for teachers could potentially impact their decisions on classroom instructions and professional achievement. Murphy and Alexander (2000) questioned whether the achievement

motivations of adults, as they progress through their professions, should evolve if they want to become more productive.

Figure 1. Motivational terms are organized into four inter-related categories: Goal, Motivation, Interests, and Self-Schema. Adapted from "The resulting corpus of 20 motivation terms relevant to academic achievement and motivation," by P. K. Murphy and P. A. Alexander, 2000, *Contemporary Educational Psychology, 25*, p. 8. Copyright 2000 by Academic Press.

Hersey, Blanchard, and Johnson (2000) described performance in the workplace as a function of the ability of an individual and their motivation to complete the task. Later, Pink (2009a) concluded motivation could ultimately be organized into three systems: biological, extrinsic, and intrinsic. After looking back at over 50 years' worth of research, Pink described how valuing of extrinsic motivating factors such as punishments or financial rewards could steal away the intrinsic motivator and individual

interest of work, activities, and jobs we participate in, turning them into something we have to do. In a 21st century school, administrators who create an environment for teachers where they can work with autonomy, focused on mastery, and driven by purpose are shifting the culture away from an ineffective extrinsic to one more intrinsically motivating (Pink, 2009b).

Pink (2009a) outlined intrinsic motivation in schools as consisting of three factors: mastery, purpose, and autonomy. Although the teacher evaluation process can serve as an external motivator for teachers to improve, administrators can shift the process to nurture intrinsic motivation in their teachers if they effectively view some of the facets of the process as ways to support mastery, purpose, and autonomy (Pink, 2009a). By moving teachers toward improvement in their ability to do their job, administrators are including mastery in the teacher evaluation process (Pink, 2009a). According to Pink, purpose is having a desire to serve something larger than oneself. The teacher evaluation process includes purpose when it identifies and guide teachers to align classroom instruction decisions to established standards at the district, state, or national level. In contrast to purpose, autonomy is the desire to make an impact on our own lives (Pink, 2009a). The traditional teacher evaluation process involves a series of step-by-step tasks to be completed by the supervising administrator. If administrators desire to have the teacher evaluation process be intrinsically motivating for teachers, they will nurture teacher autonomy by involving them in the process (Pink, 2009a). An effective evaluation process supports the motivation of teachers when they perceive the process to build mastery through the improvement on their ability, contain purpose by

recognition of and alignment to impactful standards, and involve autonomy by including teacher input in their professional growth.

While reviewing the research of Pink (2009a, 2009b) and others, Peters and Passanisi (2012) made the observation that as administration support for teacher autonomy declines, and the extrinsic motivators for teachers to achieve specified levels of proficiency is increased, it could "lead to teacher burnout and a feeling of impotence in a career that requires purpose and drive" (p.1). Supportive administrators can increase the sense of autonomy, mastery, and purpose teachers have by engaging them in discussions on their teaching, student assessment, and other reflective practices (Peters & Passanisi, 2012). An evaluation process including intrinsic motivation factors is more flexible for a variety of effective teachers than a system solely based on a rigid accountability of extrinsic factors (Peters & Passanisi, 2012).

Legislation Impacting Teacher Evaluation

An individual school district's policy concerning teacher evaluation is often supported by law, which can influence the process (Anderson, Butler, Palmiter, & Arcaira, 2016). District leadership needs to be understanding and able to execute the complexities of an effective teacher evaluation process. These processes require leadership to be knowledgeable in areas such as the purpose of evaluation standards, performance criteria, and consequences of unsatisfactory evaluations (Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005). Hopmann (2008) described 21st century education as being in an "age of accountability" and how, depending on the potential factors involved (e.g. standards, opportunities to learn, competency) in the legislation or political action, school leaders are able to follow described and assumed guidelines to develop their teacher

evaluation process. Legislation impacting teacher evaluation from both the federal level and the state of Kansas is in this section.

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) was part of President Lyndon Johnson's "War on Poverty" (Jeffrey, 1978). In the legislation, schools were identified as a cornerstone in fighting poverty by creating the possibility of mobility for disadvantaged segments of society (Jeffrey, 1978). ESEA also forced public education to address the civil rights issue of segregation (Jeffrey, 1978). According to Jeffrey (1978), the main dysfunction of ESEA originated from the political compromises on funding of the law legislators needed to make in order to get the bill passed. Allocation formulas, efforts to work through local governing structures, and the Viet Nam War were specific ways this funding was ineffective, and in some instances, counterproductive (Jeffrey, 1978).

Over the next 10 years, federal efforts were made to continue to build on the promise of ESEA. In 1968, the Bilingual Education Act recognized the efforts some states were making to work with migrant students and created a federal level grant program promoting the expansion of these efforts to other states (Klein, 2015). Some parts of the country reduced or eliminated their state or local funding purposed for communities with high-need students and replaced it with the federal ESEA funding which was supposed to be used to enhance already funded programs (U.S. Department of Education, 2019). Congress addressed the reported misuse of federal funding purposed for reaching students of need by adding language requiring states to supplement and not merely supplant programs with federal aid (Klein, 2015).

In 1978, President Jimmy Carter signed a reauthorization of ESEA allowing

school districts to implement “school wide” programs using federal funding targeted for students in need if 75% of the children were eligible for aid (Klein, 2015). While this allowed schools to streamline the number of programs offered, it ultimately increased the number of students supported through federal aid. Later, President Carter established the U.S. Department of Education (Klein, 2015). In 1981, President Reagan consolidated many programs created under another reauthorization of ESEA, the Education Consolidation and Improvement Act (Olson, 1985). Under this new structure, states had less regulatory requirements to receive federal funding, but ultimately federal aid was decreased by the legislation (Klein, 2015).

Klein (2015) outlined the intentions of President George H.W. Bush’s reauthorization bill for ESEA, titled the Hawkins-Stafford Elementary and Secondary School Improvement Act. The law-required districts to assess the effectiveness of their implemented programs targeting “educationally deprived children” by using test score data (Lytle, 1988). If they were unable to demonstrate improvement, they were at risk of having the federal funding withdrawn (Lytle, 1988). Soon after this bill was passed, in 1989, a summit was held consisting of the executive branch of the federal government and the nation’s governors (Klein, 2015). As a result of the summit, a set of national goals and a framework to achieve them were created (Klein, 2015).

The term “adequate yearly progress” (AYP) was included in President Bill Clinton’s 1994 reauthorization of ESEA, titled the Improving America’s Schools Act (Klein, 2015). In order to receive funding, states had to meet the AYP requirement by defining what annual performance goals would be considered appropriate, and maintain progress toward the goals in order to continue receiving federal aid (Klein, 2015). Later,

in 2002, the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), which was George W. Bush's reauthorization of ESEA, expanded on the previous administration's addition of AYP (Klein, 2015). Under this legislation, meeting AYP now required annual tests for students (Klein, 2015). Schools that did not make AYP were told they needed to use specific interventions (e.g., public-school choice, free tutoring) (Klein, 2015).

Section 1114 (b)(1)(C) of NCLB required "instruction by highly qualified teachers" as a component of a school wide program (S. Res. 1177, 2015). In response to this requirement, the teacher evaluation process became a focus at the state level (Hazi & Rucinski, 2009). In gathering research to help make informed policy decisions, state leadership recognized the importance of quality teachers being in the classrooms (Goldrick, 2002). Specifically, in 2002, the National Governor's Association (NGA) was briefed about ways they could facilitate an effective teacher evaluation process that would positively impact student learning (Goldrick, 2002). In 2009, as a part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, the Race to the Top (RTT) competitive grant was included (U.S. Department of Education, 2017). Under RTT, a set of criteria was established (e.g. standards used, data usage, effective teacher evaluation practices) and aligned with a point system used to decide which states received federal grant funding (U.S. Department of Education, 2017). The states had the option to implement any criteria they deemed impactful on their students' learning. The Every Student Succeeds Act later was passed without the obligation for districts to include test scores in their teacher evaluation processes (Pratt, 2016); however, scores could be used as data to fulfill RTT criterion requirements (U.S. Department of Education, 2017). Some of the trends in the development of teacher evaluation processes since these major pieces of legislation

have included an emphasis on observations, a shift from student test scores to student learning objectives, and the use of rubrics throughout the process (Anderson et al., 2016).

Since 1973, Kansas has had legislation outlining the policies, criteria, development, and procedure of school districts' teacher evaluation processes (2018 Statute § 72-2410). In 2008 the NGA, along with the Council of Chief State School Officers, began an effort to develop Common Core State Standards to impact student learning (Jerald, 2008). Districts across the nation began connecting skills and concepts outlined in these standards to their teacher evaluation processes (Leo & Coggshall, 2013). In 2012, KSDE took advantage of an U.S. Department of Education's opportunity to seek flexibility for specific requirements of NCLB by preparing a waiver request (KSDE, 2012). The KSDE put together a comprehensive and coherent proposal, which focused throughout on improving student learning. A description of the proposed teacher evaluation process was mentioned throughout in an effort to support the waiver request that was eventually granted (KSDE, 2012). As a result, the Kansas State Department of Education developed an evaluation system based on the flexibility waiver and a procedure for a district to create, submit, and approve their own evaluation systems (KSDE, 2012).

Teacher Evaluation Programs

The way in which teachers have been evaluated has evolved since the first schools were mandated to evaluate educators in 1647 (Tracy, 1995). In describing the historical practices of supervision in the United States, Tracy (1995) outlined a series of evolutionary phases of supervisory practices focusing on their purpose (assisting or assessing), personnel involved, surrounding assumptions, and implementation procedure.

As the nation expanded through the early 1800s and populations grew, town teachers, who tended to be clergy or other trusted members of the local community, were supervised by inspectors who would travel between towns to monitor "the tone and spirit of the school, the conduct and application of the pupils, the management and methods of the teacher, and the fitness and conduction of the premises" (Philbrook, as cited in Bolin & Panaritis 1992, p. 32). After observing a teacher, inspectors would have the ability to intervene in classroom instruction if the teacher was not meeting the teaching standards established by the community and would have the authority to dismiss the teacher if necessary (Tracy, 1995).

During the 1800s, the primary focus of supervisors during the evaluation process was the methodology used by teachers (Blumberg, 1985). This was also when education became a professionalized career and new administrative positions emerged (e.g. superintendent, principal, head teacher) to both manage larger student populations, but also facilitate teacher supervision (Tracy, 1995). There was a shift of responsibility for teacher training from the assigned supervisors to local specialized institutions (Spearman, 2009).

Over the next century the evaluation of teachers shifted to methods more scientific and data driven, aimed at assisting and motivating teachers (Tracy, 1995). The application of the early 1900s industry management principles to education resulted in the more measured methods used by supervisors (Bolin & Panaritis, 1992).

During the 1950s, 60s, and 70s, Goldhammer (1969) and Cogan (1973) developed a methodical approach to teacher evaluation called clinical supervision. The method emphasized the importance of the relationship between the evaluator and teacher, using a

collaborative purposeful approach to observations and discussions to improve both parties involved (Goldhammer, 1969). Clinical supervision's positive impact supervisor-teacher relationships fostered motivated educators (Goldhammer, 1969; Cogan, 1973). Tracy (1995) observed in the mid-1980s that it was common to see elements of classroom observation and face-to-face interaction included in teacher evaluation processes. This human development phase combined "the concern for a teacher's personal needs with the concern for the productivity of the organization" (Tracy, 1995).

Around the time when the RTT came into existence, Weisberg, Sexton, Mulhern, and Keeling (2009) published a report examining the United States' ability to identify and respond to variations in teacher effectiveness using the different evaluation tools implemented throughout the nation. Weisberg et al. (2009) defined the "Widget Effect" in teacher evaluation which was characterized by "institutional indifference to variations in teacher performance, and when teacher evaluation systems reflect and reinforce this indifference in several ways" (p. 6). Steinberg and Donaldson (2014) noted since the 2009 "Widget Effect" report's publication and with the availability of RTT grant funding, 46 states had implemented new teacher evaluation processes, and 11 of those states allowed local districts' discretion in developing their own process within a set of state mandated guidelines.

The complexity of teacher evaluation models has grown from a simplistic assessment to a process involving timelines, evidence, and standards (Marzano et al., 2011). Individual components of teacher evaluation processes have changed, grown in scope, and been reprioritized (Marzano et al., 2011). Throughout their evolution, the focus of teacher evaluation models shifted back and forth between growth of the

educator's ability to impact student learning and facilitating the evaluator's ability to identify concerns with classroom performance (Marzano et al., 2011).

Anderson et al. (2016) studied eight districts implementing changes to their teacher evaluation models during the 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 school years. While teachers from all of the districts studied responded in agreement the main goal of their teacher evaluation model was improving classroom instruction, teachers from half of the districts expressed beliefs the systems were designed to identify and remove ineffective teachers (Anderson et al., 2016). Aspects included in all districts' systems were the use of multiple assessments to evaluate teachers' influence on student performance and the use of rubrics for classroom observations (Anderson et al., 2016). None of the rubrics used were grade-level or subject specific (Anderson et al., 2016).

Kraft and Gilmore (2017) examined 38 states after adoption and implementation of their own evaluation process, specifically on their ability to differentiate amongst teachers. For the majority of cases, teachers rated as unsatisfactory did not change; however, Kraft and Gilmore (2017) noted there is some differentiation at the top end of the spectrum. When asked why so few teachers were rated below proficient, administrators articulated concern for the lack of time to adequately document and provide support, their own consideration of potential and motivation of individual teachers, personal discomfort with having conversations with struggling teachers, and the challenges that come with removing and replacing teachers (Kraft & Gilmore, 2017). Despite starting in 2009, little change occurred in the differentiation amongst teacher performance ratings over the first decade of the implementation (Kraft & Gilmore, 2017).

An alternative to the evaluation model implemented by some districts after the enactment of RTT, where the administrator was the evaluator of teachers, was the Peer Assistance Review (PAR) evaluation model (Johnson, Papay, Fiarman, Munger, & Qazilbash, 2010). PAR was based on the "Toledo Plan" originally developed by a teacher's union president from Toledo, Ohio in the 1980s (Johnson et al., 2010). What makes PAR different from other teacher evaluation processes is the collaboration between the teachers' union and district administration to facilitate a panel of teachers and principals to administer the evaluation process (Johnson et al., 2010). In this program, a select group of peers would evaluate their colleagues' performance that could lead to acknowledgement, intervention, or even dismissal (Johnson, et al., 2010). Facilitating additional time for peers to perform the evaluations was an expense; however, despite the $4000 to $7000 per peer evaluator investment associated with the implementation of PAR, Johnson et al. (2010) noted in districts using the PAR model, leadership viewed the system as an expense worth preserving due to the unique benefits it provided.

The KSDE , in partnership with educators across the state, created the Kansas Educator Evaluation Protocol (KEEP) (KSDE, 2012). While defining the KEEP as rigorous, transparent, and equitable, KSDE (2016) provided districts an opportunity to develop their own potential evaluation system using six guidelines, which mandated that the system must:

- Be used for continual improvement
- Meaningfully differentiate teacher performance into at least three levels
- Be based on data, evidence, and artifacts
- Be used to evaluate educators on a regular basis
- Provide useful feedback
- Be used to inform equity regarding retention, promotion, compensation and rewards (p. 2-3)

KSDE (2012) did not require a specific supervisor position to administer the evaluation in any of these guidelines used to develop an evaluation system or the KEEP. This allowed school districts more options in assigning evaluators (KSDE, 2012). When implementing the KEEP, KSDE (2012) required, based on evidence, the evaluator to identify and rate (on a scale from ineffective to highly effective) the ability of the educator to address four constructs: learner and learning, content knowledge, instructional practice, and professional responsibility. As described by KSDE (2012), the evidence that potentially can be used may be lesson plans, student work, observations, or other classroom documents. Since evidence is so broadly defined, and much of the other terminology used in the evaluation rubrics can apply to all subject areas, the KEEP is a flexible process able to be used to evaluate all educators (KSDE, 2012). Outlined in the KEEP are only minor differences for teachers of different experience levels. The evaluator will make formal observations and summative steps will be completed earlier in the school year for first and second year educators than for more experienced teachers (KSDE, 2012). For all experience levels and subject areas, the evaluator uses the collected evidence to complete documentation while continuing to communicate with the

educator for clarification and coaching, ultimately determining an overall summative rating (KSDE, 2012).

Teacher Perceptions of Evaluation

When reporting on a qualitative study of school accountability, Webb (2005) found the two prevailing perceptions teachers have of the evaluation process are that the process identifies only concerns regarding the teacher's performance in the classroom which could lead to consequences such as dismissal and the process develops the capacity of teachers by identifying areas of strength and needed improvement. Marzano et al. (2011) note the focus on improving teacher capacity when describing the research surrounding educator evaluation since the early 1900s. Consideration of teachers' perceptions in the evaluation process facilitates a quality educational environment (Bülbül et al., 2013).

When the teacher evaluation processes were examined in the 100 largest school districts in the early 1980s, Ellett and Garland (1986) noted the primary perceived use of evaluation tools was teacher dismissal. A four-part survey was used to collect data for the study: (a) purposes, (b) policies, (c) practices, and (d) opinions. Ultimately, 80 of the 100 districts were represented by respondents to the survey.

Ellett and Garland (1986) identified a contradiction in the data between the perceived purpose of the teacher evaluations and the use of the evaluation results. Twice as many respondents selected the main purpose of teacher evaluation should be professional development of teachers as those who selected teacher dismissal. In contrast, when asked to identify uses for the data collected in teacher evaluations, 90% or more of the respondents recognized both "development of remediation plans for teachers

with identified deficiencies" and "teacher dismissal" (Ellett & Garland, 1986, p. 9). Less than one third of the respondents stated they had established performance standards, and nearly two thirds stated their teacher evaluation process was not reviewed at the district level. Respondents did not indicate they were concerned with how teacher evaluation data was used for staff development, long-range improvement programs for individuals, or the district as a whole.

In a response to unavailable resources and need for practicability in the long-range implementation of a teacher evaluation program, according to Ellett and Garland (1986), districts adjusted their approach to their teacher evaluation programs. Ellett and Garland (1986) discovered districts would modify their teacher evaluation goals from a focus at the individual teacher level to the building level. This was done in an effort to increase the reliability and credibility of the data collected in the teacher evaluation process, as well as avoid putting the data collected in a negative context (Ellett & Garland, 1986). Districts moved away from using external evaluators and started relying on building level administration to assess their staff. The practices based on research concerning teacher evaluation were not being implement at the local school district level (Ellett & Garland, 1986).

The use of teacher evaluation data did not change significantly from the early 1980s through the mid-1990s (Loup, Garland, Ellett, & Rugutt, 1996). Research similar to the Ellett and Garland (1986) study was conducted 10 years later. Educators in the largest 100 school districts were surveyed concerning their teacher evaluation policies and practices. Of the districts asked to participate, 68 were represented by respondents to the survey. Loup et al. (1996) used the Ellett and Garland's survey with some additional

questions added giving respondents the opportunity to express their perceptions of whether trends in teaching and learning were being implemented into the teacher evaluation process. Additionally, teachers were asked if they perceiced the evaluation process as traditional, ritualistic, and of a questionable quality (Loup et al., 1996).

Teacher accountability and professional development of teachers were equally important purposes for teacher evaluation practices by the mid-1990s (Loup et at., 1996). Surveys from 68 school districts were completed and collected. Nearly 90% of the districts who responded claimed the data gathered from their teacher evaluation processes were mainly used for teacher dismissal and to develop remedial plans for poor performing teachers (Loup et at., 1996). More than 68% of respondents reported that their school districts required comprehensive training for teacher evaluators. This was a 10% increase from the study done 10 years prior. Loup et al. (1996) claimed the results from their study "combined with the findings of the Ellett and Garland (1986) study seem to well indicate that local school districts are rather insulated and/or autonomous in their adoption of cutting-edge practices in teacher evaluation" (p. 218). The same contradiction between perceived teacher evaluation purpose (i.e. teacher growth) and use of collected data (i.e. teacher dismissal) existed a decade after the first time it was identified.

Loup et al. (1996) notes three potential reasons for the slight decrease over the past 10 years in perceptions of the teacher evaluation process as a tool used for teacher dismissal. First, there was an increased reporting of emphasis on instructional leadership for principals. This could have indicated an increased awareness of the recent research on the importance of instructional leadership in teacher evaluation processes (Loup et al.,

1996). Second, according the respondents in the study, there was an increased number of districts including multiple observations data in teacher evaluations. These observations could have been formal, informal, or both (Loup et al., 1996). Finally, there was an increase in alternative data collecting for teacher evaluation (e.g. portfolios, self-evaluations) and a decrease in paper-and-pencil tests.

In a study conducted by Xu and Sinclair (2002), teachers were surveyed about their evaluation processes from two different samples of elementary schools in Massachusetts. One group consisted of 34 randomly selected elementary schools and the other group consisted of five demographically different elementary schools (Xu & Sinclair, 2002). Through surveys and interviews, Xu and Sinclair (2002) examined the perceptions of teachers concerning the evaluation process and how it pertained to growing their capacity to impact student learning. Xu and Sinclair (2002) explained how teachers perceived a more collaborative process as effective. These perceptions were specifically supported when teachers had pre- and post-conferences that included goal setting and peer coaching (Xu & Sinclair, 2002). The perceived negative aspects of the evaluation process were the amount of time to complete all components, the limitation of feedback only coming from the observing administrator, and the infrequency of observations (Xu & Sinclair, 2002). Additionally, teachers of non-core subjects expressed disappointment the principals observing and evaluating them were not resourceful enough to provide applicable feedback (Xu & Sinclair, 2002).

The inclusion of data points, such as standardized-testing results, has become a part of some teacher evaluation processes (Winkler, 2002). Despite the negative perceptions of this integration, there are some teacher subgroups more receptive to this

type of performance data collecting. In an effort to learn about effects of the implementation of standardized-testing results in the teacher evaluation process in Virginia Schools, Winkler (2002) interviewed six teachers of various levels of experience. Winkler (2002) discovered inexperienced teachers said they felt a sense of security gained from guidelines to follow. This is in contrast to the perception of restriction from more experienced teachers due to increased paperwork, loss of autonomy, and limitations on what they would have time to teach in their classes (Winkler, 2002). Negative reactions to the evolution of the teacher evaluation process could be a result of some teachers removing non-tested material once thought beneficial (Abrams, Pedulla, & Madaus, 2003), a shift away from student-centered instruction (Bianchini & Kelly, 2003), and a shift towards teaching to a goal of higher test scores (Shaver, Cuevas, Lee, & Avalos, 2007).

When teachers were shown what their strengths were and given opportunities to improve their capacity, they were more likely to view the teacher evaluation process as a professional development opportunity (Bradley, 2014). In researching teacher perceptions of their evaluation process, Bradley (2014) had a panel discussion with a group of K-12 teachers and noticed supportive conditions and choice for professional growth were important for promoting a positive perception of the teacher evaluation process. Teachers were more likely to perceive the purpose for teacher evaluation as growth if they were involved with creating a shared vision for the school (Bradley, 2014). This is also true if professional learning time was protected by administration to allow teachers to build their own capacity throughout the year. Bradley (2014) noticed teachers who received low ratings on previous evaluations were more likely to perceive the

evaluation process as a professional development tool if they were given support throughout the year.

Donahue and Vogel (2018) interviewed 30 teachers in diverse teaching positions who already perceived the teacher evaluation process to have a professional growth focus. Donahue and Vogel (2018) determined there were emerging components of effective teacher evaluation processes that were present for teachers with this perception, and those teachers more likely to implement feedback in their professional practices. When positive or negative feedback of an observation was included in the evaluation process, teachers were more likely to perceive the evaluation process to have a professional growth focus. If teachers perceived the feedback to be high quality, according to Donahue and Vogel (2018), there was a higher likelihood of the feedback to be implemented. Also, if feedback from an observation was given within two days, teachers were more likely to implement the suggestions (Donahue & Vogel, 2018). Timely feedback allowed teachers to reflect on the suggestions which could have led to potential clarifying discussions over their instructional decisions. Donahue and Vogel (2018) discovered there are several advantages for evaluators to use rubrics when working with the teachers they are evaluating, such as (a) feedback is more clear, (b) they are more informative by identifying the teacher's current ability level and what they would need to do in order to reach the next level, and (c) they helped the evaluator avoid inflation or deflation of ratings. Most of the rubrics included a concise number of categories for the evaluation; however, those viewed as more exhaustive provided evaluators opportunities to give more specific. Both types of rubrics, concise or exhaustive, were part of teacher evaluation processes viewed by teachers to have a

professional growth focus (Donahue & Vogel, 2018). This perception was more likely if there was an established professional relationship between teachers and their evaluators consisting of frequent, substantial, and quality time spent discussing professional growth as a team.

Summary

Topics pertinent to this study was reviewed, primarily, motivation in education, evaluation legislation, evaluation programs, and teacher perceptions of the evaluation process. By describing the benefits of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, the emphasis education legislation has on quality teachers in classrooms, the increased inclusion of teacher involvement in their evaluations, and the attributes associated with teacher perceptions of their evaluation process, the literature supports a need for studies of the relationship between the perception's teachers have toward the evaluation process and their classroom instruction decisions. Chapter 3 describes the research methodology used in this study.

Chapter 3

Methods

The purpose of this study was to determine to what extent teachers perceive the evaluation process as an accountability tool or a tool for improving instructional practices. Teacher perception of their evaluation information was collected to determine, based on their appraisal, to what extent teachers modify their instructional practices based on their perception of the process. Demographic information was also collected to determine differences in perceptions of evaluation between core and non-core teachers, as well as the differences in teachers' perceptions based on years of experience. This chapter presents the research methodology used in conducting this quantitative study, including discussion on how the study's participants were selected, the survey design, validity and reliability of the survey, how the data was collected and analyzed, and limitations.

Research Design

A quantitative design was chosen for use in the current study. Creswell (2014) noted quantitative research is used when the researcher seeks to know the relationships among variables. The researcher used data collected from a survey conducted during the 2018-2019 school year in the Riverboat School District. The independent variables were the high school teachers' subjects taught (core, non-core) and experience (0-5, 6-15, and 16 or more years). The dependent variables were teachers' perceptions of the evaluation process as an accountability tool, teachers' perceptions of the evaluation process as a tool for improving instructional practices, and the use of the teacher evaluation process to improve professional decisions and practice among teachers.

Selection of Participants

Nonrandom purposive sampling was used for this study. According to Lunenburg and Irby (2008), purposive sampling "involves selecting a sample based on the researcher's knowledge of the group to be sampled" (p. 175). The first criterion for inclusion in the sample was school level, as only secondary teachers were asked to complete the survey. The second criterion was employment at the time of the survey. A randomly selected group of two hundred teachers (forty from each high school) who were employees of the Riverboat School District during the 2018-2019 school year were asked to be part of the study.

Measurement

Sheppard (2013) was contacted and permission was granted to modify and administer the Teacher Evaluation Profile for Teachers for the current study (see Appendix A). This original survey content was selected and modified to reflect data through participants' responses about teachers' perceptions of the evaluation process.

The data collected from the survey was used to study how teacher perceptions of the evaluation process impacted their classroom instruction decisions. The survey was designed to allow teachers to describe some of their perceptions of their most recent experience with teacher evaluation in the Riverboat School District. The survey also addressed the extent to which teachers modify their professional practice based on the evaluation process. A Likert-type scale was used on the survey's non-demographic items to provide teachers a way to respond with their perceptions about the evaluation process. Participants were asked to respond to some section items of the survey by selecting one

of the following choices: 1) Strongly Disagree, 2) Disagree, 3) Agree, and 4) Strongly Agree (see Appendix B).

Two items were included in the survey for the purposes of providing demographic information. The first item gathered information on subject-area type by the participants. They were asked to respond by selecting one of the following choices: 1) Core subject, and 2) Non-core subject. The second demographic item gathered information on experience of the participants. They were asked to respond by selecting one of the follow choices: 1) 0 to 5 years, 2) 6 to 15 years, and 3) 16 or more years.

Creswell (2014) defined validity of a measurement instrument in quantitative research as "whether one can draw meaningful and useful inferences from scores on particular instruments" (p. 160). According to Creswell (2014), validity traditionally is used in three forms:

> (a) Content validity (Do the items measure the content they were intended to measure?), (b) predictive or concurrent validity (Do scores predict a criterion measure? Do results correlate with other results?), and (c) construct validity (Do items measure hypothetical constructs or concepts). (p. 160)

Modifications were made to the original instrument to measure the variables specificed in the research questions. The process for these modifications included having subject matter experts read and analyze the survey to provide feedback, suggest revisions, and revising the survey. The experts who provided feedback included district-level teacher evaluation personnel, building-level teacher evaluation personnel, and research experts. The survey was piloted with a volunteer group of 10 teachers and

administrators. Those educators provided feedback on their understanding of the survey items. No modifications were made.

Data Collection Procedures

The researcher obtained permission from Baker University to conduct the study. The Baker University IRB committee approved the research study on December 6, 2018 (see Appendix C). Next, the researcher requested permission to conduct the study from the Riverboat School District (November 12, 2018). The researcher presented a written proposal electronically on December 20, 2019 (see Appendix D). After the proposal was reviewed, the researcher received permission to conduct the study on February 28, 2019 through electronic mail (see Appendix E). Finally, the researcher was given access to the Riverboat School District's secondary teachers' emails, which the researcher uploaded into Microsoft Outlook as a distribution list.

The survey, used to determine teachers' perceptions of the evaluation process and how they use their evaluation process to improve their professional practice and decisions, was administered using a SurveyMonkey generated link included in a document shared with participants (see Appendix F). In an effort to established informed consent from participants a cover letter was distributed along with the survey. The cover letter described the purpose of the study, addressed ethical considerations, and noted the survey was voluntary. The letter also informed the teachers of the anonymity of the survey, that data collected was treated as confidential, and no additional demographic information was being collected or analyzed. The cover letter was electronically mailed with a link to the survey to all secondary teachers in Riverboat School District for the first time on February 27, 2019. A second electronic mailing containing the same cover

letter and link was sent on March 6, 2019 due to the lack of responses. The process of collecting this data was ended, and the survey was closed on March 10, 2019. The data were downloaded from SurveyMonkey in an Excel worksheet, and imported into IBM® SPSS® Statistics Faculty Pack 25 for Windows for analysis.

Data Analysis and Hypothesis Testing

In this study, each of the research questions had a corresponding hypothesis statement developed to guide the research. In order to address research questions one, two, and seven, a chi-square test of equal percentages was conducted to analyze the difference between the observed frequencies and those expected by chance. In order to address research questions three through six, eight, and nine, a chi-square test of independence was conducted to analyze cross-tabulated frequencies.

RQ1. To what extent do teachers perceive the evaluation process as an accountability tool?

H1. Teachers perceive the district teacher evaluation process as an accountability tool.

A chi-square test of equal percentages was conducted to test H1. Teacher perceptions of the district teacher appraisal process as an accountability tool were tabulated as observed frequencies. The difference between the observed frequencies and those expected by chance was analyzed. The level of significance was set at .05.

RQ2. To what extent do teachers perceive the evaluation process as a tool for improving instructional practices?

H2. Teachers perceive the district teacher evaluation process as a tool for improving instructional practices.

A chi-square test of equal percentages was conducted to test H2. Teacher perceptions of the district teacher appraisal process as a tool for improving instructional practices were tabulated as observed frequencies. The difference between the observed frequencies and those expected by chance was analyzed. The level of significance was set at .05.

RQ3. To what extent is there a difference in the perceptions of the evaluation process as an accountability tool between core and non-core teachers?

H3. There is a difference in the perception of the evaluation process as an accountability tool between core and non-core teachers.

A chi-square test of independence was conducted to test H3. The two categorical variables, perception of the process as an accountability tool and subject area type, were cross-tabulated as observed frequencies for the analysis. The level of significance was set at .05.

RQ4. To what extent is there a difference in the perceptions of the evaluation process as a tool for improving instructional practices between core and non-core teachers?

H4. There is a difference in the perception of the evaluation process as a tool for improving instructional practices between core and non-core teachers.

A chi-square test of independence was conducted to test H4. The two categorical variables, perception of the process as a tool for improving instructional practices and subject area type, were cross-tabulated as observed frequencies for the analysis. The level of significance was set at .05.

RQ5. To what extent is there a difference in the perceptions of the evaluation

process as an accountability tool among teachers based on experience (0-5, 6-15, and 16 or more years)?

H5. Teachers perceive the evaluation process as an accountability tool based on their years of experiences.

A chi-square test of independence was conducted to test H5. The two categorical variables, perception of the process as an accountability tool and experience, were cross tabulated as observed frequencies for the analysis. The level of significance was set at .05.

RQ6. To what extent is there a difference in the perception of the evaluation process as a tool for improving instructional practices among teachers based on experience (0-5, 6-15, and 16 or more years)?

H6. Teachers perceive the evaluation process as a tool for improving instructional practices based on their years of experiences.

A chi-square test of independence was conducted to test H6. The two categorical variables, perception of the process as a tool for improving instructional practices and experience, were cross-tabulated as observed frequencies for the analysis. The level of significance was set at .05.

RQ7. To what extent do teachers use the teacher evaluation process to improve their professional practice and decisions?

H7. Teachers use the teacher evaluation process to improve their professional practice and decisions.

A chi-square test of equal percentages was conducted to test H7. The use of the teacher evaluation process to improve professional practice and decisions was tabulated

as observed frequencies. The difference between the observed frequencies and those expected by change was analyzed. The level of significance was set at .05.

RQ8. To what extent is there a difference in the use of the teacher evaluation process to improve their professional practice and decisions among teachers between core and non-core teachers?

H8. There is a difference in the use of the teacher evaluation process to improve their professional practice and decisions among teachers between core and non-core teachers.

A chi-square test of independence was conducted to test H8. The two categorical variables, the use of the teacher evaluation process to improve professional practice and decisions, and subject area type, were cross-tabulated as observed frequencies for the analysis. The level of significance was set at .05.

RQ9. To what extent is there a difference in the use of the teacher evaluation process to improve their professional practice and decisions among teachers based on experience (0-5, 6-15, and 16 or more years)?

H9. There is a difference in the use of the teacher evaluation process to improve their professional practice and decisions among teachers based on experience.

A chi-square test of independence was conducted to test H9. The two categorical variables, the use of the teacher evaluation process to improve professional practice and decisions, and experience, were cross-tabulated as observed frequencies for the analysis. The level of significance was set at .05.

Limitations

The conditions not under the control of the researcher are called limitations (Lunenburg & Irby, 2008). The fidelity of the Riverboat School District teacher evaluation system might have been impacted by potential inconsistencies in its implementation by administrators. The lack of teacher response might have been a limitation as well.

Summary

Restatements of the purposes of the study were included in this chapter. Chapter 3 included a description of the methodology for the study. The chapter was organized into specific sections on research, measurement, data collection, data analysis, and study limitations. Chapter 4 includes the results of the statistical analysis and hypothesis testing.

Chapter 4

Results

The purpose of this study was to determine the extent to which teachers perceive the evaluation process as an accountability tool and a tool to improve instruction. A second purpose of this study was to determine the extent to which teachers use the teacher evaluation process to improve their professional practice and decisions. In addition, the study was to determine the extent of the differences of these perceptions and use of the evaluation process between core and non-core teachers, as well as among teachers based on experience. Teachers' perceptions were analyzed through a survey. The study examined secondary teacher perceptions in the Riverboat School District during the 2018-2019 school year. The research focused on nine research questions from which descriptive statistics was generated to further describe the research findings. An organizational summary of chapter 4 is included.

Descriptive Statistics

Lunenburg and Irby (2008) defined descriptive statistics as the "mathematical procedures for organizing and summarizing numerical data" (p. 63). Ninety certified teachers in the Riverboat School District completed the survey. Two categories describe the participants' subject taught: core, and non-core. Table 1 presents the demographic data associated with survey question one regarding the participants' subjects taught.

Table 1

Descriptive Results for Survey Question 1

Subject Taught	Frequency	Percentage
Core	44	48.89
Non-core	46	51.11
Total	90	100.00

Three categories describe the participant's experience: 0-5, 6-15, and 16 or more years. Table 2 presents the demographic data associated with survey question two regarding the participants' years of experience.

Table 2

Descriptive Results for Survey Question 2

Years of Experience	Frequency	Percentage
0-5	30	33.33
6-15	33	36.67
16 or more	27	30.00
Total	90	100.00

Hypothesis Testing

The research questions, hypothesis statements, and descriptions of the analyses conducted to test each hypothesis are included in this section. A result is provided for each hypothesis.

RQ1. To what extent do teachers perceive the evaluation process as an accountability tool?

H1. Teachers perceive the district teacher evaluation process as an accountability tool.

A chi-square test of equal percentages was conducted to test H1. The difference between the observed frequencies and those expected by chance was analyzed. The level of significance was set at .05. The results of the chi-square test of equal percentages indicated a statistically significant difference between the observed and expected values, $\chi^2 = 86.622$, $df = 3$, $p = .000$. See Table 3 for the observed and expected frequencies. The observed frequency for *agree* ($n = 59$) was higher than the expected frequency ($n = 22.5$). Teachers perceive the district teacher evaluation process as an accountability tool. H1 was supported.

Table 3

Observed and Expected Frequencies for Hypothesis 1

Response Category	Observed	Expected
Strongly Disagree	4	22.5
Disagree	21	22.5
Agree	59	22.5
Strongly Agree	6	22.5

RQ2. To what extent do teachers perceive the evaluation process as a tool for improving instructional practices?

H2. Teachers perceive the district teacher evaluation process as a tool for improving instructional practices.

A chi-square test of equal percentages was conducted to test H2. The difference between the observed frequencies and those expected by chance was analyzed. The level of significance was set at .05. The results of the chi-square test of equal percentages indicated a statistically significant difference between the observed and expected values,

$\chi^2 = 59.956$, $df = 3$, $p = .000$. See Table 4 for the observed and expected frequencies. The observed frequency *disagree* ($n = 26$) was higher than the expected frequency ($n = 22.5$). The observed frequency *agree* ($n = 51$) was higher than the expected frequency ($n = 22.5$). Although the most frequent teachers' perceptions were distributed in the agree and disagree categories, the largest proportion of responses support that teachers perceive the district teacher evaluation process as a tool for improving instructional practices. H2 was supported.

Table 4

Observed and Expected Frequencies for Hypothesis 2

Response Category	Observed	Expected
Strongly Disagree	4	22.5
Disagree	26	22.5
Agree	51	22.5
Strongly Agree	9	22.5

RQ3. To what extent is there a difference in the perceptions of the evaluation process as an accountability tool between core and non-core teachers?

H3. There is a difference in the perceptions of the evaluation process as an accountability tool between core and non-core teachers.

A chi-square test of independence was conducted to test RQ3. The difference between the observed frequencies and those expected by chance was analyzed. The level of significance was set at .05. The results of the chi-square test of independence indicated no statistically significant difference between the observed and expected values, $\chi^2 = 0.331$, $df = 1$, $p = .565$. See Table 5 for the observed and expected frequencies.

There is not a difference in the perceptions of the evaluation process as an accountability tool between core and non-core teachers. H3 was not supported.

Table 5

Observed and Expected Frequencies for Hypothesis 3

		Subject Taught	
Agreement		Core	Non-Core
Agree	Observed	11	14
	Expected	12.2	12.8
Disagree	Observed	33	32
	Expected	31.8	33.2

RQ4. To what extent is there a difference in the perceptions of the evaluation process as a tool for improving instructional practices between core and non-core teachers?

H4. There is a difference in the perceptions of the evaluation process as a tool for improving instructional practices between core and non-core teachers.

A chi-square test of independence was conducted to test RQ4. The difference between the observed frequencies and those expected by chance was analyzed. The level of significance was set at .05. The results of the chi-square test of independence indicated no difference between the observed and expected values, $\chi^2 = 0.089$, $df = 1$, $p = .766$. See Table 6 for the observed and expected frequencies. There is not a difference in the perceptions of the evaluation process as a tool for improving instructional practices between core and non-core teachers. H4 was not supported.

Table 6

Observed and Expected Frequencies for Hypothesis 4

Agreement		Subject Taught	
		Core	Non-Core
Agree	Observed	14	16
	Expected	14.7	15.3
Disagree	Observed	30	30
	Expected	29.3	30.7

RQ5. To what extent is there a difference in the perceptions of the evaluation process as an accountability tool among teachers based on experience (0-5, 6-15, and 16 or more years)?

H5. There is a difference in the perceptions of the evaluation process as an accountability tool among teachers based on their years of experience.

A chi-square test of independence was conducted to test RQ5. The difference between the observed frequencies and those expected by chance was analyzed. The level of significance was set at .05. The results of the chi-square test of independence indicated no difference between the observed and expected values, $\chi^2 = .639$, $df = 2$, $p = .726$. See Table 7 for the observed and expected frequencies. There is not a difference in the perceptions of the evaluation process as an accountability tool based on their years of experience. H5 was not supported.

Table 7

Observed and Expected Frequencies for Hypothesis 5

Agreement		Experience (in Years)		
		1-5	6-15	16 or more
Agree	Observed	8	8	9
	Expected	8.3	9.2	7.5
Disagree	Observed	22	25	18
	Expected	21.7	23.8	19.5

RQ6. To what extent is there a difference in the perceptions of the evaluation process as a tool for improving instructional practices among teachers based on experience (0-5, 6-15, and 16 or more years)?

H6. There is a difference in the perceptions of the evaluation process as a tool for improving instructional practices among teachers based on experience.

A chi-square test of independence was conducted to test RQ6. The difference between the observed frequencies and those expected by chance was analyzed. The level of significance was set at .05. The results of the chi-square test of independence indicated a statistically significant difference between the observed and expected values, $\chi^2 = 6.553$, $df = 2$, $p = .038$. See Table 8 for the observed and expected frequencies. The observed frequency for participants who responded 16 or more years of experience and *agree* ($n = 13$) was higher than the expected frequency ($n = 9$). The observed frequency for participants who responded 1-5 years of experience and *disagree* ($n = 25$) was higher than the expected frequency ($n = 20$). There is a difference in the perceptions of the evaluation process as a tool for improving instructional practices among teachers based on experience. H6 was supported.

Table 8

Observed and Expected Frequencies for Hypothesis 6

		Experience (in Years)		
Agreement		1-5	6-15	16 or more
Agree	Observed	5	12	13
	Expected	10	11	9
Disagree	Observed	25	21	14
	Expected	20	22	18

RQ7. To what extent do teachers use the teacher evaluation process to improve their professional practice and decisions?

H7. Teachers use the teacher evaluation process to improve their professional practice and decisions.

A chi-square test of equal percentages was conducted to test H7. The difference between the observed frequencies and those expected by chance was analyzed. The level of significance was set at .05. The results of the chi-square test of equal percentages indicated a statistically significant difference between the observed and expected values, $\chi^2 = 60.133$, $df = 3$, $p = .000$. The observed frequency *disagree* ($n = 32$) was higher than the expected frequency ($n = 22.5$). See Table 9 for the observed and expected frequencies. The observed frequency *agree* ($n = 48$) was higher than the expected frequency ($n = 22.5$). Although the most frequent teacher perceptions were distributed in the agree and disagree categories, the largest proportion of responses support the evaluation process used by teachers improve their professional decisions and practice. H7 was supported.

Table 9

Observed and Expected Frequencies for Hypothesis 7

Response Category	Observed	Expected
Strongly Disagree	5	22.5
Disagree	32	22.5
Agree	48	22.5
Strongly Agree	5	22.5

RQ8. To what extent is there a difference in the use of the teacher evaluation process to improve their professional practice and decisions among teachers between core and non-core teachers?

H8. There is a difference in the use of the teacher evaluation process to improve their professional practice and decisions among teachers between core and non-core teachers.

A chi-square test of independence was conducted to test H8. The difference between the observed frequencies and those expected by chance was analyzed. The level of significance was set at .05. The results of the chi-square test of independence indicated no difference between the observed and expected values, $\chi^2 = 0.016$, $df = 1$, $p = .900$. See Table 10 for the observed and expected frequencies. There is not a difference in the improvements made to professional practices and decisions based on the evaluation process among teachers between core and non-core teachers. H8 was not supported.

Table 10

Observed and Expected Frequencies for Hypothesis 8

Agreement		Subject Taught	
		Core	Non-Core
Agree	Observed	18	19
	Expected	18.3	18.7
Disagree	Observed	26	26
	Expected	25.7	26.3

RQ9. To what extent is there a difference in the use of the teacher evaluation process to improve their professional practice and decisions among teachers based on experience (0-5, 6-15, and 16 or more years)?

H9. There is a difference in the use of the teacher evaluation process to improve their professional practice and decisions among teachers based on experience.

A chi-square test of independence was conducted to test H9. The difference between the observed frequencies and those expected by chance was analyzed. The level of significance was set at .05. The results of the chi-square test of independence indicated a marginally significant difference between the observed and expected values, $\chi^2 = 4.312$, $df = 2$, $p = .116$. See Table 11 for the observed and expected frequencies. The observed frequency for participants who responded 6-15 years of experience and *agree* (n =17) was higher than the expected frequency (n = 13.7). The observed frequency for participants who responded 16 or more years of experience and *agree* (n = 12) was higher than the expected frequency (n = 10.8). The observed frequency for participants who responded 1-5 years of experience and *disagree* (n = 22) was higher than the expected frequency (n = 17.5). Although not statistically significant, there is a

difference in the improvements made to professional practices and decisions based on the evaluation process among teachers based on experience. H9 was supported.

Table 11

Observed and Expected Frequencies for Hypothesis 9

		Experience (in Years)		
Agreement		1-5	6-15	16 or more
Agree	Observed	8	17	12
	Expected	12.5	13.7	10.8
Disagree	Observed	22	16	14
	Expected	17.5	19.3	15.2

Summary

Chapter 4 included a summary of the descriptive statistics, and the results of chi-square tests of equal percentages, and chi-square tests of independence for the nine questions of the study. Descriptive statistics included the number of participants, the subject area taught by the participants, and the years of experience by the participants. A chi-square test of equal percentages indicated teachers perceive the evaluation process as an accountability tool and a tool for improving instructional practices. Another chi-square test of equal percentages indicated the majority of teachers use the teacher evaluation process to improve their professional practice and decisions. The chi-square tests of independence indicated, teachers with 16 or more years of experience perceived the evaluation process as a tool for improving instructional practices, and, teachers with 6-15 and 16 or more years of experience use the teacher evaluation process to improve professional practices and decisions.

Chapter 5 includes a summary of the study, overview of the problem and purpose, and the research questions. The major findings related to the literature review are presented. Implications for future actions, recommendations for future research, and conclusions are also included.

Chapter 5

Interpretation and Recommendations

Data-driven teacher evaluation processes have been encouraged through legislation at the state and federal level in recent years in an effort to create more efficient and effective learning environments and improve student learning. Effective processes, in an effort to encourage these improvements, consider teacher perceptions of their evaluation. The purpose of this study was to determine the extent to which teachers perceive the evaluation process as an accountability tool and a tool to improve instruction, as well as to determine the extent to which teachers use the teacher evaluation process to improve their professional practice and decisions. The participants in the study were secondary certified teachers in the Riverboat School District during the 2018-2019 school year.

This chapter contains a summary of the study. The major findings of the study and how the findings are related to the literature are also included in this chapter. Finally, implications for action and recommendations for future research are also included.

Study Summary

This study was conducted to examine the extent to which teachers perceive the evaluation process as an accountability tool and a tool to improve instruction, as well as to determine the extent to which teachers use the teacher evaluation process to improve their professional practice and decisions. A review of literature was provided over topics pertinent to this study including motivation in education, evaluation legislation,

evaluation programs, and teacher perceptions. An overview of the problem, purpose statement, and research questions were provided. This chapter concludes with a review of the methodology, the study's major findings, and recommendations for further actions.

Overview of the problem. Federal and state legislation has focused on student learning by ensuring effective teachers are in classrooms. A literature review outlined how, through the ESEA and the subsequent reauthorizations, in an effort to maintain the focus on student achievement, implementation of an effective teacher evaluation process shifted from recommended to required (Klein, 2015). The RTT grant offered incentives at the federal level for school districts who implemented effective teacher evaluation processes (U.S. Department of Education, 2017). This also aligned with the shift of purpose for teacher evaluation from pure accountability to a tool for improving instructional practices with an emphasis on observations, student learning objectives, and the use of rubrics throughout the process (Anderson et al., 2016). A literature review revealed, in the mid 1990s (Loup et al., 1996) and early 2000s (Xu & Sinclair, 2002), teacher perceptions of their evaluation process did not align with the intended purposes. The added inclusion and emphasis of standardized test scores in the teacher evaluation process, though important for data driven decisions, did not promote positive teacher perceptions of the evaluation process like supportive conditions, choice for professional growth, and quality, timely feedback (Bradley, 2014; Donahue & Vogel, 2018). An evaluation process viewed as positive is purposed to improve the abilities of teachers, recognizes and are aligned with standards, and involves teacher in the professional growth process (Pink, 2009b). These positive views of evaluation, not only are present in a collaborative professional environment, but shift teacher motivation from extrinsic to

more intrinsically driven (Pink, 2009b). Findings from the current study added to the current empirical evidence of teacher perceptions of the evaluation process and teachers' use of the evaluation process to improve their professional practice and decisions.

Purpose statement and research questions. The purpose of this study was to determine the extent to which teachers perceive the evaluation process as an accountability tool and a tool to improve instruction. Another purpose of this study was to determine the extent to which teachers use the teacher evaluation process to improve their professional practice and decisions. In addition, the extent of the differences in these perceptions and the use of the evaluation process between core and non-core teachers, as well as among teachers based on experience (0-5, 6-15, and 16 or more years), were purposes of this study. Nine research questions were posed to address the purposes of the study.

Review of the methodology. A quantitative design was chosen for use in the current study. The instrumentation used was a survey designed by Sheppard (2013) and modified to assess teachers' perceptions. The independent variables were the high school teachers' subjects taught (core, non-core) and experience (0-5, 6-15, and 16 or more years). The dependent variables were high school level teachers' perceptions of the evaluation process as an accountability tool, secondary level teachers' perceptions of the evaluation process as a tool for improving instructional practices, and the use of the teacher evaluation process to improve professional practice and decisions among teachers. Quantitative data was collected through an online survey instrument. The survey was distributed to 200 certified teachers in the Riverboat School District over the

course of an eleven-day period. Multiple chi-square tests of equal percentages and chi-square tests of independence were conducted to address the research questions.

Major findings. The findings are a result of addressing the nine research questions in this study. The results indicated evidence that teachers perceive the district teacher evaluation process as an accountability tool, as well as a tool for improving instructional practices. Teacher perceptions were not affected by the subject area they taught. There was a significant difference between teachers based on experience, where more experienced teachers had an increased likelihood to perceive their evaluation as a tool for improvement and used the evaluation process to advance their professional practice. Years of experience did not affect teachers' perceptions of the evaluation process as an accountability tool. Teachers agreed they use the teacher evaluation process to improve their professional practice and decisions. There was some evidence specificially indicating teachers with 6 or more years of experience use their evaluation to improve their professional practice and decisions, and those with 1-5 years of experience do not. The results indicated there was no evidence of a difference among teachers based on subject area taught.

Findings Related to the Literature

This study was conducted to add to the body of research concerning teacher perceptions of the evaluation process and whether they used the evaluation process to improve their professional practice and decisions. There is research on teacher perceptions of the evaluation process in terms of whether it is positive or negative, or effective or ineffective. Few studies have looked at teachers' perceptions of the purpose of their evaluation in terms of an accountability tool or a tool for improving instructional

practices. This study also adds to the body of research how those perceptions might be impacted based on subject area taught and years of experience.

Extrinsic motivators, such as dismissal and compensation of staff, can encourage teachers to improve instructional practices and decisions by promoting these changes as something they have to do (Pink, 2009b) leading to burnout and lose of drive (Peters & Passanisi, 2012). Shifting the purpose directly to improving the capacity of teacher instructional practices and decisions, through a collaborative effort to reach mastery, and with the autonomy to make positive changes, promotes a more intrinsically motivated teaching environment (Pink, 2009b). An evaluation process specifically designed to intrinsically motivate teachers could be more flexible and gives them a sense of ownership in the decision to improve. This study found 72.23% of teachers perceive the evaluation process as an accountability tool, indicating extrinsic motivation. Of those same participating teachers, 66.67% of them view the evaluation process as a tool for improving instructional practices, indicating intrinsic motivation. Furthermore, the majority of teachers use the evaluation tool to improve their professional practice and decisions.

Having high quality teachers in classrooms has been a part of federal education legislation, and specifically been a requirement since 2002 (S. Res. 1177, 2015). The response to this requirement by many states and school districts was to establish effective teacher evaluation processes. This specific effort to ensure high quality teachers are in the classroom was supported at the federal level through programs such as the RTT grant (U.S. Department of Education, 2017). With flexible criteria for the teacher evaluation processes implemented, the collection of student learning data shifted away from

standardized-test scores and toward classroom observations, student learning objectives, and the use of rubrics (Anderson et al., 2016). The current study indicated 58.89% of teachers use their evaluation data to improve their professional practice and decisions.

According to Weisberg et al. (2009), despite the requirement of highly qualified teachers in federal legislation, teacher evaluation processes of the early 2000s showed "institutional indifference to variations in teacher performance, and teacher evaluation systems reflected and reinforced this indifference in several ways (p. 6)." Research indicated how teacher evaluation processes were showing results similar to this over 15 years into the 2000s despite the 2009 research and RTT grant incentives (Steinberg & Donaldson, 2014). While the current study did not include data concerning teacher ability level, results from the study did indicate the majority of teachers do perceive the evaluation process as an accountability tool and a tool for improving instructional practices, which is a goal for effective evaluation processes (Marzano et al., 2011).

Research suggests teachers' perceptions of the evaluation process did not change much in the mid 1980s to mid 1990s (Ellett & Garland, 1986; Loup et at., 1996). They believed the purpose of evaluation should be to improve capacity and professional practices; however, research indicated educators' perceptions of the teacher evaluation process at the time, was that it was purposed for teacher accountability and dismissal. In this study, teachers' responses indicate a shift away from these one-sided perceptions. The majority of teachers perceive the purpose of the teacher evaluation process as a tool for improving professional practices and decisions, as well as an accountability tool.

Conclusions

This section includes conclusions drawn about teachers' perceptions of the teacher evaluation process, the use of the teacher evaluation process to improve professional practice and decisions among teachers, and the differences of these perceptions and use of the evaluation process between core and non-core teachers, as well as among teachers based on experience. Implications for action and recommendations for future research are included. The section closes with concluding remarks.

Implications for action. The findings of this study indicated implications for action by district and building level administration. The data from the current study did indicate teachers do perceive the evaluation process as a tool for professional growth, and to improve their practices; however, there is a difference between teachers based on years of experience. The researcher found this perception and use of the evaluation process was more evident with more experienced teachers. Administrators should note, teachers with less experience could benefit from the evaluation process as much as, if not more than, experienced teachers. If these teachers' perceptions of their evaluation were less focused on professional growth, and the feedback less used to improve practices, adjustments to how the evaluation process is handled with less experienced teachers should be made.

Recommendations for future research. The main purpose of this study was to analyze teachers' perceptions of the evaluation process and the use of the teacher evaluation process to improve their professional practice and decisions. The variables of subject taught and years of experience were included. This study contributed to the research in the field of teacher perceptions of teacher evaluation, however, additional

research is needed to understand how components of the teacher evaluation process impact teacher perceptions.

The first recommendation is to conduct a qualitative method for future research on teacher perceptions. Interviewing teachers individually or as a panel discussion will provide an opportunity hear more open-ended responses. The ability to ask follow-up questions connecting teacher perceptions to specific reasons why they have those perceptions will promote a better understanding of the influence of the teacher evaluation process on teachers.

The second recommendation is to conduct a mixed method study of the perceptions of teachers of the evaluation process. The study should include all the components of the teacher evaluation process and should gather feedback from teachers about their understanding of the importance or value from the district perspective, their own perspective, and why they believe that to be true. This would provide research about teacher's perspective of the intentions and impact of the teacher evaluation process.

The final recommendation is to extend the current study to a broader group of teachers and survey them throughout the year. Teachers at elementary, middle, and high school levels should be surveyed at the beginning and end of the year, as well as before, during, and after their evaluation. This would provide a view of how teacher perceptions might change throughout the evaluation process.

Concluding remarks. Teachers do not have a singular perception of the purpose of the evaluation process. The results from the current study's findings indicate they perceive the evaluation process as an accountability tool and a tool to improve their instructional decisions. They consider the feedback from their evaluations when making

decisions on classroom instruction and professional practices. While there was no difference between teachers of different subject areas, both the perception of the evaluation process as a tool to improve instructional decisions and the use of the feedback were more evident among teachers with more experience. In contrast, perhaps more importantly, data from the study indicated teachers with 1-5 years of experience are less likely to perceive the evaluation process as a tool to improve instructional practices, as well as, less likely to use the evaluation process to improve their professional practice and decisions. School districts need to continue to work ensuring all teachers perceive their evaluation as a tool for improving instruction, and that the feedback resulting from the process can be used by teachers to develop their professional practices and decisions.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Survey Modification Permission

From: Sheppard, Joy [jsheppard@effingham.k12.ga.us]

Subject: Re: Permission

Date: September 14, 2017 at 9:02 PM

To: Michael Filla [redacted]

Hello Michael- you are welcome to use my modified version of the TEP and make whatever modifications you wish..please send me a copy of your dissertation once you're done... best of luck!

Sincerely,

Joy Sheppard

Sent from my iPhone

Appendix B: Survey

TEACHER EVALUATION PROFILE FOR TEACHERS

The Definition of Teacher Evaluation

Teacher evaluation takes different forms in different programs. For the purpose of this study, teacher evaluation procedures may include all or some of the following:

- Classroom observations
- Student evaluation of teachers
- Meetings with teacher evaluators
- Peer evaluation
- Examination of lesson plans, materials or other artifacts
- Self-evaluation
- Student achievement

When reference is made in this questionnaire to teacher evaluation, it should be understood to encompass any of these procedures that are followed in the evaluation program within your school district.

Overview

This form has been designed to allow you to describe some of your perceptions on your most recent experience with teacher evaluation in your school district. Your participation is voluntary and your responses will be combined with those of other teachers to yield a picture of the teacher evaluation experience in your school district. All teacher participation in this survey will be handled both condifentialy and anonymously. The data collected from this survey will be used in a study on how teacher perceptions of the evaluation process impact their classroom instruction decisions. Your frank and honest responses are important to reach this goal and will remain anonymous.

Please follow the instructions carefully and set aside 3 to 5 uninterrupted minutes to provide thoughtful responses.

Instructions

Please use the questions provided on the following pages to describe yourself and the nature of your most recent teacher evaluation experience in your school district. Do this by:

- Considering each of the items carefully,
- Studying the scale to be used to describe each,
- Selecting the letter amongst the options that best represents your response.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact Michael Filla at mfillaos@[redacted].

Thank you for your participation.

HARD COPY VERSION OF SURVEY

Demographic Information:

1. Currently, do you teach a core or non-core subject? ("Core subjects" are English, math, science, and history. "Non-core subjects" are any subject not a core subject.)
   A. Core subject
   B. Non-core subject

2. Including the current year, how many years have you taught in your current district?
   A. 0 to 5 years
   B. 6 to 15 years
   C. 16 or more years

Design:

3. In the past year, was the evaluation process described to you?
   A. Yes
   B. No

4. In the past year, on how many occasions were you observed by a peer?
   A. 0
   B. 1 to 2
   C. 3 to 4
   D. 5 or more

5. In the past year, on how many occasions were you observed by an administrator?
   A. 0
   B. 1 to 2
   C. 3 to 4
   D. 5 or more

6. Was a formal administrator observation included as a part of your most recent evaluation?
   A. Yes
   B. No

7. If you answered Yes to #5, was there a formal pre-observation meeting?
   A. Yes
   B. No

Perception and Practices:

To what extent do you agree with the following statements:

8. The teacher evaluation process is an accountability tool.
   A. (Strongly Disagree)
   B. (Disagree)
   C. (Agree)
   D. (Strongly Agree)

9. The teacher evaluation process is a tool for improving instructional practices.
   A. (Strongly Disagree)
   B. (Disagree)
   C. (Agree)
   D. (Strongly Agree)

10. I use the teacher evaluation process to improve my professional practice and decisions.
    A. (Strongly Disagree)
    B. (Disagree)
    C. (Agree)
    D. (Strongly Agree)

11. If there is any additional information about your perceptions of the teacher evaluation process based on your experience that should be considered, please include it in the space provided.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Appendix C: IRB Approval Letter

Baker University Institutional Review Board

December 20th, 2018

Dear Michael Filla and Verneda Edwards,

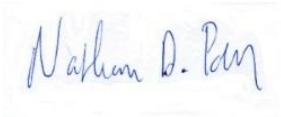
The Baker University IRB has reviewed your project application and approved this project under Expedited Status Review. As described, the project complies with all the requirements and policies established by the University for protection of human subjects in research. Unless renewed, approval lapses one year after approval date.

Please be aware of the following:

1. Any significant change in the research protocol as described should be reviewed by this Committee prior to altering the project.
2. Notify the IRB about any new investigators not named in original application.
3. When signed consent documents are required, the primary investigator must retain the signed consent documents of the research activity.
4. If this is a funded project, keep a copy of this approval letter with your proposal/grant file.
5. If the results of the research are used to prepare papers for publication or oral presentation at professional conferences, manuscripts or abstracts are requested for IRB as part of the project record.

Please inform this Committee or myself when this project is terminated or completed. As noted above, you must also provide IRB with an annual status report and receive approval for maintaining your status. If you have any questions, please contact me at npoell@bakeru.edu or 785.594.4582.

Sincerely,



Nathan Poell, MA
Chair, Baker University IRB

Baker University IRB Committee
Scott Crenshaw
Jamin Perry, PhD
Susan Rogers, PhD
Joe Watson, PhD

Appendix D: Research Request of District

From: Michael Filla
Sent: Monday, November 12, 2018 6:09 AM
To: [redacted]
Subject: Survey

[redacted]

My name is Michael Filla. I'm currently a teacher in the district and a doctoral candidate through Baker University. I'm currently writing my dissertation on teacher perceptions on the teacher evaluation process and how those perceptions impact their classroom instruction decisions. For the research component of my study, I wanted to survey all high school teachers in [redacted]. It would consist of a short email (see below) and a link to an online survey that is only five questions and takes a minimal amount of time to complete (see attached for hard copy of survey). The process would be voluntary and anonymous. I foresee 2-4 attempts over a 3 week span in an effort to acquire enough responses to ensure validity in my research.

I'm reaching out to both of you in an effort to seek permission and the facility to complete this research component. I apologize if neither of you are the appropriate person to approve such a request, and would appreciate any direction you might provide in guiding toward the correct person.

EMAIL THAT WOULD BE SENT:

Colleague,

My name is Michael Filla, and I'm currently finishing my Doctoral work at Baker University. For my research, I'm asking all high school teachers in our district to complete a 3-5 minute, five-question survey on the teacher evaluation process. This is voluntary and anonymous.

If you're still interested, please follow this link to the online survey: [TBD]

Sincerely,
Michael Filla

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Michael Filla

Appendix E: Research Permission from District

On Feb 24, 2019, at 2:21 PM, [redacted] <[redacted]> wrote:

Hi Michael,
You are free to send out your email and survey. [redacted] asked me to remind you to send this first email out, and then we can send one second email. After you send the first email, let's wait a little bit and connect with each other before you send the second one out. I will be happy to help get your needed N.

Thanks, Michael.

[redacted]

Appendix F: Email to Participants

Colleague,

My name is Michael Filla, and I'm currently finishing my Doctoral work at Baker University. For my research, I'm asking high school teachers in our district to complete a 3-5 minute, eleven-question survey on the teacher evaluation process. Taking part in this study is completely voluntary and anonymous. If you -- at any time in completing the survey -- decide you do not want to continue, you are free to withdraw and your data will not be used. This study was granted approval by the district. Data gathered from the study will be shared with the district.

If you're still interested, please follow this link to the online survey:
https://www.[redacted]

Sincerely,
Michael Filla