BEGINNING TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF COMPREHENSIVE INDUCTION PROGRAMMING

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Abstract

Training and assimilation of beginning teachers is critical to ensuring a highly qualified teaching staff. Development of new teacher induction programs requires careful planning and consideration. The purpose of this study was to evaluate one Missouri school district's comprehensive Teacher Induction Program (TIP), specifically the participants' perceptions of the program and its components. Beginning teachers' perception data was also analyzed by teaching level and total years of teaching experience. The methodology of this research followed a quantitative design using a Likert-type scale survey. Data was also collected from one open-ended response item asking participants to share how they felt the program met its purpose of acculturating beginning teachers into the learning organization and accelerating the beginning teachers' professional development. The major findings of this research indicated all participating teachers perceived six of the eight components of the TIP to be beneficial. Of the six components, regular meetings with the building administrator had the highest mean rating. Based on teaching level, elementary and secondary teachers perceived different components to be the most beneficial. Elementary teachers perceived regular meetings with the instructional coach to be the most beneficial component whereas the most beneficial component perceived by the secondary teachers was the regular meetings with the building administrator. Elementary teachers in general were more positive about the program than were secondary teachers. Total years of teaching experience did not have a compelling influence on the perceived benefits of the TIP components.

Dedication

I dedicate this to the many teachers who have influenced and supported me over the years; but especially to the two teachers who have been there for me the longest…my parents.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE

From the first day on the job, teaching is one of the few professions in which the beginning teacher has the same responsibilities as a tenured veteran. Beginning teachers are expected to handle the same variety of demands as any experienced teacher, yet the support provided to beginning teachers varies greatly from district to district and school to school. Some districts provide beginning teachers a teacher-mentor, someone who has a similar position and can offer support to the beginning teacher by answering questions and providing guidance. Other school districts have a process of support, often called induction, which includes mentoring as well as other professional development activities (New Teacher Center, 2007a). Mentoring and induction are not synonymous, though people often use these words incorrectly to describe programs or activities for beginning teachers. Understanding the relationship between these terms and how they connect to professional development is necessary for educational leaders to provide worthwhile training.

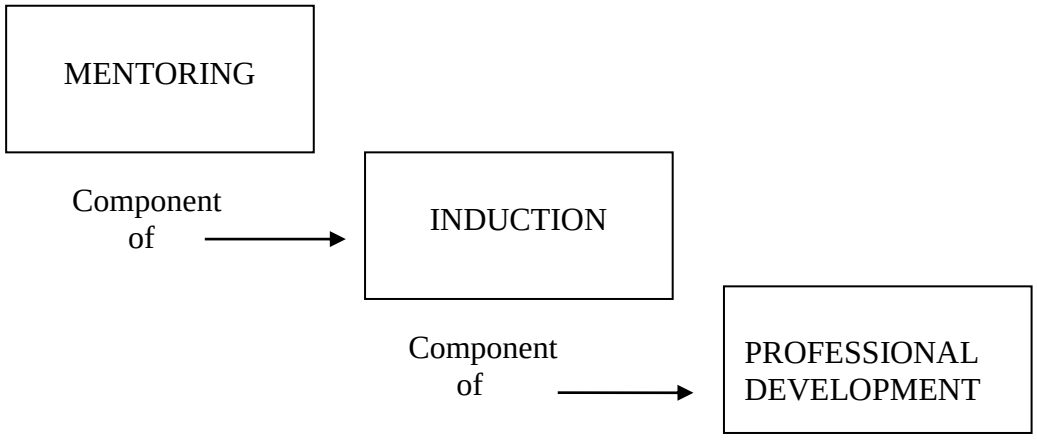

Figure 1. Mentoring, induction, and professional development relationship.

Note. Adapted from "Induction Programs That Keep New Teachers Teaching and Improving" by H. Wong, 2004b, p. 44. Copyright 2004 by Harry Wong Publications.

As depicted in Figure 1, Wong (2004b) illustrates mentoring as a component of induction which in turn is a function of the overall professional development of the teacher.

To understand the role of mentoring, one must first define what mentoring is. Mentoring is an action; it is what the mentor does (Wong, 2004b). According to Jonson, (2002) a teacher-mentor is typically a skilled teacher who has thorough command of the curriculum, effective teaching strategies, and classroom management. A teacher-mentor is able to share these skills and has the ability to build trusting relationships with others. A teacher-mentor needs to be a good listener and not be overly judgmental. Mentoring requires commitment and a willingness to reach out to another person (Jonson, 2002). However, mentoring as a single support for beginning teachers is not enough. As shown by Fulton, Yoon, and Lee's research (2005), mentoring is a useful component of induction, but it is only one element of a comprehensive induction program. In their report, *Induction into Learning Communities*, "an induction system is both a phase–a set period of time–and a network of relationships and supports with well-defined roles, activities, and outcomes" (p. 4). However, not all induction programs are structured or deployed in the same fashion. Successful induction programs have three major objectives: (a) to help employees assimilate into their new environment, (b) to help them understand their responsibilities, and (c) to ensure that the organization receives the benefits of a well-trained, highly motivated employee as quickly as possible (Gregory, 1998). Without focusing on these objectives, induction programs can become a list of tasks to accomplish and not a systematic process of professional learning.

According to Wong (2004b), Table 1 shows the differences between mentoring and comprehensive induction. A major difference between the two is the process

involved in delivering support to beginning teachers. Mentoring is often reactionary and short-term, whereas comprehensive induction is a thorough process of ongoing, long-term support. This support is strategically aligned with the district's vision and includes numerous resources and support personnel. Therefore, comprehensive induction is the overarching, inclusive program of acculturation, and mentoring is one component of that program (Wong, 2004b).

Table 1

Differences between Mentoring and Induction

Mentoring	Comprehensive Induction
Focuses on survival and support	Promotes career learning and professional development
Relies on a single mentor or shares a mentor with other teachers	Provides multiple support people and administrative support
Treats mentoring as an isolated event	Induction is comprehensive and is part of a lifelong professional development design
Limited resources spent	Investment in an extensive, comprehensive, and sustained induction program
Reacts to whatever arises	Acculturates a vision and aligns content to academic standards
Short term, perhaps a year	Long-term, recurrent, sustained

Note. Adapted from "Induction Programs That Keep New Teachers Teaching and Improving" by H. Wong, 2004b, p. 45. Copyright 2004 by Harry Wong Publications.

Comprehensive induction, which includes mentoring and all other types of professional development, is a process designed to improve the individual teacher's skills and the learning organization (New Teacher Center, 2007b). Sustaining a high quality teaching workforce is important to all school districts. Supporting this belief is the

observation that the single most important factor in student achievement is the effectiveness of the classroom teacher (Marzano, 2003; Wong, 2007). Providing the best support to bridge the transition for beginning teachers from being students of teaching to teachers of learning is critical to developing career professionals.

Problem Statement

According to a 2010 report by the U.S. Census Bureau, in 2008, the United States had 7.2 million teachers. Of this number, 20% were teachers with fewer than four years of teaching experience. To develop and maintain a highly qualified workforce, as outlined in the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, districts must offer beginning teachers special support. Research conducted by Hiebert, Gallimore, and Stigler (2002) has shown that beginning teachers need sustained on-the-job training during the first few years of employment, followed by on-going professional development.

At the same time people expect a highly qualified workforce, school district budgets are becoming tighter and tighter. Professional development of teachers can be costly. District leaders spend thousands of dollars to provide support to beginning teachers through various structures of professional development. On average, the cost to train a new teacher is around $6,000 (Villar & Strong, 2007). School districts endeavoring to retain teachers and create effective classroom instructors have engaged in professional development practices hoping these practices will achieve their goal. Induction programs cannot utilize a one-size-fits all approach, nor should they. Determining the components necessary for an induction program is critical to the success of beginning teachers. Identifying these components and their effective application is essential when creating a comprehensive induction program. Understanding which

components of induction the participants perceive as beneficial is directly connected to determining the effectiveness of an induction program.

Background and Conceptual Framework

The setting for this study was the Park Hill School district, a suburban school district located in western Missouri. This public school district, with pre-kindergarten programs through grade 12, had a total enrollment of nearly 9,500 students for the 2008-2009 school year. The school district included nine elementary schools, three middle schools (one with only sixth grade students), two high schools, a day treatment school, and an early childhood center.

As of the 2008-2009 school year, the school district employed 793 certified teachers. Table 2 presents the total certified teaching staff for three consecutive school years. The total number of certified teaching staff increased slightly over the school years from 2006-2007 to 2008-09.

Table 2

Number of Certified Teaching Staff

School Year	Number of Certified Teaching Staff		
	Elementary	Middle	High
2008-2009	339	198	256
2007-2008	334	195	250
2006-2007	330	191	242

Note. Adapted from "Park Hill School District Information," 2008.

Table 3 summarizes the total number of the district's new hires. With an average of 10.5% new staff members hired over a three year period (2006-2009), the school district needs to quickly assimilate these new employees into the culture of the organization. One way in which to systematically reach these new employees is through the school district's Teacher Induction Program.

Table 3

Number of New Hires

School Year	Number of New Hires		
	Elementary	Middle	High
2008-2009	36	28	32
Percentage of Staff	10.6%	14.1%	12.5%
2007-2008	26	18	30
Percentage of Staff	7.8%	9.2%	12%
2006-2007	33	13	28
Percentage of Staff	10%	6.8%	11.6%

Note. Adapted from "Park Hill School District Information," 2008.

The school district is strategically aligned with a common vision, mission, and values. This alignment incorporates a Professional Development Council. The council, composed of teacher representatives, promotes the development of all staff, especially beginning teachers. In cooperation with the Professional Development Council, the district's instructional coaches deliver many of the components of the Teacher Induction Program. The full time instructional coaches are master teachers who are specifically assigned as mentors for beginning and new to the district teachers (Park Hill School

District Information, 2008). The Teacher Induction Program for the school district includes eight major components.

1. A five-day professional development session prior to the return of the veteran teaching staff,
2. Curriculum and teaching resources provided prior to the first day of teaching,
3. Half-day TIP meetings held once a quarter,
4. Regular meetings with the instructional coach,
5. Regular meetings with the building-based curriculum consultant,
6. Regular meetings with the building administrator,
7. District-wide professional development days, and
8. Training and/or professional development sessions offered by out-of-district presenters (Teacher Induction Program, 2008)

The district's Teacher Induction Program is structured in accordance with the recommendations set forth by the New Teacher Center at the University of California at Santa Cruz (2005). The New Teacher Center (NTC) originated as the Santa Cruz New Teacher Project (SCNTP) (1998, as cited in U.S. Department of Education [USDOE], n.d.) which began as a project funded through the four-year research study (1988-1992) called the California New Teacher Project. The purpose of the project was to identify effective practices to support beginning teachers. This project brought together the key stakeholders at the state level. The California Department of Education and the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing were co-sponsors of the project. The collaborative effort of the project also brought together key stakeholders at the local

level, including university faculty, district administrators, union leaders, and veteran and novice teachers. The SCNTP (1998, as cited in USDOE, n.d.) continued to work on many statewide efforts in regard to best practices for new teacher induction. These efforts ultimately resulted in the development of training programs for mentors and program administrators. The SCTNP also consulted on the creation of the California Formative Assessment and Support System for Teachers. Consequently, the contributions made by the SCNTP were significant to the field of professional development for new teachers and the reform of state-wide support of new teacher induction.

The success of the SCNTP (1998, as cited in USDOE, n.d.) induction model led to the creation of a state and national teacher induction center at the University of California, Santa Cruz. The New Teacher Center operated for many years as part of the university before separating and operating independently. The New Teacher Center currently trains district personnel not only from California, but also from across the nation. The program training is based on the fundamental model supported by years of research through the SCNTP. The program philosophy is built on these beliefs:

- Learning to teach is a career-long, developmental process.
- Support should be responsive to the needs of each new teacher and embedded in every teacher's classroom practices.
- Teacher learning best occurs in collaborative environments.
- Instructional changes are most likely to occur when teachers assess their practices against recognized professional standards.

- Teaching is a continuous cycle of teaching, inquiry into practice, self-assessment, self-prescription, and re-teaching.
- Professional learning must have at its core student learning. (SCNTP, 1998, as cited in USDOE, n.d. para. 5)

The primary focus of the SCNTP (1998, as cited in USDOE, n.d.) induction model is the partnership between the novice teacher and the mentor. The match between the new teacher and the mentor is according to grade level and subject matter, and the mentors meet weekly with the new teachers to offer specific ongoing support. Selected mentors are veteran teachers who are skilled at working with adults. These teachers receive mentor training prior to working with new teachers, during which the mentors learn about the phases of development that all novice teachers experience.

Another element of the SCNTP (1998, as cited in USDOE, n.d.) induction model is that release days are provided to new teachers for professional development. Such opportunities may include observations of other teachers, curriculum planning, or self-assessment. Monthly, the new teachers meet with their peers to share experiences and network. Working with the long history of success of the New Teacher Center, this multiple component induction model is a collaborative example of support for new teachers.

Significance

Mentoring is not adequate as the exclusive support for beginning teachers, according to federal legislation passed in the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. School districts must provide more intensive professional development and induction. Analysis of teachers' perceptions concerning specific components of a comprehensive induction

program is necessary to understand the value of such programs. The information gained from this study will be shared with the school district in order to better serve beginning teachers in this suburban Missouri school district. The study will also add to the current literature on comprehensive induction programs and further promote the importance of the components associated with induction programs.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study was to evaluate one Missouri school district's comprehensive Teacher Induction Program, particularly participants' perceptions of the program and its components. Because of differences among induction program components, analysis of the individual components provided perception data about those that were the most beneficial. The study compared the responses of elementary and secondary teachers to this particular delivery model. In addition, participants' perceptions based on their years of teaching experience were also analyzed. Finally, responses to an open-ended item provided insight on participants' perceptions of how well they felt the program met its goal of acculturating beginning teachers into the learning organization and accelerating beginning teachers' professional development.

Delimitations

This research study was delimited to the population of the new teachers hired in one suburban Missouri school district. Only teachers participating in the Teacher Induction Program during the 2007-2008 and 2008-2009 school years were surveyed. The study was also delimited by the survey, which was distributed electronically rather than on paper. Respondents may have felt that their responses could be identified by

their user login within the district network, and they might not have answered the questions as openly and honestly as they would have with a paper questionnaire.

Assumptions

For this study, the following was assumed to be true: (a) the participating teachers responded honestly to the survey items, and (b) the components of the Teacher Induction Program were delivered in the manner outlined by the school district.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study to determine participating teachers' perceptions of the comprehensive Teacher Induction Program:

1. To what extent do participating teachers perceive the Teacher Induction Program components to be beneficial?
2. To what extent are the teachers' perceptions of the Teacher Induction Program components influenced by teaching assignment level?
3. To what extent are the teachers' perceptions of the Teacher Induction Program components influenced by years of teaching experience?

Definition of Terms

Induction program. A multi-year process designed to acculturate new teachers in the academic standards and vision of the district (Portner, 2005).

Instructional coach. A full-time released teacher who is skilled in professional development, cognitive coaching, and best instructional practices. This person meets regularly with beginning teachers concerning pedagogy and classroom management (Knight, 2007).

Teacher-Mentor. A selected, experienced teacher who is trained to support the beginning teacher with particular content, site-based questions, and effective teaching strategies (Jonson, 2002).

Overview of Methodology

The design of this study was survey research. The methodology utilized in the study was quantitative in design using a Likert-type scale survey. The researcher developed the instrument for the current study. The first part of the survey contained demographic items. The second section of the survey asked the participants to reflect on their participation in the district Teacher Induction Program and to rate how beneficial each of the eight components was to them. The final item of the survey was an open-ended response pertaining to the purpose of the Teacher Induction Program. Participants were asked to share their thoughts concerning how the Teacher Induction Program met its purposes of acculturating them in the learning organization and accelerating their professional growth.

The survey was distributed to 134 certified teachers in the school district. Data collection took place through an electronic Zoomerang survey at www.Zoomerang.com. The researcher entered the data into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences software (SPSS) for analysis. One-sample *t* tests were conducted to address research question one. For research question two, independent samples *t* tests were conducted, and one-factor ANOVAs were utilized to address research question three.

Organization of the Study

This research study is presented in five chapters. Chapter one includes the background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, significance of

the study, definition of terms, theoretical framework, research questions, limitations, delimitations, and the assumptions of the study. Chapter two contains a review of the literature, which includes a historical review of induction programs, attributes of effective programs, delivery models, and program evaluations associated with induction programs. Chapter three describes the methodology used in this research study. The selection of participants, instrumentation, data collection, and data analysis are included in this chapter. Chapter four presents the data analysis from the three research questions. Chapter five includes a summary of the study, discussion of the findings, implications for practice, and recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Chapter one offered an overview of this study. Chapter two is a review of the literature as it relates to mentoring and the process of induction for beginning teachers. Presented here are historical views of induction programs, research related to the components of induction programs, and aspects of teacher perceptions related to induction programs.

For decades, educational researchers have recognized the need to support beginning teachers. As a profession, education lacks a systematic process of training and certifying new teachers similar to those provided by other white-collar professions like law and medicine (Ravitch, 2003). One historical component of support for beginning teachers is that of assigning a mentor. Researchers Fulton et al. (2005) determined that a good mentor can be helpful to a beginning teacher. Conversely, "A poorly prepared or over-extended mentor can be of little assistance, and…may even reinforce bad practice" (Fulton et al., 2005, p. 4). Several researchers have supported mentoring as a component of a comprehensive process of induction (Feiman-Nemser, 2003; Moir, 2003, as cited in Portner, 2005; Wong, 2005). Structured mentoring programs, in which specifically selected and trained mentors work closely with new teachers, are an important component in most induction programs (Feiman-Nemser, Schwille, Carver, & Yusko, 1999; Ingersoll, 2003; Wong, 2004b). Therefore, mentoring is not a stand-alone program, but rather an essential part of a complete induction experience.

Ingersoll and Smith (2004) reported that during the 1990-1991 school year, about 4 in 10 beginning teachers in the United States said they had participated in a formal

teacher induction program. By the 1999-2000 school year, beginning teacher participation rates in induction programs rose to 8 out of 10 teachers. With the increase in formal induction programs, the variance in the types of activities associated with induction programs also increased. Ingersoll and Smith acknowledged teacher induction could refer to a variety of different activities such as classes, workshops, orientations, seminars, and especially, mentoring. With such varied experiences and structures associated with teacher induction programs, one must first understand the history of induction in education.

Evolution of Induction Programs

Induction programs have a long and varied history in education. By definition, induction programs provide training and support to beginning teachers. Yet, one induction program is not necessarily the same as another. How one school district defines the components of its induction program can vary greatly from the definition in another school district.

For some school districts, assigning a mentor to a new teacher is considered an induction program. For other school districts, having a menu of professional development opportunities to choose from and having several personnel available to support a beginning teacher constitutes an induction program. As reported by the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (2006), there is no consistency across states and districts; and far too often, what have been called induction programs have been limited to one-on-one mentoring designed to help new teachers survive their first year. This variance in interpretation of a beginning teacher induction program has plagued the field of education for over 50 years.

Some of the earliest research relating to induction programs is from J.B. Conant's 1963 book, *The Education of American Teachers.* The book generated much discussion regarding the need for induction programs, yet systematic or widespread development of programs did not occur. In his book, Conant outlined five kinds of support local school boards should provide for beginning teachers.

> During the initial probationary period, local school boards should take specific steps to provide the new teacher with every possible help in the form of: a) limited teaching responsibility; b) aid in gathering instructional materials; c) advice of experienced teachers whose own work load is reduced so that they can work with the new teacher in his own classroom; d) shifting to more experienced teachers those pupils who create problems beyond the ability of the novice to handle effectively; e) specialized instruction concerning the characteristics of the community, the neighborhood and the students he is likely to encounter. (Conant, 1963, pp. 70-71)

Over a decade later, Zeichner (1979) completed a paper called "Teacher Induction Practices in the United States and Great Britain." At the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Zeichner reported his examination of 11 beginning teacher induction programs in the United States. He specifically addressed the need for induction and defined it as "The first few (probationary) years of teaching following the completion of pre-service training and provisional certification but preceding permanent certification" (Zeichner, 1979, p. 3). This basic definition of induction described a time period and not a program, as he noted the diversity of program models across the country during the late 1970s.

In Zeichner's (1979) research, he described two major types of teacher induction programs being implemented. One type was an internship model, which was a degree-related program for beginning teachers, and the other type was a beginning teacher program that was a non-degree related model. The 11 programs in his study were all classified as beginning teacher programs and incorporated one or more of the five types of support recommended in Conant's (1963) report.

All of the programs identified in Zeichner's research were defined as induction programs, yet the types of support provided to the beginning teachers varied greatly. Support in one induction program meant only having a mentor, while in another induction program it meant a host of service providers. Training in some of the induction programs was limited to the school calendar, yet other programs offered two-week summer institutes. Even the format of the induction programs varied as there were school specific programs, as compared to statewide programs. Based on the general definition, however, all of the induction programs were assumed to be the same until researchers analyzed the components.

During the early part of the 1980s, the corporate sector began utilizing more formal, on-the-job training programs for new employees. Japanese production and management techniques were influencing the American business culture. The work of Deming played a significant role in how businesses structured employee training (Malonis, 2000). In his book, *Out of Crisis*, Deming offered 14 points for transforming business effectiveness. One of the 14 points was "institute training" (Deming, 1983, p. 52). As American companies were analyzing how they train new employees, American educators also looked critically at how beginning teachers were supported upon entering

the profession (Goodland, 1990; Huling-Austin, 1990). Thus, the analysis of how beginning teachers are trained on the job and the connection to induction programs reemerged.

About the same time, great uncertainty surrounded the direction of educational leadership at the national level. During President Carter's tenure, the Department of Education Organizational Act was passed by Congress and was signed into law in October 1979 (U.S. Department of Education, 2009). The Act divided the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare into two new departments: the Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Education. When President Reagan was elected in 1980, he openly opposed having the federal government overly involved in the education of American youth. Reagan supported having state and local educators make decisions regarding the education of children. Due to this emphasis on localized control of education, teacher induction became a variable left to state and district discretion.

The educational system in California embraced this newfound empowerment to address teacher training. The collaborative efforts of the California State Department of Education and the University of California at Santa Cruz served as a catalyst for programs to support beginning teachers. In 1988, the California New Teacher Project funded 15 projects designed to identify effective approaches in beginning teacher support.

As referenced in Chapter one, the Santa Cruz New Teacher Project (SCNTP; 1998, as cited in USDOE, n.d.) was one of these four-year (1988-1992) research studies. The SCNTP was led by the Teacher Education Program of the University of California, Santa Cruz, in collaboration with the Santa Cruz County Office of Education and 16

school districts in the surrounding area. During the research study, the SCNTP operated on the fundamental beliefs outlined in Chapter one (p. 8-9) from the program training presented by the New Teacher Center.

The New Teacher Center was created ten years after the inception of the California New Teacher Project. Due to the success of the SCNTP induction model and the California New Teacher Project, a statewide and national teacher induction center was opened called the New Teacher Center. The New Teacher Center (NTC) (2005) is a national education non-profit organized for the development of beginning teachers. The NTC was created to reduce the achievement gap in our nation's schools by accelerating the effectiveness of new teachers through comprehensive induction programs. Partnering with school districts, policymakers, and leaders in education, the NTC has worked to implement programs that build leadership capacity, enhance working conditions, improve teacher retention, and transform schools into vibrant learning communities. Since 1998, the NTC has contributed to reform efforts and has served as a resource for new teacher support in urban schools as well as with statewide efforts to systematize induction.

In addition to the contributions of NTC, another significant cause for the increase in induction programs stems from the expectations outlined in the federal legislation of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). This Act, passed in 2002, requires school districts to maintain a highly qualified teaching staff and emphasizes the importance of providing a multi-year induction program for beginning teachers. The specific language of NCLB indicates the individual states should be "Carrying out programs that support teachers new to their profession that would include teacher mentoring, team teaching, reduced class schedules, and intensive professional development" (NCLB, 2002, p.

1625). These components relate to the components presented by Conant nearly 40 years earlier, and this time, financial support from the federal government was listed as a provision. Funding under Title II addresses the professional development of teachers, especially those new to the profession (NCLB, 2002). The significance of this provision within the law outlined the federal government's financial support for the professional development of new teachers and specific elements of programs to support new teachers.

Despite some funding provided by the federal government, financial constraints inherent in comprehensive induction programs have played an important role in minimalistic program design. Until the NCLB, funding sources beyond the local level were unreliable and often short-term. State education budgets varied year to year, and providing a multi-year induction program required continued monetary support. Serpell (2000) noted, "The structure and preponderance of induction programs is influenced to a considerable degree by the availability of funding…and this availability is rooted in a political agenda" (p. 8). Indeed, certain components in the program delivery are more expensive, and administrators sometimes eliminate them to stay within budget constraints. Too often, the simple solution seems to be to eliminate mentoring and induction programs (Villar & Strong, 2007). Although it appears to be a financially reasonable solution, eliminating induction programs presents hidden costs to school districts.

Mentoring programs, especially when utilized as a component of a broader induction model, have indeed proven their worth. Villar and Strong conducted benefit-cost research to answer the question, "Is mentoring worth the money?" In their study based on California's Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA; 2008)

program, mentors were full-time released veteran teachers who met rigorous qualification standards. These trained mentors had a maximum caseload of 15 new teachers they supported for a two-year period. The beginning teachers who were part of this program attended monthly seminars designed to build a support network and ongoing professional dialogue with the mentors and other beginning teachers. The beginning teachers received release time to observe veteran teachers, plan curriculum, attend professional development meetings, and collaborate with their mentors about progress on professional teaching standards. The research showed the program worth the investment: the financial investment in beginning teacher training was a clear winner.

> After five years, the induction program saw a fifty percent return to society. Benefits were monetized and distributed across two basic categories: returns on district investments to training and the lowered social costs of losing new teachers from the teaching profession. (Villar & Strong, 2007, p. 12)

Experts have identified induction programs as a necessary support for beginning teachers. As recommended by various educational leaders over the past 60 years, these programs should be inclusive of several levels of assistance for multiple years. An in-depth look at the components available in a comprehensive induction program follows. The components detailed here are consistent with the historical connections made previously in this chapter.

Components of Comprehensive Induction Programs

Leaders in beginning teacher training have identified several components as effective. The following components are typically identified as part of a comprehensive induction program: high quality mentoring, multi-year programming, common planning

time, intensive and strategic ongoing professional development, participation in a network of beginning teachers, a network of support personnel, professional teaching standards and data-driven conversations, and collaboration with all stakeholders (Strong, 2005; Wong, 2004b). Detailed descriptions of each of the eight components follow.

High Quality Mentoring

Mentoring is the most important component of the induction process (Wong, 2004a). As suggested by the early work of Conant (1963), having an experienced teacher whose own workload is reduced so they can work with the beginning teacher is what contemporary literature describes as a teacher-mentor. Mentoring, the action of what a teacher-mentor does, is currently a widely accepted strategy to support beginning teachers. Jonson (2002) maintained mentoring in education serves as a natural progression in the teaching profession, as experienced teachers traditionally pass on their expertise and wisdom to new colleagues.

The philosophy surrounding mentoring is that successful classroom teachers can transfer the skills and qualities that make them so to a beginning teacher by meeting on a regular basis. An inherent flaw in this position is that not all good teachers are good mentors. Jonson, in her book, *Being an Effective Mentor*, began by stating, "Good teachers of children are not necessarily good teachers of adults" (2002, p. 17). A good mentor has additional characteristics, such as being a skilled teacher, having the ability to transmit effective teaching strategies, possessing a thorough command of the curriculum being taught, communicating openly with the beginning teacher, being a good listener, exhibiting sensitivity to the needs of the beginning teacher, and understanding that teachers may be effective using a variety of styles, and reserving judgment.

In Villani's book, *Mentoring Programs for New Teachers* (2002), she states that the requirements for mentoring go beyond general characteristics and qualities. An effective mentor understands the stages of teacher development and the needs associated with the beginning teacher. A skilled mentor also is armed with effective instructional coaching strategies appropriate for the adult learner. Problem solving skills and the ability to think critically and reflectively are also necessary (Villani, 2002). The skill set of a classroom teacher is different than the skill set necessary for mentoring.

Wong's research (2004b) further reinforces that mentoring requires the capability to work collaboratively with adults and to describe effective teaching skills. These qualities differ from those of a successful classroom teacher in that successful classroom teachers do not necessarily excel in working collaboratively with adults. Often, successful classroom teachers are naturals, so describing exactly how to be effective is difficult (Jonson, 2002). Thus, the unique skills necessary for being an effective mentor are not always developed in successful classroom teachers.

Providing training for mentors helps to ensure all beginning teachers benefit from a highly effective mentor. Research by the New Teacher Center suggested potential mentors should go through an application process in which the best candidates are selected as mentors, rather than random assignments to beginning teachers. High quality and ongoing training within a professional learning community is necessary to help mentors develop the skills needed to identify and transfer the elements of effective teaching to beginning teachers (New Teacher Center, 2007b). Certainly finding highly motivated professionals interested in the school district vision and in ensuring student

learning would make for more effective mentors than a randomized or obligatory mentor selection process.

Mentoring is clearly beneficial to the development of beginning teachers. However, mentoring as the only source of support for beginning teachers has been less effective than mentoring as just one element of a comprehensive approach to support beginning teachers (Serpell & Bozeman, 1999). A study conducted by Smith and Ingersoll (2004) indicated the most effective induction programs, in regard to retention rates, offered bundles or packages of support for beginning teachers. When a beginning teacher received three or more induction components, the turnover probability was less than half that of beginning teachers who received no induction supports. Combining mentoring with other components to support the development of beginning teachers was most effective (Boss, 2006). Described here are other types of support for combining with mentoring.

Multi-Year Program

Some induction programs confine their attention to the first year of teaching. While this practice demonstrates better results than no induction program, the most effective induction practices typically span three years. Feiman-Nemser (2001) concluded strong induction programs have a multi-year format and a developmental stance. A multi-year program can address a teacher's first-year concerns and continuously develop more sophisticated understandings over time. The New Teacher Center highlighted research indicating the learning that takes place in a beginning teacher's initial years is the most formational of a teacher's career (Goldlick, 2009). A multi-year induction process allows beginning teachers to maintain systematic support

during these critical initial years in the profession. The New Teacher Center suggested that most deep learning about instruction happens during the second and third years of teaching. The New Teacher Center study attributes this to the fact that the first year of teaching is survival oriented, whereas in the second and third years, teachers are more receptive to learning and varied approaches of instructional delivery. Therefore, induction programs which span merely one year are less effective than induction programs which span three years. Multi-year programming needs to be in place to support deeper learning.

The lack of long-term, stable, financial support to states and districts is often a roadblock to supporting multi-year programming. The Alliance for Excellent Education (2004) advocated for providing comprehensive induction programs to beginning teachers during at least their first two years. The Alliance recommended full funding support through Congress to maintain consistency of implementation. When induction is left to local funding efforts, inequitable programming can occur due to variance in districts' financial stability (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2004).

Leadership plays a key role in the success of multi-year programs. Strategic planning is necessary for such programs to run smoothly. Starting with strong leadership at the district level, a multi-year induction program can facilitate the professional development of all teachers. The Maryland State Department of Education outlined in their 2010 Induction Program fact sheet the requirement that each local school system provide an induction program that reflects coherence and consistency to ensure an integrated, seamless system of support until the beginning teacher earns tenure following completion of three years of teaching.

As the beginning teacher gains experience, collaboration with colleagues becomes more complex in nature. Instructional techniques and research-based strategies have new meaning and the professional dialogue is rich. The building level leadership then takes a stronger presence as the day-to-day collaboration is ongoing professional development (Brock & Grady, 2007). Multiple years of guidance from the educational leader are necessary to build a professional culture in which new and experienced teachers collaborate regularly and plan for the success of the students (Johnson & Kardos, 2005). Utilizing the component of multi-year programming for the professional development of beginning teachers fosters a collaborative school community culture.

Common Planning Time

One element of professional learning communities is the expectation of collaborative planning with a curricular focus. Such structures are especially helpful to beginning teachers who are just learning to plan curriculum and instruction (Stansbury & Zimmerman, 2000). For new teachers, participation with colleagues regarding instructional and assessment planning is an integral part of their professional development. In the most optimal situation, mentor teachers have the same teaching assignments as the beginning teacher (Renard, 2003). These similar assignments allow for common planning time and collaborative lesson planning. New teachers who have mentors in the same subject area and access to collective induction experiences—such as common planning time and collaborative activities—are less likely to move to another school (migration) or leave the profession after their first year teaching (attrition) (ASCD, 2005).

In order to support common plan time, a system-wide approach is necessary. At the building level, the principal plays a key role in the success of this component. Induction works best when it is embedded in the culture of school and common plan time is more than interdisciplinary meeting time (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2004).

Ongoing Professional Development

Ongoing professional development for new teachers includes meeting with other new teachers to share and learn from each other's experiences during their initial years of teaching. Sharing strategies that have been successful in their classrooms is also beneficial to beginning teachers (Villani, 2002). The greatest benefits emerge when new teacher induction programs are part of a larger professional development plan of all teachers within the school district.

Personalized professional development is necessary to support the growth of the beginning teacher (Gimbert & Fultz, 2009). A beginning teacher's professional development plan must have priorities. A beginning teacher has much to learn, and having a plan in place for gradual assimilation is vital. Beginning teachers should not be expected to attend all of the same professional development opportunities as a 10-year teaching veteran.

If the expectations for beginning teachers are too high, they are most likely destined to fail because they will be overwhelmed. The focus for beginning teachers must be in classroom management, instructional planning, comprehension of curriculum, school policies and procedures, and effective communication skills with students, parents, and colleagues (Brock & Grady 2007). With the collaborative support of the

administrator, mentor, and beginning teacher, crafting and revisiting a systematic professional development plan is a crucial step.

Network of Beginning Teachers

To overcome the traditional isolation of teachers, establishing processes for beginning teachers to network with other beginning teachers is an effective component of comprehensive induction programs (Moir, 2003). Learning from one another and sharing similar experiences provides beginning teachers connections within the professional learning community. High quality interpersonal relationships founded on trust and respect are characteristics of teachers staying in the profession (Wong, 2004b).

Depending on the size of the school district and the number of new employees hired each year, establishing a network within the district can be challenging. Many states offer regional professional development opportunities through the state's department of education (Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2010). These types of services can help to provide networking opportunities for beginning teachers in smaller school districts. Networking can include Internet bulletin boards or listservs, or they can be book groups in which beginning teachers read a professional education book and discuss it collaboratively with other beginning teachers (Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Stansbury & Zimmerman, 2002). Through whatever means, beginning teachers need to know they are not alone in the journey to becoming a successful, veteran teacher.

Support Personnel

The support personnel outlined in most literature regarding new teacher induction includes the mentor, other colleagues, and the building administrator. Mentoring and

collaborative planning with colleagues have been detailed previously in this document. Other colleagues are also of value to the development of beginning teachers. Positive collegial relationships provide another avenue in which beginning teachers may find support. Colleagues of similar age and background can lend support and offer understanding to the experiences of a beginning teacher.

Experts consider the support of the building administrator a key component of the induction program. The principal is the one who sets the tone for how easy or difficult it is for beginning teachers to be accepted into the school learning community (Haberman, 2005, Wood & Stanulis, 2007). The relationship between the building administrator and the beginning teacher is integral, as the building administrator typically serves as the evaluator of a beginning teacher. The evaluation process can be intimidating for a beginning teacher. Therefore, effective building administrators work to show both sides of their role: the evaluator and the coach (Wood, 2005). Through open communication and a trusting relationship, beginning teachers can gain insight from both roles of the building administrator.

Professional Teaching Standards and Data-Driven Conversations

Professional teaching standards can include state level expectations or district level expectations. Because they reflect a vision of good teaching, Feiman-Nemser (2003) asserted the standards could serve to shape conversations about instruction. In some school districts, the evaluation tool administrators use is an example of professional teaching standards. Such standards represent the various facets of the work a classroom teacher should be proficient in accomplishing. As a building administrator uses these standards for evaluation, it is also possible to use them in a different manner. Using the

standards during the mentor/mentee collaboration will provide direction and meaning to the process of the beginning teacher progressing to attain a proficient status (Olebe, Jackson, & Danielson, 1999).

Data-driven conversations can center on instructional strategies, classroom management, or student achievement. Within a professional learning community, the value of data-driven conversations to promote growth is well documented. The work of DuFour and Eaker (1998) is prevalent in the current literature. They describe the professional learning community working with data to make the necessary instructional decisions at the classroom, school, and district level. Having beginning teachers immersed in a culture that uses data allows them to learn first-hand the value of using data to determine the next steps for instructional delivery.

Collaboration with All Stakeholders

Strengthening the connections within the learning community helps to develop support strategies for beginning teachers. Sharing information, learning from one another, and aligning resources is an effective opportunity for new teachers to interact with other staff members, including mentors, coaches, specialists, department heads, and administrators. The work of the Project on the Next Generation of Teachers at Harvard Graduate School of Education supports this. Johnson and Birkeland (2003a) stated the work of the Project suggests that schools would do better to develop school-wide structures that promote the frequent exchange of information and ideas among novice and veteran teachers than to rely only on one-to-one mentoring (Johnson & Birkeland, 2003a). Discussing ways to collaborate with students and parents is also useful in building the beginning teacher's skill set.

Due to the importance of a teacher's skill set and its direct correlation to student achievement, supporting the growth of beginning teachers must be a collaborative effort. The power of the collective group to support a beginning teacher can be impressive. The greatest gains in professional development of beginning educators occur when there is collective dedication to the process of nurturing and guiding the growth of these professionals.

Beginning Teachers' Perceptions of Induction Programs

From recent studies regarding induction programs, beginning teacher perception data is generally positive (Lambreth, 2007). The support provided to a beginning teacher, no matter how limited, has been reported to be helpful. Moving away from the "sink or swim" survival notion for the first year provides beginning teachers with a certain degree of confidence (Ingersoll & Smith, 2004; Maciejewski, 2007).

One induction program component beginning teachers perceive to be helpful is mentoring (Brannon, Feine, Burke, & Weiman, 2009). In the research conducted by Flanagan (2006) in one Virginia school district, beginning teachers reported overall satisfaction with the mentoring program. The participants indicated three elements that had a positive impact on the mentoring component.

The first element was that mentor and mentee should be in close physical proximity to one another (Flanagan, 2006). Having the mentor right next door or across the hall led to higher levels of perceived satisfaction than situations in which beginning teachers had mentors not located in close proximity. The second element associated with positive impact was the mentors and mentees having the same subject matter to teach. The connection with the actual job duties of planning and instruction produced greater

perceived satisfaction than when the mentor and mentee had different teaching assignments. The final element for positive impact was the mentor and mentee working with the same grade level (Flanagan, 2006).

Flanagan (2006) reported negative responses about the mentoring from a few teachers. The reoccurring theme of the negative responses was a mismatch when assigning mentors. For instance, as reported in the summary, a specialized teacher did not have a mentor in the building, another beginning classroom teacher was assigned to the librarian as a mentor, and still another beginning teacher and the mentor did not have compatible personalities and teaching styles.

Another component beginning teachers perceived to be helpful was having a common plan time with the mentor and other colleagues. Collaborative planning is an area in which beginning teachers typically need additional support from veteran teachers. In research conducted by Fry (2007), a beginning teacher reported, "The teaching part is going great. Being with kids is amazing. It's the school routine, working with the other teachers, that's going not so amazing" (p. 224). This teacher's grade-level colleagues had been teaching together for a decade. They also had classrooms next to one another, while the first year teacher's classroom was in another part of the school. This combination resulted in the beginning teacher's disappointment in her grade level collaboration.

Another teacher from the Fry (2007) study commented about her induction experience. Her disappointment was with the two components of her official induction program. The first, her officially assigned mentor, did not provide the connection or support she sought. In addition, the second component of the induction program involved meetings for all of the new teachers in her district. The first meeting was in

mid-September and involved an all-day workshop. For this teacher, the potential benefits of the meeting were negated because she had to prepare plans for a substitute teacher during a time when she was still figuring out how to plan for herself. She decided, "The induction meetings are basically a repeat of college. Last time, for example, we had the special education teacher and it was just a repeat of things I already knew" (Fry, 2007, p. 230).

Generally speaking, the qualitative data gathered from the Fry (2007) study indicated some variation in the perceptions of the beginning teachers in terms of the support they received. Participants cited examples of various levels of support from the school administrator, school district, and other sources. The interview data suggested some of the teachers related to the developmental stages of a beginning teacher, indicating that a sustained network of support is critical to the development of novice teachers.

In a study by Thompson, Paek, Goe, and Ponte (2005), a large majority of teachers reported that they improved in specific aspects of teaching through the help of the support provider. Interview data confirmed these findings and revealed that teachers identified having a support provider as one of the best, if not the best part of the induction program. Interview data also indicated a strong relationship between a strong engagement in the induction program and having an on-site support provider. The interview data gave voice to teacher complaints about the program, with the primary as the large amount of time and paperwork the job required (Thompson et al., 2005).

Summary

In summarizing the review of literature, a disconnect seems to exist between the theory of effective induction programs and the actual practice of executing the critical components that research indicates are necessary for an effective induction program. McCaughtry, Kulinna, Cothran, Martin, and Faust (2005) stated that reform of new teacher education is widely sought but rarely achieved. Schools and universities are organizations built on a conservative epistemology, with a complex interaction of existing practices and diverse assumptions about the nature and purpose of teaching and learning. As such, the institutions do not change easily. The McCaughtry et al. report documented important exceptions to the general rule of traditional approaches to teacher education. High levels of collaboration between the new teacher and mentor are a major element in successful programs that have brought real change to teacher education. The most promising criteria for judging the quality of pre-service and in-service preparation appear to be the perceptions of those learning to teach and those learning to improve their teaching.

Educational research in teacher induction programs is not an end in itself, but rather a means to the end of finding richer and more complex meanings in quality classroom teaching that translate to student achievement. The focus must always be on the quality of learning for each school's students. This focus can become central when teachers experience coherence, collaboration, and cooperation in their daily professional lives.

These qualities appear to be diminishing under growing pressure for higher test scores, increased time constraints, and growing financial issues. Faculties in education

need to find ways to mediate the tensions and contradictions between these obstacles and the voices of students and teachers. Effective induction programs are a means by which teachers can be more prepared and competent in their work, which translates to higher levels of student achievement (McCaughtry et al., 2005).

This chapter was a review of the relevant literature, which included a historical review of induction programs, attributes of effective programs, delivery models, and program evaluations associated with induction programs. In chapter three the methodology used in this research study is described. The selection of participants, instrumentation, data collection, and data analysis are also included in the next chapter.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to determine beginning teachers' perceptions of the benefits of specific components of the Teacher Induction Program. In addition, the study addressed demographic comparisons data relating to teaching assignment grade level and years of teaching experience of participating teachers. Chapter three presents the research design, data analysis, hypothesis testing, and limitations of this study.

Research Design

The design of this quantitative study was survey research. Quantitative evidence gathered from the study was used to understand teachers' perceptions relating to the eight components of the Teacher Induction Program. Responses from the open-ended item were analyzed and categorized as to how well the program met its goal of acculturating beginning teachers with the learning organization and accelerating the beginning teacher's professional growth.

Population and Sample

The population for this study was new teachers in one suburban Missouri school district who have participated in the district's Teacher Induction Program. New teachers to the school district participate in a comprehensive induction program to acculturate them to the district and to accelerate their professional development. The new teachers in this district are from one of three categories. First-year teachers have zero to 11 months of teaching experience. Second-year teachers have 12 to 24 months of teaching experience, and teachers new to the district have more than two years of experience at the time they come to the school district.

The sample for this study was limited to new hires during two consecutive school years. The new hires represented various buildings and grade levels from across the district. The school district hired 95 teachers for the 2008-2009 school year. Of this group, 41 were classified as first-year teachers. These individuals had zero to 11 months of teaching experience at the beginning of the 2008-2009 school year. The remaining 54 new hires were classified as experienced, but new to the school district for the 2008-2009 school year. Additionally, teachers who were in their second year of teaching and/or hired for the 2007-2008 school year were included in this study. A total of thirty-nine second-year teachers, teachers with one full year of experience, participated in the district's Teacher Induction Program during the 2008-2009 school year. The study focused on the responses from these 134 teachers.

Sampling Procedures

In order to participate, the individuals for this study met specific criteria. According to Lunenburg and Irby (2008), "Purposive sampling involves selecting a sample based on the researcher's experience or knowledge of the group to be sampled.…Clear criteria provide a basis for describing and defending purposive samples" (p. 175). The rationale for selecting these two cohorts of teachers was that the teachers had completed the Teacher Induction Program during its second and third year of development. Following the debut year (2006-2007 school year) of the district's Teacher Induction Program, some changes and adaptations were made to the programming. During the second and third years, the program's outline was the same for all beginning teachers.

Instrumentation

The researcher developed the instrument used for this study. A copy of the survey is in Appendix A. Instead of using a paper version of the survey, the researcher uploaded all survey items into an electronic survey program called Zoomerang. The survey was organized to elicit the participating teachers' perceptions of the eight components of the school district's Teacher Induction Program. Descriptions of the eight components, which were the focus of the survey, appeared in detail in chapter one. As described earlier and highlighted in table 1 of chapter one, the eight components correspond with the current research regarding comprehensive induction programs (Wong, 2004b).

The electronic survey was organized into three sections (see Appendix A). In the first section of the survey, demographic information was requested from the participants. Four demographic items were listed: gender, teaching assignment level, years of teaching experience in the district, and total years of teaching experience. Participants checked the appropriate boxes under each heading.

The second section of the survey focused on how beneficial the participants perceived the eight components of the Teacher Induction Program to be. Participants rated each of the eight components on a 5-point Likert-type scale. The scale indicated *Not At All Beneficial* = 1, *Somewhat Beneficial* = 3, *Extremely Beneficial* = 5. The following statement was the item stem for this section of the survey. "Reflecting on your participation in the Teacher Induction Program, please rate how beneficial each of these components have been to you as a beginning teacher in the Park Hill School District."

Below is a list of the eight components.

1. A five-day professional development session prior to the return of the veteran teaching staff,
2. Curriculum and teaching resources provided prior to the first day of teaching,
3. Half-day TIP meetings held once a quarter,
4. Regular meetings with the instructional coach,
5. Regular meetings with the building-based curriculum consultant,
6. Regular meetings with the building administrator,
7. District-wide professional development days, and
8. Training and/or professional development sessions offered by out-of-district presenters

An open-ended item in the final section of the survey provided participants the opportunity to elaborate on their experience in the Teacher Induction Program. Participants were asked to respond, in 100 words or less, to the following that addressed the purpose of the induction program.

> Induction programs serve a purpose for school districts. The programs are meant to acculturate beginning teachers with the learning organization and accelerate the beginning teacher's professional growth. Please share your thoughts regarding how the induction program has addressed this purpose for you.

Measurement

Determining the teachers' perceived benefits from each of the eight components of the Teacher Induction Program was the intended measure of the survey. Participating

teachers marked demographic information regarding gender, teaching assignment level, years of teaching experience in Park Hill, and total years of teaching experience to allow comparison of perceptions across the profiles. Comparison trends were analyzed based on the demographic diversity of the sample population.

The perceived benefit or lack of benefit by participating teachers for each of the eight components of the Teacher Induction Program was determined from the responses on the Likert-type scale. These were low inference items, as each component was described in the same manner in which it was outlined as part of the district Teacher Induction Program (Teacher Induction Program, 2008). The final open-ended item allowed respondents to share specific information regarding the Teacher Induction Program. Analysis of the similarities and differences among the responses to the open-ended item provided additional information. Comparison of the open-ended responses to those from the Likert-type scale and the demographic items also provided additional explanation regarding the perceptions of the participants.

Validity and Reliability

A panel of nine experts was recruited to verify the validity of the survey instrument. All nine experts were practicing instructional coaches in the school district and all had extensive experience with induction programs and training. The researcher requested feedback regarding each section of the survey, including the cover letter. Regarding the cover letter, clarity judgment was requested of the introduction, purpose, anonymity of responses, consent for participation, and timeline. For each of the three sections of the survey, comments on ease of understanding, readability, and clarity were

requested for specific attributes of the survey. The feedback document developed by the researcher and used by the nine experts is in Appendix B.

A pilot test of the electronic survey was conducted using the following participants: the researcher's advisor, the Executive Director of Research, Evaluation, and Assessment for the school district, the Assistant Superintendent of Academic Services for the school district, the Director of Professional Development for the school district, and two classroom teachers who were not involved in the Teacher Induction Program. Results of this test were used to ensure accurate dissemination and retrieval of the electronic survey. Based on the pilot test, two minor modifications were made to the formatting of the survey. One format modification involved the spacing of the survey questions. As a result, the three sections of the survey were separated on different pages. The other format modification dealt with the character spaces available for the open ended response item. The maximum number of characters was increased from 200 characters to 300 characters.

Data Collection Procedures

An application to conduct research was submitted to the Executive Director of Research, Evaluation, and Assessment of the school district. The administration date of the survey was selected for the beginning of the 2009-2010 school year. The timing of the survey was appropriate because participants could reflect on the program after the summer break. Written approval to conduct this research study was received from the Executive Direction of Research, Evaluation, and Assessment of the school district. The district approval request and the approval documents are in Appendix C.

In addition, the Baker University Institutional Review Board granted permission for this study. Copies of the Institutional Review Board form and approval letter are in Appendix D. The researcher met with the building principals in August 2009 to inform them that the survey would be sent electronically to the participating teachers and that the teachers would have two weeks to complete the survey. The survey link was sent via e-mail to the 134 participating teachers. A cover letter was included as part of the e-mail sent to the study sample. An introduction of the researcher and description of the study were in the opening paragraph of the letter. A copy of the cover letter is in Appendix E.

Participation in the study was voluntary, and participants acknowledged consent to participate by clicking on the survey link within the text of the e-mail. The letter described that responses would remain anonymous and no individual results could be released. There was no risk involved or any participant who elected to respond to the electronic survey. The survey link was open for two weeks and the respondents received a reminder one week before the close of the window. A copy of the reminder email is in Appendix F. The data from the survey was retrieved from Zoomerang.

Data Analysis and Hypothesis Testing

A quantitative methodology was used to gain insight into the perceptions of beginning teachers regarding the components of the school district Teacher Induction Program. After the results of the Zoomerang survey were compiled, an Excel spreadsheet was produced that included the responses for the teachers who completed the survey. The data was exported from Excel into Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Data was first analyzed and reported using descriptive statistics. Information on the surveys that related to gender, teaching assignment level, years

teaching in the district, and total years of teaching experience were analyzed using frequency tables. Frequency of responses and perceptions were reported for each of the scale items.

One-sample *t* tests were used to determine if participants' responses were significantly different from 3, the middle of the Likert-type scale. A significant difference provided evidence for each component's benefit or lack of benefit as perceived by the individual participant. The description of the hypothesis tests is below.

Eight hypothesis tests were conducted for research question one. In the Hypothesis 1 statement below, *component x* was replaced with one of the following:

1. A five-day professional development session prior to the return of the veteran teaching staff,
2. Curriculum and teaching resources provided prior to the first day of teaching,
3. Half-day TIP meetings held once a quarter,
4. Regular meetings with the instructional coach,
5. Regular meetings with the building-based curriculum consultant,
6. Regular meetings with the building administrator,
7. District-wide professional development days, and
8. Training and/or professional development sessions offered by out-of-district presenters.

H1: Participating teachers stated that *component x* was beneficial to them during their participation in the Teacher Induction Program. Each of the eight hypotheses was tested at the 0.05 level of significance.

For research question two, eight independent samples *t* tests were conducted to determine if teaching assignment level influenced the response to the items in section two of the survey. Based on the demographic data supplied by the participating teachers, the teachers were divided into two groups, elementary or secondary. Teachers in the elementary group included those individuals who taught Kindergarten through 5th grade and/or worked in an elementary building. Teachers in the secondary group included those individuals who taught 6th grade through 12th grade and/or worked in a middle school or high school. The following hypothesis was tested.

H2: There is a difference between elementary and secondary teachers' perceptions of the benefits of the TIP components. The mean response from each group was compared to test this hypothesis at the 0.05 level of significance.

For research question three, eight one-factor ANOVAs were conducted to determine if total years of teaching experience influenced the response to the items in section two of the survey. Based on the demographic information of total years of teaching experience provided by participating teachers, the teachers were categorized in one of three groups. The three groups included: two years of experience, three to four years of experience, and five or more years of experience. The following hypothesis was tested.

H3: There is a difference among teachers with varying years of teaching experience when determining the perceived benefit of the TIP components. (Each of the eight hypotheses was tested at the 0.05 level of significance.)

The qualitative information from part three of the survey was analyzed for similarities and differences in the teachers' responses. The responses were also analyzed

as to how the Teacher Induction Program met its purpose, and the results provided additional explanation and clarification about the perceptions of the participants.

Limitations

The following limitations applied to this study.

1. The survey link was e-mailed only to teachers participating in this one suburban Missouri school district. Therefore, the results may not be generalized beyond the specific population from which the sample was drawn.
2. Genuineness of responses could vary from participant to participant.
3. During some of the professional development opportunities, participants had a menu of options from which to choose.
4. The quality of presentations within the Teacher Induction Program might have varied.
5. Implementation and delivery of the program from the instructional coaches might have varied from coach to coach and teacher to teacher.

Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to present the research design, data analysis, hypothesis testing, and limitations of this study. The methodology of the study was quantitative in design. The researcher developed the survey to analyze the participants' perceptions of the components of the comprehensive induction program as related to the how beneficial the specific components were to each participant. The Likert-type scale responses from the survey were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Comparison data

based on the demographic profile of the respondents was also analyzed. The survey was distributed electronically. In chapter four the results of the study are presented.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to examine the perceptions of beginning teachers who participated in one Missouri school district's comprehensive Teacher Induction Program in order to analyze the individual components, determine component effectiveness, and provide insight into this particular delivery model. Chapter four includes the analysis of the descriptive statistics. The chapter also includes the results of the study, addressing each of the three research questions regarding the perceived benefits of the program components and whether participants' perception were different based on teaching level and years experience.

Descriptive Statistics

A total of 64 new teachers to the school district during the 2008-2009 school year completed the researcher's survey for this study. Two of the teachers were removed from the statistical analysis. Although they were new teachers to the district, they were also hired as instructional coaches who were responsible for the delivery some of the components of the Teacher Induction Program. Therefore, a total of 62 new teachers were included in the analysis. Tables 4-6 display the demographic information of the participants.

Frequency counts and percentages were calculated for three variables; gender, teaching level, and years of experience. Table 4 presents the data for gender. Of the 62 participants, 77.4% of the teachers were female.

Table 4

Frequency Counts for Gender

Gender	Count	Percentage
Female	48	77.4
Male	14	22.6
Total	62	100.0

Teaching level of the participants is displayed in Table 5. Participants selected one of the three teaching levels, elementary, middle, or high, to describe their placement for the 2008-2009 school year. It should be noted, for the hypothesis testing that middle and high were collapsed into one group. This decision was made based on the delivery of the Teacher Induction Program which was tailored specifically for elementary teachers or secondary teachers. The elementary instructional coaches designed and presented the half-day trainings for the elementary teachers and the secondary instructional coaches designed and presented the half-day trainings for the secondary teachers. These trainings were separate, but similar, for each teaching level group. As Table 5 presents, more teachers were from the secondary level (59.7%) than from the elementary level (40.3%).

Table 5

Frequency Counts for Teaching Level

Teaching Level	Count	Percentage
Elementary	25	40.3
Middle	14	22.6
High	23	37.1
Total	62	100.0

Table 6 contains the data for years of teaching experience. All teachers new to the district at the start of the 2008-2009 school year were included in the Teacher Induction Program. At the time of the survey, all participants were in their second year with the school district. Therefore, no one responded to the option for 1 year of experience. Additionally, the researcher collapsed the single years into groups for the hypothesis testing. Two groups were determined for hypothesis testing that involved years of teaching experience. Group 1 included participants with 2-3 years of experience and Group 2 included participants with 4 or more years of experience.

Table 6

Frequency Count for Years of Teaching Experience

Teaching Experience	Count	Percentage
2 years	18	29.0
3 years	23	37.1
4 years	4	6.5
5 years	1	1.6
6 years or more	16	25.8
Total	62	100.0

This section described the descriptive statistics of the study. Frequency counts and percentages for gender, teaching level, and years of teaching experience were analyzed for the participants. The next section describes the results of the hypothesis testing.

Hypothesis Testing

The results of the hypothesis testing for each of the three research questions are presented here. Results from the one sample *t* tests are described and then presented in Table 7 for research question one. For research question two, the results of the independent samples *t* tests are described and then presented in Table 8. Outcomes from the eight one-factor ANOVAs are presented in Table 9 for the hypothesis testing for research question three. Finally, conclusions from the open-ended response item are included in this section.

Research Question One

Eight hypothesis tests were conducted, and the results of the one sample *t* tests for survey questions 5-12 are described here. This section contains the results of the hypothesis testing for research question one: To what extent do participating teachers perceive the Teacher Induction Program components to be beneficial?

A one sample *t* test was conducted using survey question 5 responses. The results indicated the average teacher response ($M = 3.5806$) was statistically different from a neutral response of 3 ($t = 4.645$, $df = 61$, $p = .000$). The mean rating was higher than 3, indicating that teachers perceived the five-day professional development session to be beneficial.

A one sample *t* test was conducted using survey question 6 responses. The results indicated the average teacher response ($M = 3.2742$) was marginally different from a neutral response of 3 ($t = 1.836$, $df = 61$, $p = .071$). The mean rating was higher than 3, indicating that teachers tended to perceive receiving the curriculum and teaching resources prior to the first day of teaching to be beneficial.

A one sample *t* test was conducted using survey question 7 responses. The results indicated the average teacher response ($M = 2.9032$) was not statistically different from a neutral response of 3 ($t = -.629$, $df = 61$, $p = .531$). The mean rating was not different than 3, indicating that teachers were somewhat indifferent to the perceived benefits of the half-day TIP meetings.

A one sample *t* test was conducted using survey question 8 responses. The results indicated the average teacher response ($M = 3.4355$) was statistically different from a neutral response of 3 ($t = 2.901$, $df = 61$, $p = .005$). The mean rating was higher than 3,

indicating that teachers perceived the regular meetings with their instructional coach to be beneficial.

A one sample *t* test was conducted using survey question 9 responses. The results indicated the average teacher response ($M = 2.9516$) was not statistically different from a neutral response of 3 ($t = -.264$, $df = 61$, $p = .793$). The mean rating was not different than 3, indicating that teachers were somewhat indifferent to the perceived benefits of meeting regularly with their building-based curriculum consultant.

A one sample *t* test was conducted using survey question 10 responses. The results indicated the average teacher response ($M = 3.7258$) was statistically different from a neutral response of 3 ($t = 5.109$, $df = 61$, $p = .000$). The mean rating was higher than 3, indicating that teachers perceived the regular meetings with their building administrator to be beneficial.

A one sample *t* test was conducted using survey question 11 responses. The results indicated the average teacher response ($M = 3.7097$) was statistically different from a neutral response of 3 ($t = 5.897$, $df = 61$, $p = .000$). The mean rating was higher than 3, indicating that teachers perceived the district-wide professional development days to be beneficial.

A one sample *t* test was conducted using survey question 12 responses. The results indicated the average teacher response ($M = 3.5645$) was statistically different from a neutral response of 3 ($t = 5.542$, $df = 61$, $p = .000$). The mean rating was higher than 3, indicating that teachers perceived the trainings and/or professional development sessions offered by out-of-district presenters to be beneficial.

In Table 7 the mean rating for each component is displayed. Responses to six of the eight survey questions indicated teachers perceived the TIP component to be beneficial. Teachers were indifferent to two components: the half-day TIP meetings and meeting with the building-based curriculum consultant. Of all of the components, regular meetings with the building administrator had the highest mean rating.

Table 7

Mean Rating for TIP Component (n = 62)

	TIP Component Evaluated	Mean Rating	Standard Deviation
1.	Five-day professional development session before school begins	3.5806	0.98428
2.	Curriculum & teaching resources provided prior to first day of teaching	3.2742	1.17584
3.	Quarterly half-day TIP meetings	2.9032	1.21074
4.	Regular meetings with the instructional coach	3.4355	1.18212
5.	Regular meetings with the building-based curriculum consultant	2.9516	1.44208
6.	Regular meetings with the building administrator	3.7258	1.11868
7.	District-wide professional development days	3.7097	0.94760
8.	Training and/or professional development sessions offered by out-of-district presenters	3.5645	0.80207

Research Question Two

Eight hypothesis tests were conducted, and the results of the independent samples *t* tests for differences between elementary and secondary teachers' responses to questions 5-12 are described here. This section contains the results of the hypothesis testing for

research question two: To what extent are the perceptions of the Teacher Induction Program components influenced by teaching assignment level?

An independent samples *t* test was conducted using survey question 5 responses to compare the perceptions of elementary teachers and secondary teachers (survey question two). The results indicated the average elementary teacher response ($M = 3.9200$) was significantly different from the average secondary teacher response ($M = 3.3514$) ($t = 2.309$, $df = 60$, $p = .024$). Elementary teachers rated the five-day professional development session more beneficial than did secondary teachers.

An independent samples *t* test was conducted using survey question 6 responses to compare the perceptions of elementary teachers and secondary teachers (survey question two). The results indicated the average elementary teacher response ($M = 3.6800$) was significantly different from the average secondary teacher response ($M = 3.0000$) ($t = 2.312$, $df = 60$, $p = .024$). Elementary teachers rated receiving the curriculum and teaching resources prior to the first day of teaching more beneficial than did secondary teachers.

An independent samples *t* test was conducted using survey question 7 responses to compare the perceptions of elementary teachers and secondary teachers (survey question two). The results indicated the average elementary teacher response ($M = 3.7600$) was significantly different from the average secondary teacher response ($M = 2.3243$) ($t = 5.608$, $df = 60$, $p = .000$). Elementary teachers rated the half-day TIP meetings more beneficial than did secondary teachers.

An independent samples *t* test was conducted using survey question 8 responses to compare the perceptions of elementary teachers and secondary teachers

(survey question two). The results indicated the average elementary teacher response (M = 4.0800) was significantly different from the average secondary teacher response (M = 3.0000) (t = 3.923, df = 60, p = .000). Elementary teachers rated the regular meetings with their instructional coach more beneficial than did secondary teachers.

An independent samples t test was conducted using survey question 9 responses to compare the perceptions of elementary teachers and secondary teachers (survey question two). The results indicated the average elementary teacher response (M = 3.0800) was not significantly different from the average secondary teacher response (M = 2.8649) (t = .573, df = 60, p = .569). Elementary teachers and secondary teachers rated meeting regularly with their building-based curriculum consultant in a similar manner.

An independent samples t test was conducted using survey question 10 responses to compare the perceptions of elementary teachers and secondary teachers (survey question two). The results indicated the average elementary teacher response (M = 3.8400) was not significantly different from the average secondary teacher response (M = 3.6486) (t = .658, df = 60, p = .513). Elementary teachers and secondary teachers rated the regular meetings with their building administrator in a similar manner.

An independent samples t test was conducted using survey question 11 responses to compare the perceptions of elementary teachers and secondary teachers (survey question two). The results indicated the average elementary teacher response (M = 4.0000) was significantly different from the average secondary teacher response (M = 3.5135) (t = 2.033, df = 60, p = .046). Elementary teachers rated the district-wide professional development days more beneficial than did secondary teachers.

An independent samples *t* test was conducted using survey question 12 responses to compare the perceptions of elementary teachers and secondary teachers (survey question two). The results indicated the average elementary teacher response ($M = 4.0000$) was significantly different than the average secondary teacher response ($M = 3.2703$) ($t = 3.903$, $df = 60$, $p = .000$). Elementary teachers rated the trainings and/or professional development sessions offered by out-of-district presenters more beneficial than did secondary teachers.

As presented in Table 8, elementary teachers perceived six of the eight components to be more beneficial than did the secondary teachers. For two components, the meetings with the building-based curriculum consultant and meeting with the building administrator, there was not a statistically significant difference between the responses of elementary teachers and secondary teachers. Overall, elementary teachers perceived regular meetings with the instructional coach to be the most beneficial component, whereas the secondary teachers perceived regular meetings with the building administrator to be the most beneficial component.

Table 8

Mean Rating for TIP Component by Teaching Level (n = 62)

	TIP Component Evaluated	Elementary School Participants	Secondary School Participants	Difference between Groups
1.	Five-day professional development session before school begins	3.9200 (*n* = 25)	3.3514 (*n* = 37)	0.5686
2.	Curriculum & teaching resources provided prior to first day of teaching	3.6800 (*n* = 25)	3.0000 (*n* = 37)	0.6800
3.	Quarterly half-day TIP meetings	3.7600 (*n* = 25)	2.3243 (*n* = 37)	1.4357
4.	Regular meetings with the instructional coach	4.0800 (*n* = 25)	3.0000 (*n* = 37)	1.0800
5.	Regular meetings with the building-based curriculum consultant	3.0800 (*n* = 25)	2.8649 (*n* = 37)	0.2151
6.	Regular meetings with the building administrator	3.8400 (*n* = 25)	3.6486 (*n* = 37)	0.1914
7.	District-wide professional development days	4.0000 (*n* = 25)	3.5135 (*n* = 37)	0.4865
8.	Training and/or professional development sessions offered by out-of-district presenters	4.0000 (*n* = 25)	3.2703 (*n* = 37)	0.7297

Research Question Three

Eight one-factor ANOVAs were conducted to determine if years of teaching experience influenced the responses to questions 5-12 in section two of the survey. Each of the eight hypotheses was tested at the 0.05 level of significance. This section contains the results of the hypothesis testing for research question three: To what extent are the

perceptions of the Teacher Induction Program components influenced by years of teaching experience?

Table 9

Table of Fs

	df	*F*	*p*
Five-day professional development session before school begins	2, 59	2.346	0.105
Curriculum & teaching resources provided prior to first day of teaching	2, 59	0.431	0.652
Quarterly half-day TIP meetings	2, 59	0.361	0.699
Regular meetings with the instructional coach	2, 59	1.764	0.180
Regular meetings with the building-based curriculum consultant	2, 59	0.654	0.524
Regular meetings with the building administrator	2, 59	1.094	0.341
District-wide professional development days	2, 59	1.059	0.353
Training and/or professional development sessions offered by out-of-district presenters	2, 59	0.402	0.671

The results, as displayed in Table 9, showed no statistical differences in regard to the components based on the participants' years of teaching experience.

Section 3 of Survey

Section three of the survey was an open-ended response item. The item stem stated induction programs serve a purpose for school districts. The programs are meant to acculturate beginning teachers to the learning organization and accelerate the beginning teacher's professional growth. Participants were asked to share their thoughts regarding how the induction program had addressed this purpose.

Of the 62 participants, 32 (52%) responded with favorable comments in regard to the induction program meeting its purpose. The comments ranged from general statements to highlighting specific elements. An example of a favorable, general comment from one participant was, "It has helped me a lot with getting to know Park Hill expectations. It has helped me become more familiar with the curriculum and GLEs. Overall, it was beneficial when starting my teaching here in the Park Hill district!" A more specific comment from a beginning teacher was, "The district does a good job of giving beginning teachers a great deal of information and training early in the school year. The regular meetings with the instructional coaches and PD helped fill in gaps the first year of teaching." Within the 32 favorable comments, 17 were from elementary teachers and 15 were from secondary teachers. Therefore, 71% of the elementary beginning teachers and 40% of the secondary beginning teachers found the induction program to be meeting its purpose.

Further analysis of the elementary teachers' responses indicated a trend to identify a specific person or role as a positive element of the induction program. A total of nine responses included some degree of mentioning a person or role. Five elementary teachers specifically referenced the role of the instructional coach as being a positive attribute of

the program. One respondent wrote, "I feel like the most beneficial part of the TIP program is the quarterly meeting with the instructional coaches. They always presented something that I was needing more information on and they always gave great ideas. Every time I left a meeting I felt rejuvenated and a sense of confidence in myself. The instructional coaches are by far what makes the TIP program so great!" Another elementary teacher shared, "I really enjoyed the one-to-one meetings with the instructional coach because it could address my specific needs." Four other elementary teachers mentioned people in specific roles as positive attributes to the induction program. Those roles included the building-based curriculum consultant, the building administrator and a central office director. Nine elementary teachers' responses from the total of 24 responses (38%) specifically mentioned a person or role as a favorable component of the induction programming.

The overall percentage of favorable responses from secondary teachers was much smaller than that of the elementary students. Less than half of the secondary teachers described the induction program as meeting its purpose. When analyzing the 15 favorable responses from the secondary teachers, seven teachers mentioned individuals or roles as being a positive component of the induction program. Three secondary teachers specifically mentioned the presence of the instructional coach as being a positive attribute of the program. One comment regarding the instructional coach was, "The main benefit I experienced was getting to know other teachers and finding out basic information about how things work in the district. Having an instructional coach is wonderful!" Networking with other teachers was also mentioned as another secondary teacher shared, "The program gave me time to network with other new teachers to form relationships.

These contacts have been beneficial as an educator when I needed assistance." Across secondary and elementary responses, 16 beginning teachers mentioned a specific person or role that attributed to the induction program meeting its purpose.

The less-favorable responses were also analyzed. Only seven elementary responses were not included in the favorable group. Three of the seven elementary teachers did not provide any information to the open-ended response item. The four less-favorable responses from elementary teachers' identified specific issues regarding the program's misalignment with their job duties. One respondent shared, "As a beginning educator who is not a traditional classroom teacher, I would have liked more targeted information/instruction for my specific field." Another respondent commented, "I think that the Teacher Induction Program was better suited to meet the needs of brand new teachers than teachers with experience who were just new to the district." The other responses were similar in stating the program did not match their teaching assignment due to a more specific content area than regular elementary classroom teacher.

Within the less favorable responses from secondary teachers, a total of 22 teachers described the program as not meeting its purpose. This represents 58% of the total secondary participants who responded negatively to the open-ended response item. Four of these less favorable responses specifically referenced the program to address the needs of the more experienced teachers who were included in the program. Two such responses were, "Need to have an alternative for the new to Park Hill Teachers that come in with experience elsewhere," and "For veteran teachers it was a lot of review." Another negative theme shared by secondary teachers was the time being out of the classroom. Seven responses indicated that being taken out of the classroom was an additional stress

to their beginning year. One respondent wrote, "Getting taken out of class is a huge hassle. Getting the last day canceled was the best part of the whole program. I would rather be with my students in the classroom than doing the TIP meetings." Another participant shared displeasure with having to prepare for a substitute so early in the school year. This secondary teacher wrote, "I would have liked more training on BIST (Behavior Intervention Support Team). I also felt it was a bit stressful at our first TIP meeting because it was fairly early in the year and I hadn't yet had a sub, so this created more stress rather than benefit. I do wish that our content mentor and instructional coach would have come in and observed our teaching more and then given us constructive criticism."

Similar to the unfavorable elementary responses, secondary respondents mentioned disconnect between the program and their specific content needs. For example, one secondary teacher wrote, "The materials covered were helpful, but tended to be focused on one subject with not enough examples on how it could be applied to other subjects. I often felt like the topics were not applicable to my subject area or grade level. Teachers were taken out of the classroom at an already overwhelming time in their careers." Another teacher shared, "I thought that I was spending a lot of time going over strategies that I had already learned. I needed more time in my building working with those within my department."

Five secondary teachers' responses indicated the instructional coach was not a useful component to them. The responses alluded to timing and certification differences as reasons for the unfavorable response. One secondary teacher wrote, "…The instructional coach assigned to me has no background in my content so I did not find this

relationship to be very beneficial." Another comment referenced poor timing as a concern. "I don't have time in the middle of the day to take out and talk with the instructional coach. If I need something I would prefer for me to contact her instead of regular meeting times."

In comparing the responses between the elementary and secondary teachers, two unique differences emerged. Not a single elementary response mentioned an issue with being taken out of class for the meetings or having to make substitute plans. From the secondary responses, a total of five specifically mentioned being dissatisfied for being taken out of class and/or having to make substitute plans early in the school year. The other difference emerged in the comments regarding instructional coaches. The responses referencing instructional coaches were favorable or positive from the elementary teachers. From the secondary responses, five secondary teachers specifically referenced the instructional coach in negative terms mainly due to the instructional coach not having the same background of content knowledge as the beginning teacher. These responses matched the results from the independent samples *t* tests for questions 7 and 8. For both questions, elementary teachers rated the quarterly half-day TIP meetings and the regular meetings with the instructional coach more beneficial than the secondary teachers did.

Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to present the results from the study. The researcher presented the descriptive statistics of the participants, followed by the results of the hypothesis testing for each research question. For research question one, eight hypothesis tests were conducted, and the results of the one sample *t* tests were presented.

For research question two, eight hypothesis tests were conducted and the results of the independent samples *t* tests were presented. Finally, the results for research question three were shared from the eight one-factor ANOVAs that were conducted to determine if years of teaching experience influenced the responses. The final section of the chapter contained the findings of the open-ended response item. Provided in chapter five is a summary of the study, discussion of the findings, implications for practice, and recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER FIVE

INTERPRETATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The previous chapter presented the data analysis and results of the study. Chapter five includes the summary of the study, findings related to the literature, conclusions, and recommendations for future research and educational practice.

Study Summary

The training and assimilation of beginning teachers is critical to maintaining a highly qualified teaching staff. Therefore, new teacher induction requires careful logistical planning and consideration. When offering a host of support activities and processes, examination of the perceived benefits by the participants can contribute to the overall program evaluation.

Overview of the Problem

After hiring new teachers, school districts must assimilate their beginning employees into the culture and expectations of the district, as well as provide support to strengthen the teachers' instructional skill set. For new teachers, there is sometimes not a systematic process or network of support to achieve these goals, and they are left to figure things out on their own. However, school districts that have developed comprehensive induction programs support beginning teachers to reach their potential by having a structure and systematic process in place to master these objectives. Understanding which components are perceived by beginning teachers to be most beneficial can assist school leaders as they develop and refine induction models within their districts.

Purpose Statement and Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to examine the perceptions of beginning teachers who participated in one Missouri school district's comprehensive Teacher Induction Program. The study was designed to analyze the individual components and provide perception data about the most beneficial aspects. Differences between elementary and secondary teacher groups was examined and reported for this particular delivery model. Additionally, the researcher tested if the participants' years of teaching experience influenced the perceived benefits of the components.

Review of Methodology

The methodology of this research followed a quantitative design using a Likert-type scale survey. The researcher developed the instrument for the study. The initial part of the survey contained demographic items. The second section of the survey asked the beginning teachers to reflect on their participation in the induction program and rate how beneficial each of the eight components was to them. Finally, the last section of the survey was an open-ended response item asking participants to share whether they felt the program had met its purpose of acculturating them into the learning organization and accelerating their professional growth.

The researcher distributed an electronic version of the survey to 134 certified teachers who were identified by the school district as participants in the Teacher Induction Program during the 2008-2009 and 2009-2010 school years. The data was collected and entered into the SPSS for analysis.

Major Findings

The major findings from the research study examining teachers' perceptions of how beneficial the components of a comprehensive Teacher Induction Program (TIP) are described below.

Beneficial Components

One sample *t* tests were conducted for the hypothesis testing for research question one: To what extent do participating teachers perceive the Teacher Induction Program components to be beneficial? The results of the one sample *t* tests indicated that teachers perceived six of the eight components to be beneficial. The six components which had a mean rating statistically greater than 3 were: the five-day professional development session, receiving the curriculum and resources prior to the first day of teaching, regular meetings with their instructional coach, regular meetings with their building administrator, the district-wide professional development days, and the trainings and/or professional development sessions offered by out-of-district presenters.

Of these six components, regular meetings with the building administrator had the highest mean rating, followed closely by the district-wide professional development days. Possible rationale for the high rating by all participants for meeting with the building administrator could include the specific link between the beginning teacher and his or her direct supervisor, as well as the job site connection. The building administrator, working as the instructional leader of the building, could offer tailored support to the beginning teacher for instructional needs and school culture needs. Based on calendar information provided by the school district, the district-wide professional development days were non-student contact days and therefore did not require teachers to miss instructional time

with students (Park Hill School District Calendar, 2009). This stipulation may speak to the difference between the high mean rating for the professional development days as opposed to the lower mean rating of the quarterly half-day TIP meetings.

The quarterly half-day TIP meetings and meeting with the building-based curriculum consultant were two components which teachers appeared to be indifferent about the benefits. The quarterly half-day TIP meetings required teachers to be out of the classroom. Teachers may have found the quarterly half-day TIP meetings less beneficial since they were missing instructional time with their students. Comments from the third section of the survey revealed perceptions that the quarterly half-day TIP meetings were a review of what the teachers had learned in college. Meetings with the building-based curriculum consultant were reported as less beneficial as well. The role of the building-based curriculum consultant was to be someone in the same building to support the curricular needs of the beginning teacher. Within the qualitative section of the survey, participants wrote about a disconnect of certification between some building-based curriculum consultants and the beginning teacher's particular teaching assignment. Therefore, specialty positions like guidance counselors, art teachers, special education teachers, etc., may not have another person with the same position in the building. In turn, this component may cause confusion or frustration for those teachers who are the only teachers in the building certified in the specialty area.

Influence of Teaching Level

Independent samples *t* tests were conducted to address research question two: To what extent are the teachers' perceptions of the TIP components influenced by teaching level? For the hypothesis testing, the teaching level (elementary, middle, and high) was

collapsed into two categories (elementary and secondary). The elementary teaching level category included teachers of kindergarten through 5th grade and/or those teachers who worked within an elementary building. The secondary teaching level category included teachers of 6th through 12th grade and/or those teachers who worked within a middle or high school. The results of the independent samples *t* tests indicated that elementary teachers perceived six of the eight components to be significantly more beneficial than the secondary teachers reported.

The six components elementary teachers rated higher than secondary teachers included: the five-day professional development session, receiving the curriculum and resources prior to the first day of teaching, the quarterly half-day TIP meetings, regular meetings with their instructional coach, the district-wide professional development days, and the trainings and/or professional development sessions offered by out-of-district presenters. Meeting with the building-based curriculum consultant and meeting with the building administrator were two components where the average responses from the elementary teachers and the secondary teachers indicated no significant differences. The elementary teachers perceived regular meetings with the instructional coach to be the most beneficial component, whereas the secondary teachers perceived the regular meetings with the building administrator to be the most beneficial.

The differences between elementary and secondary teachers' perceptions of the most beneficial components offered interesting possibilities. Elementary teachers perceived the support offered by the instructional coach to be more beneficial than the support by the building administrator. After further analysis of the district's instructional coach model at the elementary level, the researcher found that the elementary

instructional coach was a full-time released teacher assigned to two grade levels. The district's model included elementary instructional coaches for the following grade spans: Kindergarten and 1st grade, 2nd and 3rd grade, and 4th and 5th grade. In contrast, the model for the secondary instructional coaches was by content area. The secondary instructional coaches were also full-time released teachers assigned for the following 6th through 12th grade content areas: communication arts, math, science, and social studies. With a larger grade span and variety of specific course descriptions within the content areas, this particular model for secondary instructional coaches may have played a factor in the lower perceived benefits as reported by secondary teachers. This conclusion was supported in the narrative responses from participants. Five secondary teachers specifically referenced the instructional coach in negative terms mainly due to the instructional coach not having the same background of content knowledge as the beginning teacher.

In addition to the variance between elementary teachers' and secondary teachers' perceptions of the instructional coach, the quarterly half-day TIP meetings were perceived as significantly more beneficial by the elementary teachers than by the secondary teachers. Based on information provided by the school district, most of the quarterly half-day TIP meetings were planned and presented differently between the two teaching levels. Another possible rationale for the difference in perceptions of the quarterly half-day TIP meeting was more apparent in the open-ended responses by the secondary teachers. The secondary teachers responded negatively to being pulled out of class for the quarterly half-day TIP meetings. Again, based on further analysis of the district's scheduling, the secondary teachers were on a block schedule and therefore

making up for lost class time was potentially more critical than at the elementary level. Missing one class in a block schedule is equivalent to two class meetings because the class session is double the amount of time and typically meets every other day. Conversely, in an elementary schedule, instruction for specific content areas is daily for approximately the same amount of time each day which may allow for more flexibility in instructional planning.

Influence of Teaching Experience

Eight one-factor ANOVAs were conducted for research question three: To what extent are the perceptions of the TIP components influenced by years of teaching experience? Each of the eight hypotheses was tested at the 0.05 level of significance. There was no statistical difference in the teachers' perceptions of the components based on years of teaching experience. The number of years of teaching experience did not have a compelling influence on the perceived benefits of the TIP components. The designs of the components were equally beneficial to all participants and teachers with more years of teaching experience found the components to be as beneficial as teachers with fewer years of teaching experience.

Meeting the Purpose of the Program

The last section of the survey was an open-ended response item. The item stem stated that induction programs serve the purposes of acculturating beginning teachers with learning organizations and accelerating beginning teachers' professional growth. Participants were asked to share their thoughts regarding how the induction program had addressed this purpose. Over half of the respondents to the survey indicated a favorable response to the program meeting this purpose. A larger percentage of elementary

teachers responded favorably to the program meeting its purpose than did secondary teachers. Additionally, more so than reported by secondary teachers, the elementary teachers' responses identified a person or role as a positive element within the induction program experience.

A smaller percentage of secondary teachers' responses were positive about the program meeting its purpose. Fewer secondary teachers than elementary teachers mentioned a specific person or support role as a positive element of the induction program. Additionally, secondary teachers' responses were more critical of specific components like the quarterly half-day TIP meetings and the regular meetings with the instructional coach, as well as the process of the induction program. There were secondary teacher responses which specifically indicated that the instructional coach was not a useful component to them as well as responses that indicated dissatisfaction for being taken out of class for meetings associated with the induction program.

Findings Related to the Literature

As the name depicts, a comprehensive induction program offers a variety of supports, and in the current study, the beginning teachers perceived several of the components to be beneficial. Most notably, the researcher concluded that regular meetings with the building administrator were perceived to be very beneficial by the participants. The results of the current study support previous research conducted by Haberman (2005) and by Wood (2005). Haberman (2005) found that many beginning teachers cited having a supportive principal as the most critical factor in their professional development. Wood's study (2005) was conducted in a large urban school

district. She discovered five central roles of the principal within an induction program. One of the five roles of the principal was that of novice teacher advocate.

The support and guidance provided, or in some cases not provided, by the building administrator has been critical to the growth of the beginning teacher. As reported by Johnson and Birkeland (2003b), new teachers regularly requested a transfer from a school because the principal was disconnected or inaccessible at times when a new teacher expressed anxiety or distress. Being visible and accessible throughout the school year provides an avenue of communication and support between the beginning teacher and the building principal (Johnson & Birkeland, 2003b). Comparably, regular meetings with the building administrator had the highest mean rating of all components by the participants in this study.

Although meeting regularly with the building administrator had the highest mean rating for being beneficial to the teachers in the current study, five other components were also identified as being beneficial. The current study supports Boss' claim that multiple components assist in the development of beginning teachers. "The most effective programs provide newcomers with a support system that has multiple components and the more components the new teacher is offered, the better the results" (Boss, 2006 p.2). The other components which the beginning teachers in the current study perceived to be beneficial were: the district-wide professional development days, the five-day professional development session, and the trainings and/or professional development sessions offered by out-of-district presenters, regular meetings with their instructional coach, and receiving the curriculum and resources prior to the first day of teaching.

The two components from the current study which were perceived as somewhat beneficial by participants were regular meetings with the building-based curriculum consultant and the quarterly half-day TIP meetings. When comparing the responses from the open-ended response item to these two components, specific concerns were noted. Frustration was mentioned in regard to the mismatch of beginning teacher to the building-based curriculum consultant. This was most apparent in the secondary responses or non-classroom teachers at the elementary level. Another concern shared from the secondary participants was being gone for the quarterly half-day TIP meetings during student contact time. As referenced in Fry's study (2007), teachers' reported dissatisfaction with similar components. A participating teacher mentioned disappointment with her officially assigned mentor and the meetings for all new teachers in her district. Yet, both of these components have been described as important in the literature (Fulton, Yoon, & Lee, 2005; Moir, 2003; Wong, 2004b). Based on findings from the current study, participants' perceptions of the benefits associated with these components may not be as well defined as the literature presents.

The current study also analyzed the perceptions of elementary teachers in comparison to secondary teachers. In general, the elementary teachers perceived the TIP components to be more beneficial than did the secondary teachers. Statistically significant differences were noted for all components except meeting with the building-based curriculum consultant and meeting with the building administrator. The elementary teachers perceived meeting with the instructional coach to be the most beneficial component. In Knight's book, *Instructional Coaching; A Partnership Approach To Improving Instruction* (2007), he asserted that instructional coaches can

increase their chances of having a big impact by focusing their efforts on high-leverage practices. He described this as the Big Four issues: behavior, content knowledge, direct instruction, and formative assessment. In addition, Knight determined that in order for instructional coaches to be highly effective, they must have a deep knowledge of whatever practices they share with teachers. The main contrast between the instructional coaches for the elementary teachers and the instructional coaches for the secondary teachers was the proportion of grade spans each group serviced. Elementary instructional coaches provided support to two grade levels, whereas secondary instructional coaches gave assistance to seven grade levels and various courses within most grade levels. Therefore, changes to the instructional coach model for the secondary teachers of the current study would need to occur to align with Knight's position. Having a narrowed grade span focus could improve the secondary instructional coaches' ability to offer specific support to the beginning teachers of this school district.

While the elementary teachers who participated in the current study perceived the instructional coach to be the most beneficial component of the TIP, this contrasted the secondary teachers who perceived the instructional coach to be only somewhat beneficial. From the open-ended responses of this study, five secondary teachers specifically referenced a disconnection between the instructional coach's certification and their particular teaching assignment. Secondary participants' requested targeted assistance for planning and assessment development, but if the instructional coach was not steeped in that particular content area, then the support not as purposeful. Therefore, the expectation Knight described for instructional coaches to have a deep content knowledge

would be supported by the secondary teachers' perceiving this component to be only somewhat beneficial.

Finally, the results showed years of teaching experience did not have a statistical effect on how beneficial the participants perceived the components. The current study revealed the components of the TIP to be equally beneficial for teachers of varying years of experience. The professional development aspects of the program connect to what Feiman-Nemser, Schwille, Carver, & Yusko (1999) described as conceptualizing induction as a form of long-term, on-going professional development. The participating teachers in the current study acknowledged the components to be beneficial whether they had over six years of teaching experience or as few as two years of teaching experience. Villani (2002) referenced benefits for linking beginning teachers' professional development to larger professional development plans for all teachers. Consequently, the findings the researcher gained from the current study appear to be congruent with this type of on-going professional development for beginning teachers.

Conclusions

The research gained from this study strengthens the body of evidence regarding the value and perceived benefits of induction programs. Specifically, the results of this study highlight components that some beginning teachers perceived as beneficial. Furthermore, differences in perceptions based on teaching level can provide insight to induction program planning and deployment in order to best meet the individual teacher's needs.

Implications for Action

Based on the data compiled by the researcher, the school district may want to further analyze the delivery of induction-related services based on teaching level and specific job assignment. Differentiating the programming for elementary teachers and secondary teachers may be an appropriate first step. The program delivery for the secondary teachers could potentially be restructured in such a way so that the teachers are not taken out of class as frequently for trainings. Additionally, tailoring how the instructional coach is utilized for secondary teachers could be an area the school district should consider refining and aligning to better meet the needs of the teachers so they do not feel their time is misspent.

Another area of concentration for the school district to investigate would be how specialized teaching positions fit into the induction process. Beginning teachers who are not grade level or core content area teachers, such as guidance counselors, fine arts teachers, and media specialists, could potentially benefit from a more individualized induction program. This recommendation is based on the comments provided by participants who felt the quarterly half-day TIP meetings were geared more towards the general teaching assignment.

The building-based curriculum consultant appeared to be another potentially under-utilized or ineffective component based on the survey. This component was rated the least beneficial by the elementary teachers. Secondary teachers also reported less favorable results about the benefits of this component in sections two and three of the survey. The process by which consultants are paired with a beginning teacher could be re-examined for closer alignment of job descriptions as a mismatch of partnering could

be a reason for the lower ratings. Gaining feedback from the individuals serving as the building based curriculum consultants could also provide insight to potential reasons for this component to not be as highly rated as others.

Recommendations for Future Research

Due to the complexity in the design of comprehensive induction programs, any one component could be further analyzed. Based on the results of this study, a more specific analysis of each of the eight components would provide additional information for school leaders, especially if controlled for variance between elementary and secondary teachers. To add to the scope of perception data available for the components, including information from the building administrators, curriculum consultants, and instructional coaches would be another possibility. Obtaining perception data from these individuals regarding each of the components and how the components may or may not benefit new teachers could provide insights into the delivery model not obtained by participants.

Although participants in this study were able to provide narrative information, an additional change for future research would be to interview current participants and former participants of the TIP program. Furthermore, interviewing the support personnel who assist in the components of the program could provide a different format of gaining information. Categorizing the comments of individuals connected to the induction program could produce a rich representation of genuine perception data.

An additional key benefit of induction programs can be a decline in teacher attrition. Further research could examine the participants of the district's TIP program and their employment history. By examining the individual feedback of the TIP

participants and their attrition rate, one may be able to determine how to improve and revise the TIP program if necessary based on attrition rates and reasons.

Concluding Remarks

Perception plays a pivotal role in all educational environments. When the perceptions of educators are acknowledged they are more likely to participate in and value the required activities of their school district. Research that measures the perceived value of induction programs to beginning teachers offers information that district officials should use when calibrating induction offerings.

Based on this understanding, school districts must consistently survey and interview beginning teachers regarding their perceptions of their induction program experience. This feedback, coupled with student achievement data, can provide districts with a comprehensive program evaluation. Enculturation and assimilation into the professional learning community requires consistent effort and dedication to the professional development of our essential educational resource; the classroom teacher.

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Appendix A

Survey

zoomerang

“Teacher Induction Programs as Perceived by Beginning Teachers”

Survey Instrument

Page 1 - Heading

Please check the appropriate bubbles for the following four items.

Page 1 - Question 1 - Choice - One Answer (Bullets) [Mandatory]

Gender:

- ○ Female
- ○ Male

Page 1 - Question 2 - Choice - One Answer (Bullets) [Mandatory]

Teaching Assignment Level:

- ○ Elementary
- ○ Middle
- ○ High

Page 1 - Question 3 - Choice - One Answer (Bullets) [Mandatory]

Years of teaching experience in Park Hill:

- ○ 1 year
- ○ 2 years
- ○ 3 years
- ○ 4 years

Page 1 - Question 4 - Choice - One Answer (Bullets) [Mandatory]

Total years of teaching experience:

- ○ 1 year
- ○ 2 years
- ○ 3 years
- ○ 4 years
- ○ 5 years
- ○ 6 or more years

Page 2 - Heading

Reflecting on your participation in the Teacher Induction Program, please rate how beneficial each of these components have been to you as a beginning teacher in the Park Hill School District.

Page 2 - Question 5 - Rating Scale - One Answer (Horizontal) [Mandatory]

The five-day professional development session prior to the return of the veteran teaching staff

Not At All Beneficial		2		Somewhat Beneficial		4		Extremely Beneficial
❍	1	❍	2	❍	3	❍	4	❍ 5

Page 2 - Question 6 - Rating Scale - One Answer (Horizontal) [Mandatory]

Curriculum and teaching resources provided prior to the first day of teaching

Not At All Beneficial		2		Somewhat Beneficial		4		Extremely Beneficial
❍	1	❍	2	❍	3	❍	4	❍ 5

Page 2 - Question 7 - Rating Scale - One Answer (Horizontal) [Mandatory]

The half day TIP meetings held once a quarter

Not At All Beneficial		2		Somewhat Beneficial		4		Extremely Beneficial
❍	1	❍	2	❍	3	❍	4	❍ 5

Page 2 - Question 8 - Rating Scale - One Answer (Horizontal) [Mandatory]

The regular meetings with your instructional coach

Not At All Beneficial		2		Somewhat Beneficial		4		Extremely Beneficial
❍	1	❍	2	❍	3	❍	4	❍ 5

Page 2 - Question 9 - Rating Scale - One Answer (Horizontal) [Mandatory]

The regular meetings with your building-based curriculum consultant

Not At All Beneficial		2		Somewhat Beneficial		4		Extremely Beneficial
❍	1	❍	2	❍	3	❍	4	❍ 5

Page 2 - Question 10 - Rating Scale - One Answer (Horizontal) [Mandatory]

The regular meetings with your building administrator

Not At All Beneficial		2		Somewhat Beneficial		4		Extremely Beneficial
❍	1	❍	2	❍	3	❍	4	❍ 5

Page 2 - Question 11 - Rating Scale - One Answer (Horizontal) [Mandatory]

The district-wide professional development days

Not At All Beneficial		2		Somewhat Beneficial		4		Extremely Beneficial
❍	1	❍	2	❍	3	❍	4	❍ 5

Page 2 - Question 12 - Rating Scale - One Answer (Horizontal) [Mandatory]

The training and/or professional development sessions offered by out-of-district presenters				
Not At All Beneficial	**2**	**Somewhat Beneficial**	**4**	**Extremely Beneficial**
❍ 1	❍ 2	❍ 3	❍ 4	❍ 5

Page 3 - Question 13 - Open Ended - Comments Box [Mandatory]

Induction programs serve a purpose for school districts. The programs are meant to acculturate beginning teachers with the learning organization and accelerate the beginning teacher's professional growth.
Please share your thoughts regarding how the induction program has addressed this purpose for you.

Appendix B

Feedback Form

Comprehensive Induction Programs as Perceived by Beginning Teachers

Survey Feedback Form

Instructional Coach:_____
Date:_____
Please take few moments to review the attached survey and provide feedback.

Cover Letter

Introduction was clearly described. ☐ Yes ☐ No
If no, please describe why:_____

Information was helpful to determine purpose. ☐ Yes ☐ No
If no, please describe why:_____

Anonymity of responses was clearly described. ☐ Yes ☐ No
If no, please describe why:_____

Consent for participation was clearly described. ☐ Yes ☐ No
If no, please describe why:_____

Timeline of survey was clearly described. ☐ Yes ☐ No
If no, please describe why:_____

Section 1: Demographic Information

Directions were easy to understand. ☐ Yes ☐ No
If no, please describe why:_____

Format was easy to read. ☐ Yes ☐ No
If no, please describe why:_____

Choices were clear. ☐ Yes ☐ No
If no, please describe why:_____

Consent for participation was clearly described. ☐ Yes ☐ No
If no, please describe why:_____

Timeline of survey was clearly described. ☐ Yes ☐ No
If no, please describe why:_____

Section 2: Teacher Induction Program Components

Opening comment was relevant. ☐ Yes ☐ No
If no, please describe why:_____

Directions were easy to understand. ☐ Yes ☐ No
If no, please describe why:_____

Format was easy to read. ☐ Yes ☐ No
If no, please describe why:_____

Components were described accurately. ☐ Yes ☐ No
If no, please describe why:_____

Scale was easy to understand. ☐ Yes ☐ No
If no, please describe why:_____

Section 3: Open-ended Response Item

Opening comment was relevant. ☐ Yes ☐ No
If no, please describe why:_____

Directions were easy to understand. ☐ Yes ☐ No
If no, please describe why:_____

Additional Feedback:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Thank you for taking time provide feedback regarding this survey.

Appendix C

District Approval

Park Hill School District

Research Checklist and Approval

Date: October 19, 2009

Submitted to: Director of Research, Evaluation & Assessment

Submitted by: Lezlee Ivy, Assistant Principal Plaza Middle School

Research Proposal Title: Comprehensive Induction Programs as Perceived by Beginning Teachers

Principal Investigator(s): Lezlee Ivy

Checklist

- ☑ Completed "Application to Conduct Research in PHSD"
- ☑ Copy of "Informed consent" letter to study population/parents
- ☑ Copies of measurement instruments
- ☑ Approval from university human subjects committee (IRB) if applicable
- ☑ Three (3) copies of your complete application package

Approval of this research is contingent on adherence to district procedures as outlined in the document entitled "Application to Conduct Research" and the information provided with the application. The district must be notified of any substantive changes to the information contained in the application. The district reserves the right to withdraw approval of research if the research is deemed to no longer be in the best interests of the Park Hill students, staff, or the district.

Research Application: ☐ Approved ☐ Denied Date: _____

Signatures

_____
Director of Research, Evaluation, and Assessment

_____
Principal

_____
Principal

_____
Principal

10/28/2009

Application to Conduct Research in PHSD

Name	Organization	Department		
Lezlee Ivy	**Park Hill School District**	**Plaza Middle School**		
Address	City	State	Zip Code	
6501 NW 72nd Street	**Kansas City**	**MO**	**64152**	
Phone Number	Fax Number	E-mail		
816-359-6241	**816-359-4219**	**ivyl@parkhill.k12.mo.us**		

I have read and understand the process of application to conduct research in the Park Hill School District. I also verify that the information provided in this application is accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Lezlee Ivy 10/19/09

Signature Date

Is this study part of your work for a degree?

☑ Yes ☐ No

If Yes, complete the following:

☐ Ph.D. ☑ Ed.D. ☐ M.A./M.S

☐ Undergraduate ☐ Other

University or College: Baker University

Date of IRB Approval (or date of application if pending) October 23, 2009 (pending approval)

Advisor's Name: Dr. Brad Tate

Advisor's Telephone Number: 913-491-4432, ext. 1228

Attach a concise, yet thorough, response to each of the following items.

1) **Title and purpose of study**
2) **Timeline**
   When do you plan to start your study? What is the estimated total length of time?
3) **Benefits to the district**
   How will this study benefit the Park Hill School District?
4) **Research Design Summary**
   Give specific information on the methods to be used during the course of the study. Please include your research questions, instruments, sampling and data collection methodologies, and proposed analyses. Samples of instruments may include survey questions, observation forms, and interview questions. Finally, describe any tasks students or staff will be asked to complete. Describe procedures you will use to secure and acknowledge informed consent of all participants, including active or passive consent. If passive, please provide a rationale. Please attach copies of any letters. Outline how subjects will be identified and criteria used for recruitment, who will make the initial contact with subjects, and whether or not inducements will be used to secure participation.
5) **Assurance of anonymity of PHSD students & staff**
   How will the anonymity of Park Hill students and staff be protected?
6) **Risks of the research**
   List any known risks of the proposed investigation to students, staff, or the district.
7) **District involvement**
   What request are you making of the Park Hill School District and the Director of Research, Evaluation, and Assessment? Specify numbers of students and staff to be involved, length of time, and time line for completion of your investigation.
8) **Funding Sources**
9) **IRB approval**
   If applicable, give the date and copy of IRB approval letter, or application if IRB review is in process. Park Hill School District will not allow study to begin until we have an approval letter on file.

1) **Title:**
Comprehensive Induction Programs as Perceived by Beginning Teachers

Purpose of study:
The federal No Child Left Behind Act, passed in 2002, requires districts to maintain a highly qualified teaching staff and emphasizes the importance of new teacher induction. In recent years, comprehensive induction programs have been developed by school districts across the nation. There is not a "one size fits all" approach to induction programs and not all induction programs are created the same. Current research regarding the specific components of induction programs is limited. Therefore, the purpose of this research is to gain information regarding beginning teachers' perceptions of the specific components of the Park Hill Teacher Induction Program.

2) **Timeline**
The timeline for this study would be the fall semester of the 2009-2010 school year. The estimated length of time to participate would be fifteen minutes during a specific two week window.

3) **Benefits to the district**
This study will benefit the Park Hill School District by providing specific information regarding each component of the Teacher Induction Program as perceived by beginning teachers. This information can be beneficial in current and future planning of TIP. Additionally, as one of the few school districts to provide a comprehensive induction program, the information gained will contribute to the limited research currently available regarding the benefits of the components of induction programs.

4) **Research Design Summary**
An electronic survey will be used to gather data regarding the school district's comprehensive induction program. The survey consists of four demographic items, nine items related to the components, and one open ended response item focusing of the purpose of the program.

The research questions guiding this study are:

1. To what extent do participating teachers perceive the Teacher Induction Program's components to be beneficial?
2. To what extent are the perceptions of the Teacher Induction Program's components influenced by teaching level?
3. To what extent are the perceptions of the Teacher Induction Program's components influenced by teaching experience?

See the attached cover letter and survey.

The participating teachers will be asked to complete the electronic survey during a two week window during the fall semester of the 2009-2010 school year. The survey should take approximately 15 minutes to complete.

10/28/2009

Using 2008-2009 employee data, 134 teachers will be contacted to participate in this study. 41 were first year teachers, 54 were experienced, but new to the district, and 39 were second year teachers. As stated in the cover letter, participation in the survey is voluntary and by clicking on the survey link, subjects are giving their consent to participate. The researcher will make the initial contact with the subjects and no inducements will be used to secure participation.

5) **Assurance of anonymity of PHSD students & staff**
Participating staff will take the survey anonymously via an on-line survey. Only teaching level and demographic information will be needed from the participants. No other personal information will be needed.

6) **Risks of the research**
There are no known or perceived risks to the participants or the school district.

7) **District involvement**
In regard to district involvement, I am requesting the use of district technology, specifically email addresses, identification of the participants in order to contact them, and the support to conduct this research.
134 teachers are eligible to participate in this study. Answering the survey items will take approximately 15 minutes during a two week window at the fall semester the 2009-2010 school year.

8) **Funding Sources**
No funding is necessary for this study.

9) **IRB approval**
See attached IRB request submitted to Baker University School of Education Graduate Department.

10/28/2009

Appendix D

Institutional Review Board Request

BAKER UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
GRADUATE DEPARTMENT

Date:_____
IRB PROTOCOL NUMBER _____
(IRB USE ONLY)

IRB REQUEST
Proposal for Research
Submitted to the Baker University Institutional Review Board

I. Research Investigator(s) (Students must list faculty sponsor first)

Department(s) **School of Education Graduate Department**

	Name	Signature	
1.	Lezlee K. Ivy	_____,	Principal Investigator
2.	Dr. Brad Tate	_____,	x Check if faculty sponsor
3.	Dr. Merrie Skaggs	_____,	__ Check if faculty sponsor
4.	Dr. Judith Smrha	_____,	__ Check if faculty sponsor
5.	Dr. Michael S. Brown	_____,	__ Check if faculty sponsor

Principal investigator or faculty sponsor contact information:
Phone: 816-891-9901
Email: ivyl@parkhill.k12.mo.us

Mailing address of Principal Investigator: 6335 North White Oak Court
Parkville, MO 64152

Expected Category of Review: ____Exempt __X__Expedited ____Full

II: Protocol Title
Comprehensive Induction Programs as Perceived by Beginning Teachers

Summary
The following summary must accompany the proposal. Be specific about exactly what participants will experience, and about the protections that have been included to safeguard participants from harm. Careful attention to the following may help facilitate the review process:

In a sentence or two, please describe the background and purpose of the research.

The federal No Child Left Behind Act, passed in 2002, requires districts to maintain a highly qualified teaching staff and emphasizes the importance of new teacher induction. In recent

years, comprehensive induction programs have been developed by school districts across the nation. There is not a "one size fits all" approach to induction programs, and not all comprehensive induction programs are the same. Current research regarding the specific components of comprehensive induction programs is limited. Therefore, the purpose of this research is to gain information regarding beginning teachers' perceptions of the specific components of one district's comprehensive induction program.

Briefly describe each condition or manipulation to be included within the study.

This study will involve collecting data from the 134 teachers who participated in the induction program of one suburban school in Missouri during the 2008-2009 school year. The study seeks to analyze the unique components of this school district's comprehensive induction program and compare the responses by the different categories of beginning teachers.

What measures or observations will be taken in the study? If any questionnaire or other instruments are used, provide a brief description and attach a copy.

An electronic survey based on the components of the comprehensive induction program will be used to gain data regarding beginning teachers' perceptions of the induction program in one suburban school district. See attached copy.

Will the subjects encounter the risk of psychological, social, physical or legal risk? If so, please describe the nature of the risk and any measures designed to mitigate that risk.

No, the subjects will not encounter any risk in participating in this study because the data is collected anonymously.

Will any stress to subjects be involved? If so, please describe.

No, the subjects will not be involved in any additional stress since the data is collected anonymously.

Will the subjects be deceived or misled in any way? If so, include an outline or script of the debriefing.

No, the subjects will not be deceived or misled in any way because the data remains anonymous.

Will there be a request for information that subjects might consider to be personal or sensitive? If so, please include a description.

Gender, teaching level, and years of experience, are the only demographic information which will be requested from the subjects. No other personal or sensitive information will be requested.

Will the subjects be presented with materials that might be considered to be offensive, threatening, or degrading? If so, please describe.

No, the subjects will not be presented with materials that might be considered to be offensive, threatening, or degrading.

Approximately how much time will be demanded of each subject?

Fifteen minutes is the approximate amount of time which will be requested from each subject.

Who will be the subjects in this study? How will they be solicited or contacted? Provide an outline or script of the information which will be provided to subjects prior to their volunteering to participate. Include a copy of any written solicitation as well as an outline of any oral solicitation.

For the 2008-2009 school year, the 134 beginning teachers in the school district's comprehensive induction program will be the subjects of this study. They will be contacted via email to participate in an on-line survey. The individual names will be provided by the Human Resource Department for the school district. See attached cover letter.

What steps will be taken to ensure that each subject's participation is voluntary? What if any inducements will be offered to the subjects for their participation?

The subjects will be offered a window of time to complete the survey and will not be pressured to participate. With permission granted for this study by the Executive Director of Research and Evaluation no inducement will be required.

How will you ensure that the subjects give their consent prior to participating? Will a written consent form be used? If so, include the form. If not, explain why not.

Participant consent is voluntary, and the sample will be collected anonymously. School district permission is pending for this study.

Will any aspect of the data be made a part of any permanent record that can be identified with the subject? If so, please explain the necessity.

No information will be made a part of any permanent teacher record because the subject's identification remains anonymous throughout the study.

Will the fact that a subject did or did not participate in a specific experiment or study be made part of any permanent record available to a supervisor, teacher or employer? If so, explain.

No information regarding a subject's participation or nonparticipation is part of any permanent record.

What steps will be taken to ensure the confidentiality of the data?

No names of subjects will be identified within the study or any other identifying aspects that reveal the privacy of the subjects. Each participant will be identified by an assigned number to ensure anonymity.

If there are any risks involved in the study, are there any offsetting benefits that might accrue to either the subjects or society?

There will be no risks to selected respondents due to the anonymity of the data collection. School district and building level administration, as well as instructional coaches and Professional Development Councils, could benefit from the information collected from the study. Currently, there is limited research regarding the benefits of the components of induction programs as perceived by participating teachers. This study will provide information concerning the perceptions from beginning teachers in one suburban school district in the state of Missouri.

Will any data from files or archival data be used? If so, please describe.

No data from files or archival data will be used in this study.

11 December 2009

Lezlee Ivy
6335 North White Oak Court
Parkville, MO, 64152

1858
BAKER UNIVERSITY

Dear Ms. Ivy:

The Baker University IRB has reviewed your research project application (M-0076-1109-1211) and approved this project under Exempt 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.

The Baker University IRB requires that your consent form must include the date of approval and expiration date (one year from today). Please be aware of the following:

1. At designated intervals (usually annually) until the project is completed, a Project Status Report must be returned to the IRB.
2. Any significant change in the research protocol as described should be reviewed by this Committee prior to altering the project.
3. Notify the OIR about any new investigators not named in original application.
4. Any injury to a subject because of the research procedure must be reported to the IRB Chair or representative immediately.
5. When signed consent documents are required, the primary investigator must retain the signed consent documents for at least three years past completion of the research activity. If you use a signed consent form, provide a copy of the consent form to subjects at the time of consent.
6. If this is a funded project, keep a copy of this approval letter with your proposal/grant file.

Please inform Office of Institutional Research (OIR) or myself when this project is terminated. As noted above, you must also provide OIR with an annual status report and receive approval for maintaining your status. If your project receives funding which requests an annual update approval, you must request this from the IRB one month prior to the annual update. Thanks for your cooperation. If you have any questions, please contact me.

Sincerely,

Marc L Carter, PhD
Chair, Baker University IRB

CC: Brad Tate

P.O. Box 65, Baldwin City
Kansas 66006-0065
785-594-6451 • fax 785-594-2522
www.bakeru.edu

Appendix E

Cover Letter

Dear Park Hill Classroom Teachers,

The purpose of the email is to request your participation in a doctoral research project.

My name is Lezlee Ivy. In addition to being the assistant principal at Plaza Middle School, I am currently a doctoral candidate at Baker University. I am presently conducting a clinical research study titled "Comprehensive Induction Program as Perceived by Beginning Teachers". The survey for this study was approved by Dr. Jeff Klein, Park Hill's Executive Director of Research, Assessment and Evaluation.

The purpose of the "Comprehensive Induction Program as Perceived by Beginning Teachers" study is to investigate the percetions of beginning teachers in regard to benefits of the Teacher Induction Program (TIP). Resoults of this study will be presented to the Park Hill School Districts' Superintendent Candinet, the Professional Development Council, and the administrative staff to provide information about the topic of comprehensive induction programs. Data from this study will help district and school officials make well informed decisions of the TIP.

Your completion of the attached survey will be essential to the completion of this study. Your responses to this survey will be anonymous and strictly confidential. No individual teacher or specific school results will be identified. Your participation in the survey is voluntary. Clicking on the survey link indciates consent to participate.

The survey should require no more than 15 minutes to complete. If you could set aside time before or after your work day to complete the survey, I would appreciate it. Please submit your questionnaire by November __, 2009.

You valuable time and response are greatly appreciated. If you have any questionsor if you would like a copy of the results of this study, you may contact me via email at ivyl@parkhill.k12.mo.us.

Regards,

Lezlee Ivy
Assistant Principal
Plaza Middle School
Park Hill School District

Clicking on this link indicates consent to participate.
http://www.zoomerany.com/Survey/?p=WEB229SCRNCUSC
Thank you for your time.

Appendix F

Reminder Email

Dear Park Hill Classroom Teachers,

The purpose of this email is to remind you of the request for your participation in my doctoral research project regarding the Teacher Induction Program. Your completion of the attached survey will be essential to the completion of this study. Your responses to this survey will be anonymous and strictly confidential. No individual teacher or specific school results will be identified. Your participation in the survey is voluntary. Clicking on the survey link indciates consent to participate.

The survey should require no more than 15 minutes to complete. If you could set aside time before or after your work day to complete the survey, I would appreciate it. Please submit your questionnaire as soon as possible.

You valuable time and response are greatly appreciated. If you have any questionsor if you would like a copy of the results of this study, you may contact me via email at ivyl@parkhill.k12.mo.us.

Regards,

Lezlee Ivy
Assistant Principal
Plaza Middle School
Park Hill School District

Clicking on this link indicates consent to participate.
http://www.zoomerany.com/Survey/?p=WEB229SCRNCUSC
Thank you for your time.