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Newly Hired Teachers' Perspectives on Factors that Influence Their Attrition or Retention

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Walden University
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Abstract

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MAEd., Western Carolina University, 2004

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Doctoral Research Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

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Abstract

Newly hired teacher attrition has increased across the nation and is one of the main contributors to the current teacher shortage. This study specifically addressed a suburban school district located in the Mid-Atlantic region that had experienced a high rate of attrition of newly hired teachers (NHTs). This issue is important because NHT attrition affects school budgets and student achievement. The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore the professional experiences of NHTs, and how those experiences contributed to their decisions to leave or remain employed. The conceptual framework that grounded this study was Ingersoll's concept of teacher turnover. A purposeful sample of 8 nontenured NHTs, in their 1st, 2nd, or 3rd year of teaching at elementary, middle, or high schools in 1 school district, volunteered to participate in this study. Data were collected through semistructured interviews and were transcribed, coded, and analyzed to develop 2 themes and 7 subthemes. Key findings of the study revealed that NHTs stayed in the district because of the support, collaboration, and meaningful relationships with colleagues and students, but left the profession because administrators did not support or communicate realistic expectations for teachers new to the profession or the district. Key recommendations for action are to provide NHTs with multiple opportunities to observe and be mentored by veteran or master teachers throughout their 1st year in the profession and receive adaptive versions of the support programs or initiatives offered by district leaders. These endeavors could contribute to positive social change when district administrators improve the teaching and induction experiences of NHTs to increase their retention rates.

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Dedication

This study is dedicated to the Most-High One, my family, especially my mom, siblings, and extended family, who are my inspiration. This is also for my youngest nephews, Kesnor Kirkland and Kavani Nickirk Jackson, who have been my "motivation" from day one - you both have the "world" at your fingertips, and I want you to know that the "sky is really the limit" and that you can achieve anything and be anyone, once you put your minds to it. This study is also for my role models, my colleagues, and students, past and present, encouraging us all to use our "voices" as instruments to empower, mold, and inspire daily as good human beings.

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Section 1: Introduction to the Study

Introduction

Newly hired teacher attrition in the United States has been a challenge for school district leaders for several decades and the problem has not abated (Lowrey, 2012; Marinell & Coca, 2013; Shockley, Watlington, & Felsher, 2013). The loss of newly hired teachers from the teaching profession is a loss of highly qualified educators (Shockley et al., 2013). In many states, the teaching profession has become less attractive, and this has been demonstrated by teacher shortages (Sass, Bustos Flores, Claeys, & Perez, 2012; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). Newly hired teacher attrition has increased across the nation and is one of the main contributors of the current teacher shortage (Zhang & Zeller, 2016). Newly hired teachers have left the profession at a higher than normal rate than experienced teachers and that has been a cause for concern for all policymakers and other stakeholders. Greiner and Smith (2006) reported that in the United States, 9.3% of public school newly hired teachers left the profession or the classroom before completing a notable or significant number of years, and that over 1/5 of these teachers left their teaching position within the first 3 years. Greiner and Smith stated that 50% of newly hired teachers exited the teaching profession within the first 5 years of service. Teacher shortage is defined as an imbalance between demand (vacant positions in teaching) and supply (Sass et al., 2012; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). According to some researchers, the shortage did not lie only in a lack in the number of graduates from teaching preparation programs but in the school districts' inability to retain newly hired teachers (Boyd, Grossman, Lankford, Loeb, Michelli, & Wyckoff, 2006; Burke, Aubusson, Schuck,

Buchanan, & Prescott, 2015; Burke, Schuck, Aubusson, Buchanan, Louviere, & Prescott, 2013; Dupriez, Delvaux & Lothaire, 2016; Ingersoll, 2001, 2002; Sass et al. 2012; White, Gorard, & See, 2006). Huling, Resta, and Yeargain (2012) stated that retaining a critical number of teachers who have the necessary skills and experiences would save districts from incurring the expenses related to teacher attrition and enable districts to undertake bigger issues, such as transformation and reform to improve student achievement (Huling et al., 2012). Shaw and Newton stated that the best way to transform the public education system in America was to develop and retain teachers in the classrooms (Shaw & Newton, 2014).

Su, Dainty, Sandford, Townsend, and Belcher (2011) found that the first 3 to 5 years of a newly hired teacher's experience was sometimes tenuous, filled with met and unmet expectations which led to dissatisfied newly hired teachers and an increase in their attrition rates. Other research identified salary compensation, school culture, lack of collegial and administrative support, and student discipline as primary factors that influenced newly hired teachers' decisions to remain or leave their employment (Su et al., 2011).

Districts across the United States are concerned about newly hired teachers leaving the profession. Kono (2012) stated that 33% of newly hired teachers in the United States left teaching after 3 years, and after 5 years, 46% of newly hired teachers have left the profession. Perry and Hayes (2011) found that approximately 30% of newly hired teachers exited the profession by their third year.

Brief Description of the Local Site and Support Programs for Newly Hired Teachers

A local school district in the Mid-Atlantic region is experiencing the problem of newly hired teacher attrition. To address this issue, the district has offered predesigned and structured professional development and other support programs geared toward lessening newly hired teacher attrition. Despite these support programs or initiatives, some newly hired teachers have left during the school year which interrupted the continuity and delivery of instruction.

Hiring and recruitment. The annual hiring and recruitment process for this study district begins each year in the month of March. For example, to hire for the 2019-20 school year, the district recruitment team started on September 27, 2018 and completed their work on July 25, 2019. The team traveled to various colleges, universities, and teacher recruitment fairs in Virginia, Delaware, Michigan, Pennsylvania, New York, Ohio, and Maryland. This intense recruitment was done at the expense of the district, and in anticipation of teachers leaving the district. Nationally, the annual cost to recruit, hire, and train newly hired teachers has been approximately 2.2 billion dollars per year. (Hughes, 2012). Hence, it is time consuming and costly to recruit, hire, and orient newly hired teachers into their various school sites.

The study district employs approximately 2,000 certificated and noncertificated teachers and staff with 96.3% of the teachers deemed highly qualified based on Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). During the 2019-2020 academic year, the district was comprised of 19 elementary schools, 5 middle schools, 3 high schools, 2 academies, and a career and technology center. During that year, these schools enrolled approximately

18,000 students, 31.7% of whom were minority students. The district had a 94%

graduation rate. Newly hired teachers in this school district, irrespective of their previous

teaching experiences, were provided mandatory induction or orientation seminars for 1

year and mentors for 3 years, along with specific on-site professional development

workshops. According to the district's website these professional development

workshops were created by the district and were geared toward accommodating various

professional and classroom needs of newly hired teachers while offering a meaningful

and rewarding experiences for the teacher.

Support programs and initiatives. The support programs offered by the local

district included a 1 year ongoing newly hired teacher induction program. Newly hired

teachers were also assigned a mentor for 3 years. During their first 3 years of

employment, the district offered newly hired teachers various monthly on-site or off-site

professional development workshops geared toward the specific needs of newly hired

teachers. All support programs were offered by the Teaching, Learning and Professional

Development Department of the district and are mandatory for all newly hired teachers.

According to communication with a district leader the predesigned professional

development workshops were based on the results of an annual survey that the district

administers to newly hired teachers and on some district leadership assumptions

concerning newly hired teachers' professional needs that influenced their experiences for

the first 3 years.

Newly hired teachers involved in the 1-year mandatory induction program met

once a month on second Wednesdays, for approximately 2 and a half hours. At these

meetings, newly hired teachers were exposed to a variety of preplanned seminars, discussions or forums, on topics such as classroom management, parent and student communication, unit and lesson planning, assessments to guide instruction, content-based workshops, cultural diversity and sensitivity awareness, understanding assessments and scoring, and teaching students with special needs in the inclusion classroom.

The mentorship program was designed to work in conjunction with the 1-year induction program and other professional development. In the 2nd and 3rd year of the newly hired teacher support programs, newly hired teachers attended various professional development workshops designed specifically for them. Induction, mentorship, and predesigned professional development programs or workshops were mandatory and created as support initiatives for newly hired teachers. One of the major purposes of these support programs was to help newly hired teachers become familiar with the culture of their schools, to assist them with content delivery and assessments, classroom management, and to provide them with collegial support. Mentors were usually veterans or master teachers randomly assigned to mentees based on their content areas, and sometimes the mentors and mentees were at different grade levels. Mentors had to successfully complete a mentor training program, and they were paid a stipend to work with the mentees. Both mentors and mentees were provided with a mentorship handbook designed to guide their relationship and made it an efficient and rewarding experience. This mentorship program operated across the entire local district for all newly hired teachers. According to the district's website one of the major expectations of the support program was to foster positive professional growth and development of newly hired

teachers, with the expectation that the support given and received would encourage newly hired teachers to remain employed in the district.

Problem Statement

Newly hired teacher attrition is an issue at a suburban district in the Mid-Atlantic region. Hiring data provided by the district showed that between August 1, 2011 to August 1, 2016, 443 teachers were hired as newly hired teachers. During the same time period, 377 teachers terminated their services: Either they did not return, or had their contracts terminated. Of the 377 teachers who left during 2011-2016, 162 were newly hired teachers. So, of the 443 teachers who were hired between August 2011 to August 2016, 162 newly hired teachers did not return to the district, a total of 42%, which was similar to the national average of newly hired teachers who leave the profession within the first 5 years (Kono, 2012; Wiebke, & Bardin, 2009). These newly hired teachers left despite the many support programs or other induction initiatives made available to them. The study district has not conducted research to achieve an understanding of newly hired teacher attrition. The gap in practice addressed was the lack of understanding of the professional experiences of newly hired teachers and how these experiences influenced them to leave or remain employed at the district.

Nature of the Study and Research Questions

I conducted a qualitative case study with the aim to achieve a deep and nuanced understanding of the professional experiences of newly hired teachers and how those experiences influenced them to leave or remain employed at the district. The overall research question was the following: What are the professional experiences of currently

employed newly hired teachers and how do those experiences influence them to leave or remain employed at the district?

I interviewed a representative sample of currently employed newly hired teachers. A purposeful sampling of eight newly hired teachers in their first, second, or third year employed in the district, were selected as participants in the study. The data was analyzed using an iterative two-cycle coding process consisting of open coding and pattern coding. Following the coding process, I conducted thematic analysis as outlined by Ravitch and Carl (2016). An in-depth discussion of the qualitative methodology and data analysis will be provided in Section 3.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to achieve a deep and nuanced understanding of the professional experiences of newly hired teachers and how those experiences influenced them to leave or remain employed at the district. The findings may provide district leaders an understanding of and deeper insights into the professional experiences that influenced newly hired teacher attrition or retention that could be used to inform the development of additional or revised district initiatives that are targeted to retain newly hired teachers.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework that informed my study was the concept of teacher turnover as developed by Ingersoll (2001). From his research findings, Ingersoll stated that in the year 1990-1991, 190,000 newly hired teachers entered the profession. At the end of the 1991 academic school year, 180,000 or 91% of these teachers left the

profession permanently. Ingersoll, stated that in 1993-1994, approximately 193,000

teachers newly entered the profession. In the following 12 months, 213,000 or 110% of

these newly hired teachers left the profession (Ingersoll, 2001). Ingersoll stated that

"organizational characteristics and conditions of schools" (p. 499) influenced teacher

turnover and job satisfaction. Ingersoll stated that when job satisfaction becomes job

dissatisfaction, teacher turnover results. Research studies conducted by Certo and Fox

(2002) and Ingersoll (2001, 2004) showed that teachers' job satisfaction was influenced

by salary, working conditions, unmet expectations, job stressors, support programs,

teacher preparation programs, and administrative support. Newly hired teachers reported

that low salaries were a deterrent to staying in the profession (Certo & Fox, 2002;

Ingersoll, 2004). Working conditions played a role in newly hired teacher attrition or

turnover. Forty-two percent of the newly hired teachers interviewed stated that job

dissatisfaction in the working environment helped them to decide to leave the profession

(Greenlee & Brown, 2009; Kukla-Acevedo, 2009; Lynch, 2012; Wang, 2007). Newly

hired teachers' disappointment when the job or profession did not meet their expectations

was another factor that influenced teacher turnover (Certo & Fox, 2002; Ingersoll, 2003,

2004). Job stressors, such as student motivation and student disciplinary problems were

other factors related to teacher turnover (Perrachione, Rosser, & Petersen, 2008).

Mentoring or support programs, which increased from 50% in 1990 to 91% in 2008,

provided newly hired teachers with "packages" or "bundles" that were often ineffective

and did not influence the teachers' decisions to remain in the profession (Corbell,

Osborne, & Reiman, 2010; Leimann, Murdock, & Waller, 2008; Lynch, 2012; Oliver,

2009; Parker, Ndoye, & Scott, 2009). Teacher preparation programs lacked the "true" preparation of the real-world classroom and teacher turnover was a result (Cochran-Smith, Canady, McEachern, Piazza, Power, & Ryan, 2011; Mastekaasa, 2011). Based on researchers' data findings, newly hired teachers reported that one of the major factors that influenced their decision to leave the teaching profession was lack of adequate administrative support (Certo & Fox, 2002; Ingersoll, 2003, 2004). Ingersoll further argued that decreasing turnover by improving organizational and school conditions were better solutions than continual cycles of new teacher recruitment.

Operational Definitions

For the purpose of this qualitative research study, the following key terms were defined:

Mentoring: Mentoring is an established partnership between a mentor and a mentee, where the mentor facilitates or guides the mentee in his or her professional and personal growth. Mentoring is a process and an ongoing relationship. It is a reciprocal learning relationship where the mentor and mentee develop a collaborative partnership toward achieving mutually defined and set goals, achievable by the mentee over a period of time (Cook, 2012).

Teacher induction: Teacher induction is a transitioning program created to assist new teachers in becoming acclimatized to the climate and culture of their new schools. It is seen as a socialization process that acculturates new teachers to their teaching community (Hellsten, Prytula, Ebanks, & Lai, 2009).

Teacher professional development: Professional development programs are designed to meet the professional needs of teachers. Professional development as defined by the National Staff Development Council and cited by DuFour, DuFour and Eaker (2008), "is a lifelong collaborative learning process that nourishes the growth of individuals, teams, and the school through a daily job-embedded, learner-centered, focused approach" (p.469).

Teacher attrition: Teacher attrition is the phenomenon of teachers leaving the profession or the classroom (Harfitt, 2015; Ingersoll, 2012). Locally, the term is defined by the study district as newly hired teachers leaving within the first 3 years of teaching in the district (District Website, 2018).

Newly hired teacher: Newly hired teacher is defined in the study as a new teacher hired in the district as a first-time teacher or with previous years experiences in teaching. It refers to teachers who are experiencing their first 3 years of employment in the district (District Website, 2018).

School characteristics: School characteristics are features of the school that embodies the beliefs and attitudes of teachers and staff, leadership roles, the cultural norms, rituals, ceremonies, symbols, stories, and relationships between the staff and the teaching and learning environment (Ingersoll, 2001).

Assumptions, Limitations, Scope, and Delimitations

Assumptions

Assumptions are those aspects of a study that are not completely under the control of the researcher but the absence of these aspects make the study irrelevant (Creswell,

2012). Two core assumptions underly my study. First, I assume that newly hired teachers will provide honest answers to the interview questions. To encourage honesty from participants, I will explain to participants how their confidentiality will be preserved and that they can withdraw from the study at any time without ramifications. Second, I assume that the participation selection criteria are appropriate. To make this assumption, I will select a sample that is representative of the population of newly hired teachers in the district.

Limitations

Limitations are aspects of the study over which the researcher has no control (Creswell, 2012). Due to the nature of the qualitative design of the study, small sample size, and the local nature of the sample, this study will have the following limitation. The interviews will be conducted during the Spring academic term, a period which schools in the district undergo annual standardized testing of most students. It could be that teachers will be distracted and not fully attentive in their participation in my study.

Scope and Delimitations

The scope of this study was a sample of eight newly hired teachers employed by a suburban district located in the Mid-Atlantic region. This study will be delimited in two ways. First, newly hired teachers at the two Academies and the Vocational Center will be excluded, as these are specialized workplaces. Second, this study is not designed to evaluate newly hired teachers nor the induction, mentorship, or professional development programs.

Significance of the Study

The problem of newly hired teacher attrition is an important one. Nationally, 14% of newly hired teachers left their employment at the end of their first year, 33% within their first 3 years and 50% within the first 5 years (Kono, 2012; Wiebke, & Bardin, 2009). At the local K-12 district, the issue of newly hired teacher attrition is important because of the economic and educational implications that resulted from the annual recruitment and hiring of teachers, the development of support program for newly hired teachers, and the implications of providing consistent and quality education for all students in the district. At the local level, the findings may lead to positive social change by transforming overall school support for newly hired teachers, improving the status quo and guiding future research. Positive social change can result in an increase in the retention of newly hired teachers which may improve student achievement. This study will add to the research literature and information about newly hired teacher attrition and may be useful to other public-school districts that are seeking to minimize, lessen, or prevent newly hired teacher attrition.

Summary

In Section 1, I established the problem that my qualitative case study will address: Newly hired teacher attrition at a suburban district in Maryland. Hiring data provided by the district showed that between August 1, 2011 to August 1, 2016, 443 teachers were hired as newly hired teachers. During the same time period, 377 teachers terminated their services; either they did not return, or had their contracts terminated. Of the 377 teachers who left during 2011-2016, 162 were newly hired teachers. The focus of my study was to

achieve a deep and nuanced understanding of the professional experiences of newly hired teachers and how those experiences influenced them to leave or remain employed at the district. Ingersoll's (2001) concept of teacher turnover was the conceptual framework that was used to ground this study. I ended Section 1 by explaining the significance of the study and its potential contributions to social change.

In Section 2, I review the research literature that pertains to newly hired teacher attrition. In Section 3, I describe the research methodology, the research design and approach, participants, data collection and data analysis. In Section 4, I present the findings or results of my study, and in Section 5, I discuss the findings of my study and describe conclusions, recommendations, and direction for future research.

Section 2: Literature Review

Introduction

According to the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (NCTAF), the attrition rate of newly hired teachers was significantly higher than that of other professions (Perrachione, Rosser, & Petersen, 2008). Findings from multiple research studies have provided evidence of the high attrition rate in teaching (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017; Gray & Taie, 2015; Perrachione et al., 2008; Reyes & Alexander, 2017; Schaefer, Long, & Clandinin, 2012; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004; Su et al., 2011). Su et al. (2011) found that approximately 22% of all newly hired teachers leave the profession within the first 3 years and Carver-Thomas and Darling-Hammond (2019) found an overall teacher turnover rate of 16% nationwide in 2019. Goldring, Taie, and Riddles (2014) found a 20% teacher turnover rate among teachers within the first 3 years of teaching. Similarly, Perrachione et al. (2008) found that 20%-30% of newly hired teachers leave the profession within the first 5 years, while Sutcher, Darling-Hammond, and Carver-Thomas (2019) reported new teacher attrition rates varied between 15% and 50% within the first 5 years.

Moreover, Schaefer et al. (2012) and Smith and Ingersoll (2004) found that the best and brightest newly hired teachers were the most likely to leave the profession within 5 years, a trend which is especially illustrated by higher attrition rates among new teachers in math, science, and special education fields (Nguyen, Pham, Springer, & Crouch, 2019). Results from the first through fifth waves of the U.S. Department of Education *2007-2008 Beginning Teacher Longitudinal Study* indicated that over 17% of

recently hired teachers were no longer teaching by the fifth year (Gray & Taie, 2015).

Taken together, these finding represent a highly concerning trend.

This high attrition rate has significant negative ramifications on both schools and

students. Financially, high teacher attrition is extremely costly. The NCTAF (2007)

claimed that the annual national cost of newly hired teacher attrition was more than 7

billion dollars annually, when considering the recruitment, administrative processing,

professional development, and training requirements of newly hired teachers. This total

cost was corroborated in the finding of Greenlee and Brown Jr. (2009), who determined

that the approximate nationwide cost for school districts to recruit, hire, and retain

teachers or fill their positions was 7.34 billion dollars annually. These costs have

increased over time and, roughly a decade later, are now estimated to be over $8 billion

(Garcia & Weiss, 2019; Sutcher, Carver-Thomas, & Darling-Hammond, 2019). A study

by Hughes (2012) estimated the cost of teacher recruitment, hiring, and training alone in

the United States to be approximately 2 billion dollars annually, excluding the costs

associated with teacher retention. Urban school districts are estimated on average to

spend more than $20,000 per new teacher hire (Learning Policy Institute, 2017). In

addition to the cost of teacher recruitment and training, newly hired teacher attrition also

impacts class size, curriculum planning, and collegiality in schools, all of which can have

potentially negative effects on student achievement (Greenlee & Brown Jr., 2009). The

loss of newly hired teachers with great potential threatened the academic opportunities of

students by creating unstable learning environments and negatively influencing the

quality of teaching (Gibbons, Scrutinio, & Telhaj, 2018; Schaefer et al., 2012; Zhang & Zeller, 2016).

In this chapter, I present a literature review of the current research about newly hired teacher attrition and teacher retention to provide context for my research study and establish a clear connection between my research question, conceptual framework, and problem statement. To assemble this comprehensive literature review, I read and analyzed numerous peer-reviewed and scholarly journal articles, reports, and books on topics related to newly hired teacher attrition. I used the following databases to locate all research studies appropriate for this review: Walden University's Thoreau, Education Resources Information Center (ERIC), EBSCOHost Academic Complete, Sage, Google Scholar, and ProQuest Central. I used specific keywords and terms to find the relevant literature: *age of newly hired teachers*, *teacher preparation programs*, *lack of administrative and collegial support for teachers*, *school characteristics*, *salary*, *school culture*, *student discipline*, *interpersonal relationships*, *lack of recognition*, *lack of opportunity for advancement*, *newly hired teacher attrition*, *induction*, *mentorship*, *professional development programs for new teachers*, *new teacher support programs*, *workplace conditions*, *teacher turnover*, and *case study design*. In order to reach full saturation, I examined the literature and conducted keyword searches of all these terms both individually and in combination until I found no new references. As a final measure, I conducted a citation search in Google Scholar to ensure that all references and their included citations were exhausted. From this, I selected the most relevant studies and read all pertinent research materials relating to newly hired teacher attrition.

Based on the extensive literature search and publication review, this chapter is organized into three sections: (a) the effects of teacher attrition on schools, (b) factors influencing the attrition and retention of newly hired teachers, and (c) the role of support and development programs in teacher retention.

The Effects of Teacher Attrition on Schools

Attrition of newly hired teachers contributed to several issues in the classroom environment that decrease student achievement levels and inhibit students and schools from meeting the proficiency levels set out in the Common Core Standard requirements. The negative effects of high teacher attrition rates manifested in several ways, from the classroom environment itself to the number of experienced teachers in the profession. From class size to the quality of instruction, teacher attrition directly affected a student's education on a day-to-day basis while also negatively affecting a school district's operations. A key path towards minimizing teacher attrition lied in the recruitment of qualified and committed educators who were well prepared to take on the diversity, challenges, and rigor of the modern classroom (Burke et al., 2013; Greenlee & Brown Jr., 2009; Sullivan, Johnson, & Simons, 2019).

One negative effect of high teacher attrition was its effect on the delivery of quality instruction by limiting teacher experience and effectiveness. Rockoff (2004) analyzed over a decade of standardized test scores across elementary schools in two New Jersey school districts and found that, all other factors being equal, students who had teachers with more than 10 years of teaching experience had significantly higher test scores in reading. Using a very large dataset, Harris and Sass (2008) examined the effect

of teacher training and experience on student achievement. They combined information on the reading and mathematics achievement test scores for all students in Grades 3-10 in the state of Florida between 1999–2000 and 2004–2005 with data about their teacher education, training, and experience to determine how teaching quality affected student performance. Harris and Sass (2008) found that more experienced teachers were more effective at teaching specific subjects, including elementary-level reading and elementary and middle school-level math, resulting in higher student performance in those subjects. This was particularly true for teachers early in their career, leading the researchers to suggest that retention policies aimed at young elementary and middle-school teachers could be particularly important for increasing student and school performance (Harris & Sass, 2008).

Kukla-Acevedo (2009) analyzed survey results from 3,505 participants who took the Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS) and Teacher Follow-up Survey (TFS) from the National Center for Education between 1999–2001 to investigate how workplace conditions influenced teacher attrition. In addition to finding that new, less experienced teachers were almost 2 times more likely to change schools compared to more experienced teachers, Kukla-Acevedo (2009) also found that teachers needed to acquire at least 5 years of teaching experience before they were fully effective at influencing and improving student performance. Ronfeldt, Loeb, and Wyckoff (2013) used regression models to investigate the potential negative effects of high teacher turnover on student performance using data from over 600,000 students in the 4th and 5th grades in New York City. The researchers found that decreased teacher experience caused by high

teacher turnover partially explained negative effects of teacher attrition on student achievement. Specifically, students in grades with higher teacher turnover had lower scores in math and language arts, with even more notable disparities in schools with African American and underperforming student populations (Ronfeldt et al., 2013).

A 2016 study by Hanushek, Rivkin, and Schiman corroborated Ronfeldt et al. (2013) findings, the researchers conducted analyses of the combined effect of teacher turnover and the effectiveness of those teachers who left the schools on the quality of instruction at those schools within a large, urban district in the state of Texas. Their findings indicated that, although most teachers who left the district were less effective instructors, the loss of teaching experience as a result of teacher turnover negatively affected the quality of instruction in the school district (Hanushek et al., 2016). The researchers concluded that retention of *effective* teachers was more influential for student performance than teacher retention overall.

Adnot, Dee, Katz, and Wyckoff (2017) investigated whether turnover among low versus high-performing teachers impacted student achievement differently. The researchers analyzed the District of Colombia's Public Schools' standard teacher performance rating system, IMPACT, combined with student standardized test scores in reading and math from 2011 to 2013. Under the IMPACT system, teachers rated as ineffective or minimally effective multiple times are separated from the district, while those rated highly effective are offered monetary and nonmonetary awards. Adnot et al. (2017) determined that turnover among low-performing teachers had a significantly positive impact on student performance by removing ineffective educators from the

district. However, turnover among high-performing teachers negatively affected student

performance overall. Thus, targeted teacher turnover, also known as strategic retention,

by school districts may benefit student achievement by replacing ineffective teachers.

Adnot et al. (2017) concluded that retention of highly effective teachers would provide

greater benefits overall than targeted turnover of low-performing teachers.

In addition to negatively affecting student achievement, teacher attrition rates

influence the classroom in a variety of other ways, including the implementation of

school policies, consistent curriculum, and the fluidity of yearly transitions of students

(Curtis, 2012). High levels of new teacher turnover can create a non-cohesive classroom

environment that inhibits student academic development (Schaefer et al., 2012). In fact,

researchers have found a link between favorable teacher working conditions and positive

student academic growth (Johnson, Kraft, & Papay, 2012), as well as the opposite namely

that less favorable teacher working conditions are associated with lower rates of student

achievement, conditions which are predominantly documented in low-income,

underserved schools (Simon & Johnson, 2015). In a survey about school working

conditions and student achievement in Massachusetts, Johnson et al. (2012) stated that

teachers who described their working environment as positive experienced more

satisfaction and decided to stay longer at their schools. Additionally, more satisfied

teachers contributed to higher rates of student achievement (Johnson et al., 2012),

supporting the finding that higher teacher retention benefits students academically.

High teacher attrition rates are disruptive to the classroom environment, the

financial resources of school districts, and negatively affect the quality of instruction and

the school environment itself. However, although high teacher attrition rates are widely recognized to be detrimental to student learning and research has begun to clarify exactly what factors can influence individual teacher decisions to leave the profession, it is less clear what measures are most effective at resolving the challenges facing teachers in order to increase teacher retention.

Factors Influencing the Attrition and Retention of Newly-Hired Teachers

Given the high attrition rates among newly hired teachers, much research has focused on trying to identify exactly why new teachers leave the profession. Researchers have identified several factors that contribute to high teacher attrition, from working conditions such as insufficient support and collegiality in school environments, to the characteristics of newly hired teachers themselves. Schaefer et al. (2012) conducted a meta-analysis of 65 peer-reviewed articles to determine what issues were most pertinent among early-career teachers who left the profession. The researchers identified two types of factors that contributed to new teachers leaving the profession: (a) individual factors, including teacher burnout, teacher resiliency, teacher demographics, and family commitments; and (b) contextual factors, including conditions at the workplace such as issues related to students, lack of administrative support, limited teacher education and training, collegial collaboration, and insufficient professional development initiatives (Schaefer et al., 2012). Many of the studies that have investigated what influences teacher attrition and retention can be grouped into similar categories as those identified by Schaefer et al. (2012) and will be discussed below in the following order: workplace conditions, and the demographics and training of newly hired teachers.

Contextual factors. Although the reasons for teacher attrition certainly vary for every individual, research has demonstrated repeatedly that workplace conditions of newly hired teachers are critical in their decision to stay or leave the profession within the first few years of their career. Workplace conditions in this case do not refer to the facilities or technology available to teachers, but rather the social and cultural environment of the school itself.

Kukla-Acevedo (2009) investigated the effect of three specific workplace conditions on teacher decisions to leave the profession: administrative support, classroom control, and behavioral climate. Their results showed that individuals in their first year of teaching were strongly influenced by these workplace conditions when deciding to leave the profession, but more experienced teachers were not strongly influenced by these factors. In fact, teachers with 0–5 years of experience were nearly 1.5 times more likely to leave teaching and 2 times more likely to change schools compared to more experienced teachers. Among the factors influencing their decisions to leave teaching were lack of administrative support and stress from negative workplace conditions, including student behavioral challenges. Kukla-Acevedo (2009) suggested that improving a school's behavioral climate could be critical to decreasing the attrition of first-year teachers. Alternatively, strong support from the principal, including clear communication of expectations and maintaining order in the school, protected against teacher turnover. Kukla-Acevedo (2009) also found that teachers needed to acquire at least 5 years of teaching experience before they were fully effective at influencing and improving student

performance, suggesting that the first 5 years after a teacher is hired is a critical time period to target for increasing retention rates.

In a study conducted nationwide, a sample of 1,571 middle and high school mathematics teachers who were randomly selected completed a survey. Curtis (2012) examined reasons that influenced teachers to leave the profession. All survey participants were highly qualified, newly hired, or experienced mathematics teachers. Participants were separated into teachers who stayed in the profession and those who left teaching. Of those who left teaching, 32 individuals were selected for an interview. The participants stated that they became teachers for several reasons. The reasons were their desire to work with that particular age group, their confidence in teaching their content area, personal fulfillment of doing a job that was worthwhile, the influence of role models and family members already in the profession, and to make a difference in the lives of their students. The participants stated that some of the major reasons for leaving the profession were their experiences with their expectations and the actual realities of the professional environment, the lack of proper monetary compensation, lack of student accountability for their academic achievement and behaviors, the mandate of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation and lack of administrative support. Curtis (2012) predicted an impending teacher shortage, particularly a shortage of mathematics teachers, when the number of teachers who are expected to soon retire is combined with the numbers of new teachers expected to leave the profession within their first 3 years of teaching. Curtis (2012) suggested that a reevaluation of current teaching conditions and teacher treatment is necessary to avoid this impending teacher shortage.

A mixed-method study by Burke et al. (2013) also explored the reasons behind new teacher departure from the profession. The researchers specifically quantified the importance of remuneration, workload, support, and administrative and parental support. They conducted interviews with 42 participants and administered a best–worst scaling survey to 258 new teachers using the information gathered in the interviews to design the survey. The researchers stated that the factors that contributed to teacher attrition were related to lack of teacher-student engagement, collegiality and teacher collaboration, and ongoing administrative support (Burke et al., 2013; Burke et al., 2015). Furthermore, because newly hired teachers are typically unprepared to resolve many of the classroom situations they will encounter, researchers found that teachers' confidence in their ability to meet each challenge was often a deciding factor in whether or not they choose to leave teaching. Burke et al. (2013) also found that when teachers' needs for student engagement, professional challenges, collegiality and support, and remuneration and recognition were met, newly hired teachers were less likely to leave the profession.

Interestingly, putting too much focus on new teacher recruitment instead of current teacher retention and support may contribute to the high teacher turnover rate as well. Boyd, Lankford, Loeb, Ronfeldt, and Wyckoff (2011) stated that one of the reasons newly hired teachers leave the profession is current educational policies that are focused on the importance of hiring new teachers instead of retaining newly hired teachers. Analyzing data on teacher applications from the New York City Department of Education from 2006–2008, the researchers found that more experienced teachers were less likely to request school transfers, probably because they had found a satisfying school

environment in which to teach. Once hired, Boyd et al. (2011) concluded, new teachers

need to be nurtured, reminded that they are needed, and given the full support of school

administration. The researchers also advocated that newly hired teachers be given support

from colleagues and other stakeholders to decrease their attrition rates (Boyd et al.,

2011).

Employing a different approach, Lindqvist and Nordanger (2016) conducted a

longitudinal study on teacher attrition over 22 years. They tracked the teaching careers of

87 participants from the time they graduated college in 1993 to 2014. During the first 15

years, the study data were collected through semistructured questionnaires by a lecturer at

a teacher education program who had a relationship with the participants. Lindqvist and

Nordanger inherited the dataset from the lecturer and continued to collect survey data

once a year from the participants. During this long-term study, 60% of the participants

left teaching. On the 2013 survey, those who had left teaching said that they would

consider returning to the profession if the following needs were met: improved working

conditions, higher salary, manageable scheduled assignments, and less pressure from

variables not related to the teaching and learning environment. In fact, the researchers

found that some highly qualified teachers would be willing to continue teaching given

appropriate additional support. However, when individuals' expectations were not met, it

had a negative influence on their professional experience. In fact, Lindqvist and

Nordanger (2016) determined that the process of teacher attrition often began long before

the teacher finally left the profession, but the researchers did not identify any "quick

fixes" for these problems. Instead, they recommended that school leadership be more

aware of teachers' needs and adequately assist newly hired teachers to succeed in their new profession. Most importantly, Lindqvist and Nordanger (2016) suggested that school leadership must have an understanding of how to fully support and integrate new teachers into the school culture and continue to sustain these teachers once they form part of the teaching and learning environment.

Recently, Kaniuka and Kaniuka (2019) investigated the complex linkages between teacher turnover, working conditions, and student achievement. The researchers used data from the North Carolina Teacher Working Conditions Survey, teacher turnover data from the North Carolina School Report Card, and student performance data from the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction to model how turnover and working conditions impacted student achievement over a 2-year period. They found that schools with superior teacher working conditions had higher student achievement. Furthermore, working conditions influenced teacher turnover significantly, with poor working conditions associated with high teacher turnover. This connection was even stronger among schools that were impacted by high levels of poverty and minority students, suggesting that working conditions in these schools were even more important in mediating teacher turnover. Kaniuka and Kaniuka (2019) concluded that school accountability systems should include measures of teacher satisfaction and working conditions to truly assess school performance, support student achievement, and minimize teacher turnover.

Complicating the problem of understanding teacher attrition is that the reasons why teachers leave the profession can differ between educators at private and public

schools. Torres (2012) conducted a mixed-methods study to understand why newly hired teachers left the profession within the first 5 years of their employment. Torres interviewed 15 public school and 10 Catholic school teachers in the United States who had left teaching. Based on their survey responses and interviews, Torres (2012) explored their entire teaching experience during their short tenure and found that most newly hired teachers entered the profession with long-term goals and commitments. At times, the participants were satisfied with their overall teaching experience in the classroom, but teaching did not offer enough professional rewards to keep them in the profession. These rewards were not solely related to salary, but also included the recognition of colleagues and administration, professional gratification, mental stimulation, and consistent engagement and challenge. Torres (2012) also found that teachers who left Catholic schools had different reasons for leaving than their public-school counterparts. Additional factors, such as religion and the culture of the Catholic school environment played a role in the attrition of these teachers. Many of them grappled with the Catholic identity and the loss of religious leaders seen as the foundation of the Catholic institution. Ultimately, Torres (2012) found that the lack of any sense of accomplishment and success in the classroom among newly hired teachers were determining factors in their decision to leave the teaching profession.

Taking a different approach to the issue, Greenlee and Brown Jr. (2009) investigated what workplace conditions were most effective at decreasing teacher attrition. In their study, the researchers tried to determine what elements of a teaching environment made teachers want to stay and work for an extended period at the same

location. Using convenience sampling, the researchers selected 97 teachers to participate

in a quantitative survey which asked them about their perceptions of principal leadership

behaviors, working conditions, and incentives for teacher retention. Greenlee and Brown

Jr. (2009) found that 41% of participants wanted a principal who established a positive

culture, 37% of respondents wanted conditions that promoted teacher creativity and a

focus on educational excellence, and 19% wanted opportunities for teachers to

collaborate to achieve their goals. The researchers recommended that public schools

address school culture and working conditions to reduce newly hired teacher attrition.

Specifically, Greenlee and Brown Jr. (2009) highlighted the need for positive leadership

behavior and organizational structures in schools as the most important factors affecting

teacher retention.

      Individual factors. Resolving the workplace conditions that contribute to teacher

attrition is only one part of the teacher turnover problem. Teacher attrition is not only

influenced by school and classroom conditions, but also by the personal characteristics,

training, and professional development of educators themselves.

      Studies by Harfitt (2015) and Wong and Luft (2015) found evidence that newly

hired teachers in the United States who left the profession within their first 5 years of

service were most likely young in age or early career teachers. Harfitt (2015) conducted a

narrative inquiry study that examined why two early career teachers left the profession

after teaching for I year to later return to the profession in 2 years. Harfitt (2015)

interviewed the participants multiple times and had them complete monthly journals after

they returned to the teaching profession. Although the sample size of the study was small,

Harfitt (2015) asserted that the newly hired teachers leaving the teaching profession within 3 years were mostly young teachers who were in the classroom for the first time. Harfitt concluded that the age of newly hired teachers and their transition from student teacher to teacher were major reasons for this pattern. Studies have shown that the transition from student teacher to teacher can be a daunting experience and educators often go through various developmental stages at the beginning of their careers, including eager anticipation, the shock of reality, a survival period, disillusionment, self-doubt, and reflection (Ingersoll & Smith, 2004; Moir, 1999). Harfitt (2015) also found that a lack of support from the school caused newly hired teachers to become frustrated and see themselves as failures. In fact, the participants in this study reported becoming physically ill at the inability to cope with the demands of their job. Clearly, support mechanisms, or the lack thereof, were key to understanding why these two early career teachers left the profession (Harfitt, 2015). The researcher recommended that policy makers and school leaders anticipate the challenges that newly hired, or early-career teachers will face and help to mitigate these challenges through collaborative professional development measures.

Wong and Luft (2015), taking a different approach, investigated how a teachers' personal beliefs and perspectives influenced their decisions to stay in the profession. Using a longitudinal, mixed-methods design, the researchers selected 35 high-school science teachers as participants. During the 5-year study period, 27 of the participants remained as full-time teachers. The eight teachers that left full-time teaching during the study period did so within the first 3 years of their career. Through annual interviews

with each teacher, Wong and Luft (2015) determined that teachers who held more

student-centered beliefs were more likely to continue teaching past their third year

compared to those with more teacher-centered beliefs. The researchers recommended that

teacher training programs take this into account and encourage student-centered learning

and instruction in early career teachers to reduce teacher attrition (Wong & Luft, 2015).

Teacher training is a critical part of successful transitions for newly hired

teachers. Sandoval-Lucero, et al. (2011) conducted a study to examine the paths and

experiences of early career or newly hired teachers who graduated from three different

models of teacher preparation: traditional, professional development, and teacher-in-

residence. The researchers examined the links between teacher training paths and

preparedness with their intention to remain in the profession. The participants were all

trained in college or university teacher education programs and participated in effective

professional development programs offered by their school system. Sandoval-Lucero et

al. (2011) found that although the participants followed different paths to the teaching

profession, they shared certain commonalities. All participants noted the importance of

having fellow teachers or colleagues assist and guide them through classroom routines

during their first few years of teaching and recalled formative early teaching experiences

by mentors or relatives who were also teachers. The participants also observed and

experienced good teaching as a matter of passion, calling, or personality attribute, and not

as something that necessarily needed cultivation (Sandoval-Lucero et al., 2011).

Sandoval-Lucero et al. (2011) also noted that teachers trained in traditional, formal

training programs felt better prepared than those who were trained in alternative

programs. In fact, formally trained teachers felt more responsible for their students'

learning and remained in teaching longer than informally trained teachers. That said,

however, teachers trained in college teacher education programs held broader views

about their future career options and considered the option of leaving the teaching

profession in the more distant future (Sandoval-Lucero et al., 2011).

Although Sandoval-Lucero et al. (2011) found that formally trained teachers were

more likely to stay in the teaching profession longer than informally trained teachers, a

formal teaching education alone does not guarantee teacher success in the classroom.

Walkington (2005) found that university-style lectures and workshops were only a weak

simulation of the unpredictable, complex nature of real classrooms. The additional

support that newly hired teachers need to establish credence in the profession must be

acquired through professional development programs and ongoing training workshops.

Walkington (2005) suggested that newly hired teachers develop their professional

identity through four elements: creating time to talk, taking the opportunity to reflect,

making judgements, and engaging in research activities. Walkington (2005) determined

that extended opportunities for teachers to engage in professional dialogue with other

educators helped build trustworthy relationships and allow genuine concerns to be shared

and mitigated. Opportunities to reflect afforded new teachers the chance to develop and

refine their personal teaching philosophies. By making judgments, new teachers learned

to connect observations to personal experience and build confidence in their own

identities and the work of their colleagues. Finally, engaging in research allowed new

teachers to consider the broader context and data supporting a strong educational

environment (Walkington, 2005). Newly hired teachers can experience these four elements through in-house or onsite professional development training and workshops geared towards meeting specific needs or honing skills.

As teacher attrition rates have risen, alternative pathways to a teaching career have also increased in number. There has been little research on whether teachers who received alternative teacher preparation are more or less likely to leave the profession than teachers who have received formal training. Zhang and Zeller (2016) conducted a longitudinal study to determine the attrition rates of teachers as related to their preparation for the career. They interviewed 60 teachers in Massachusetts and re-contacted them 7 years later to see if they were still teaching. Zhang and Zeller (2016) found that teacher preparation accounted only for about 25% of teacher retention during the study period, suggesting that preparation plays a role but does not explain teacher retention patterns alone. However, the researchers found that teachers who entered the profession through an alternate route and did not complete a traditional teacher education program had a lower retention rate than traditionally trained teachers. Zhang and Zeller (2016) attribute this to the increased preparedness of formally trained teachers for the demands of the classroom environment.

Similarly, Guthery and Bailes (2019) found that retention rates of new teachers in Texas were highly related to their training, certification, and initial school placement. Like many states in the United States, Texas has dealt with growing teacher shortages by deregulating teacher certifications to increase the availability of non-traditionally certified teachers. Guthery and Bailes (2019) assessed the persistence rates of new

teachers over 5 years, from their preparation program to initial placement, to determine

how teacher training and certification pathways influenced their attrition rate. They found

that traditionally trained and certified teachers were more likely to remain in their public-

school positions for 5 years (67.5%), compared to alternatively-certified teachers

(60.6%). Although they did not explicitly study this, Guthery and Bailes (2019)

suggested the reason for this difference may be that traditionally certified teachers are

more personally dedicated to the profession than alternatively certified teachers who may

not intend to make education a long-term career choice.

Despite the slightly higher retention rates of formally trained teachers, the

transition from student teacher to full-time teacher is difficult. Teachers need ongoing

professional training, particularly during their early career years, to help them through

this stressful transition (Mantei & Kervin, 2011). Newly hired teachers must learn their

new roles as teachers while also learning to cope effectively in the classroom. Mantei and

Kervin (2011) found that some newly hired teachers experienced tension and feelings of

isolation when their professional identities were challenged in the classroom

environment. Furthermore, new teachers entering the classroom sometimes found the

transition from theory to practice to be very sudden, experiencing a clear disparity

between their idealistic expectations and the reality of the classroom (Mantei & Kervin,

2011). The researchers argued that new teachers needed the support of professional

development programs geared toward assisting them in becoming competent, efficient

instructors. Such professional development programs tailored to the specific needs of new

teachers would empower and reward them with meaningful experiences, sharing useful

and practical tools of the trade (Mantei & Kervin, 2011). Professional development programs should also meet the personal needs of new teachers, helping them develop their identity as educators by fostering active engagement and collaboration among fellow teachers, the researchers asserted (Mantei & Kervin, 2011).

Teachers at high-need high schools have expressed the same desire for more effective administrative support and professional development (Petty, Fitchett, & O'Connor, 2012). Petty et al. (2012) surveyed both newly hired and veteran teachers at high-need high schools to see what factors influenced their decisions to stay or leave such schools. In this study, 189 participants completed the online survey asking questions about the teachers' perceptions of the characteristics of successful practitioners, teacher preparation programs, best policies for attracting newly hired teachers, retaining highly qualified practitioners, and reasons for leaving or staying in the profession. The survey results showed that, although adequate monetary compensation was the primary method for retaining most teachers in high-need schools, money did not always keep teachers from leaving these schools (Petty et al., 2012). In fact, consistent administrative support emerged as a very important factor in newly hired teacher retention in high-need schools. Such administrative support included the respect and recognition of student achievement and a school culture that was focused on caring relationships among students and staff. Petty et al. (2012) found that one way of providing administrative support for teachers was through the establishment of educational policies that were reflective of classroom practitioners and not just unilaterally spearheaded by politicians and officials without teacher input. Moreover, the voices of newly hired or early career teachers should be

recognized and listened to during such policy dialogues, both as a way to improve the daily school climate and to retain newly hired teachers (Petty et al., 2012). Petty et al. (2012) concluded that college and university teacher preparation programs needed to better prepare their graduating teachers for the actual classroom. This would potentially require complete restructuring of standard teacher preparation programs to incorporate supplemental education that would benefit newly hired teachers who are beginning their teaching careers (Petty et al., 2012).

In an extensive literature review, Schaefer et al. (2012) identified the specific causes that contributed to newly hired teacher attrition, including individual factors such as those discussed in this section, and contextual factors, such as those discussed in the previous section on workplace conditions. They found that individual factors, including personal demographics and family, teacher burnout, and lack of resilience worked with the contextual workplace factors, such as professional development, professional support, student issues, salary, teacher collaboration and teacher education. Despite the interaction of individual and contextual factors on teacher attrition, however, Schaefer et al. (2012) found that most research studies investigated either individual factors or contextual factors with regards to teacher attrition, not both. Furthermore, Schaefer et al. (2012) suggested that teacher attrition is not a choice made at a single point in time, but rather a process that early career teachers consider over time, which should be reflected in the research into reasons behind teacher attrition. Ultimately, the researchers concluded that to fully understand and diminish teacher attrition, both individual factors and contextual

factors need to be considered together to offer appropriate, continual support to early career teachers (Schaefer et al., 2012).

The Role of Support and Development Programs in Teacher Retention

As discussed in the previous section, multiple research studies on teacher attrition and retention have highlighted the importance of workplace conditions in teacher attrition decisions (Boyd et al., 2011; Burke et al., 2013; Burke et al., 2015; Harfitt, 2015; Lindqvist & Nordanger, 2016; Mantei & Kervin, 2011; Petty et al., 2012; Schaefer et al., 2012; Walkington, 2005). Specifically, Greenlee and Brown Jr. (2009) found that an emphasis on educational excellence and teacher creativity, a positive work environment that began at the top with the principal, and collaboration among education colleagues were critical to teacher retention. This is important because, unlike the individual factors that can influence teacher decisions to leave the profession, workplace conditions can be addressed and changed directly by schools trying to increase teacher retention. Specifically, teacher support and professional development programs are critical areas that require more emphasis and research to identify the most effective types of training and support programs for new teachers. In this section, I discuss some types of support systems in place for newly hired and early career teachers and their potential effectiveness at reducing newly hired teacher attrition rates.

Induction and mentorship programs. Induction programs set goals and expectations for newly hired teachers to help them become acclimatized to their new professional working environment (Athanases et al., 2008). Induction programs often work collaboratively with a mentorship program. A mentorship program has newly hired

teachers paired with a mentor who is an experienced or veteran teacher. Mentors provide

support that helps newly hired teachers with instruction and adjusting to school norms,

culture, climate, and expectations for the first two years of their career. Like the induction

program, the mentorship program helps newly hired teachers immerse themselves into

the professional culture of the school so that they feel jointly responsible for providing an

excellent education to the students (Athanases et al., 2008; Gaikhorst, Beishuizen,

Korstjens, & Volman, 2014). It has been estimated that, as of 2008, over 90% of teachers

in the United States had participated in some kind of induction program (Ingersoll, 2012),

and 29 states required induction and/or mentor training support for new teachers as of

2016 (Goldrick, 2016). Researchers have found evidence that induction programs can

increase early career teacher retention (Wong, Firestone, Lamb, & Luft, 2015); however,

the effectiveness of these programs can vary widely depending on their content and

implementation (Bray, 2019; Ingersoll, 2012; Luft et al., 2011; Mitchell, Howard,

Meetze-Hall, Hendrick, & Sandlin, 2017).

Although teacher induction and mentoring programs can be very useful, these

programs may fail to achieve their goals because of ill-defined state guidelines (Goldrick,

Osta, Barlin, & Burn, 2012). In a national review of state guidelines for teacher induction

and mentorship programs, the New Teacher Center (NTC) found that most state

induction programs did not meet their ten criteria for high-impact, multi-year teacher

induction programs (Goldrick et al., 2012). Most importantly, not all states required all

new teachers and administrators to participate in the induction program. The NTC

recommended that states review their current induction program criteria to see where they

can improve, beginning with requiring such programs for all new educators in the state

(Goldrick et al., 2012). The most recent teacher induction program standards released by

the NTC in 2018 highlight three components that all induction programs should have: (a)

foundational, (b) structural, and (c) instructional (New Teacher Center, 2018). The

foundational aspects of an induction program should identify the basis for the program's

design, including the program's vision and leadership needs; the structural aspects should

describe the required program components, such as mentor responsibility and the

establishment of learning communities; and the instructional aspects should identify the

required outcomes that mentors need to help new teachers achieve, such as assessing

teacher progress and cultivating optimal learning environments for students (NTC, 2018).

Unfortunately, most induction programs do not follow these guidelines. Induction

programs are often built of a mishmash of ideas about teacher knowledge and student

expectations that are taken from existing induction program materials instead of purpose-

built for an individual school district's need (Athanases et al., 2008). These programs are

also typically presented in the form of mini-workshops that are focused mainly on school

policies and classroom or student management, so the level of teacher support at these

mini-workshops is highly dependent on the available time and financial resources

dedicated to these efforts (Athanases et al., 2008). Additionally, teacher mentors are not

always given the appropriate preparation and materials to adequately guide early career

teachers in these programs.

Athanases et al. (2008) examined four case studies of individuals who were

mentors to new teachers to assess the effectiveness of induction and mentorship

programs. The study participants conducted four action-research projects between 2002–

2003 on new teacher induction and mentor development to develop a curriculum for

mentors of new teachers. Despite the promise of reduced teacher attrition offered by

induction and mentorship programs, Athanases et al. (2008) found that these programs

often consisted of a mixture of models taken from many different programs that did not

always effectively meet the needs of a specific school district. In fact, the mentor

curriculum models did not sufficiently meet the expectations of newly hired teachers or

their mentors (Athanases et al., 2008). Most mentors were selected because of their

seniority, being either lead teachers or veteran teachers, and this selection did not always

yield the most positive outcomes. Often, the goals and expectations of the mentor–mentee

match were not met, with mentors "ready to provide emotional support but less ready to

help new teachers question their practice and develop strategies to improve or refine it"

(Athanases et al., 2008, p. 755).

The most effective forms of teacher induction programs may be those with

subject-specific content. Luft, Firestone, Wong, Ortega, Adams, and Bang (2011)

conducted a mixed-methods study to investigate the efficacy of science-specific induction

programs compared to general induction programs on early career science teachers. After

two years of teaching and participating in the induction programs, all teachers

demonstrated similar pedagogical beliefs, but participants in the science-specific

induction program utilized more interactive learning in their science classrooms (Luft et

al., 2011). Clearly, some form of induction program is helpful for early career teachers,

but subject-specific induction programs may be even more effective at training highly qualified educators (Luft et al., 2011).

Despite the widespread use of mentorship programs, there is little documented research in the United States regarding effective teacher mentorship development to inform the curricula that are used in these types of programs (Athanases et al., 2008). Many programs, manuals, and guidelines for mentorship programs exist, but they lack a purposeful, deliberate, tactical approach to the development of effective teacher mentors. The assumption that good teachers make naturally exceptional mentors and need little to no instruction on how to mentor or guide their mentee is erroneous (Athanases et al., 2008). Instead, mentors should be carefully selected according to specific criteria and the mentor curriculum should include the necessary materials and resources, such as handouts, manuals, and guidelines, that will enhance the mentor–mentee partnership (Athanases et al., 2008). One of the criteria for selecting mentors for incoming teachers should be the subject matter they teach. Research has found that mentors in the same subject area as the mentee are more effective at increasing teacher retention (Ingersoll, 2012). Thus, carefully choosing and training teacher mentors is a critical process that should be treated as an integral part of the induction and mentorship programs intended to support newly hired teachers (Athanases et al., 2008).

Chan (2014) did a meta-analysis that learned about the effect of new teacher induction model in K–12 and higher education organizations. Chan (2014) found that inductive activities were effective in lessening a new teacher's fear, which offered them a feeling of support to build their confidence. Mentors should work collaboratively with

newly hired teachers to plan curriculum, ensure effective teaching and learning, develop

teaching strategies, complete data analysis, facilitate communication with parents and

community members, and help them meet other professional obligations and standards.

However, in order for an induction and mentorship program to become successful,

"policy mandates and human resources need to be made available for support" (Chan,

2014, p. 45). Essentially, induction and mentorship programs must also include

guidelines for the mentor to be effective at helping to train their new teacher mentee,

which does not just come naturally for a veteran or experienced teacher. Chan (2014)

determined that induction models that do not meet or address these objectives may not

produce a successful partnership between the mentor and mentee.

Teacher induction and mentoring programs are also challenged by the lack of

relationship between school administrations and newly hired teachers. Kono (2012)

conducted a series of projects that examined how would assist rural school principals in

developing comprehensive first-year teacher induction programs to prevent teacher

attrition. In the first part of the study series, 45 principals participated (Kono, 2012). The

participants were asked to rate and rank important school and classroom skills, as well as

the traits they would like to see in new teachers. In the second part of the study series, the

participants included 62 first year and aspiring teachers from Northern State University

(Kono, 2012). Participants were asked to rate and rank 60 classroom traits that were

important when looking for a school to teach in for the first time. In the third part of the

study series, Kono (2012) completed a comparative analysis of the needs of the principals

and the teachers. Kono (2012) found that newly hired or early career teacher induction

programs did help first-year teachers to succeed in schools, especially when experienced

teachers assisted their newly hired colleagues in establishing effective classroom

routines, management procedures, and solid instructional strategies. A key factor in the

success of these programs was that school principals had the resources to create programs

that could effectively facilitate the transition of newly hired teachers into the system

while retaining the services of these teachers as well (Kono, 2012). Ultimately, this study

found that well-structured teacher induction programs created greater retention and

reduced attrition rates for newly hired teachers (Kono, 2012).

Providing effective assistance or support programs for newly hired teachers does

not just reduce new teacher attrition, it can also have a long-term effect on their tenure in

the profession. Feiman-Nemser (2012) conducted a meta-analysis to identify how

induction programs eased the transition of newly hired teachers into their professional

role and into a collaborative professional learning community. According to Feiman-

Nemser (2012), providing effective support to newly hired teachers in their beginning

years be a "humane response to the stresses" of the first few years of teaching (p. 2).

Newly hired teachers should be able to obtain help from more experienced colleagues

instead of being allowed to feel incompetent or ineffective and having to rely solely on

themselves (Feiman-Nemser, 2012). According to the author, newly hired teachers

cannot be expected to know everything and handle stressful classroom situations without

the constant support of administration, colleagues, and development programs designed

for their success. Feiman-Nemser (2012) found that when induction and mentorship

practices were designed to meet the needs of newly hired teachers, they contributed to

building stronger professional learning communities, which facilitated further professional development and greatly assisted newly hired teachers. Specifically, Feiman-Nemser (2012) recommended that for the first year, newly hired teachers be given assistance in gathering instructional materials, be allowed to shift students with extreme behavioral problems to more experienced teachers, be paired with a mentor with the time and ability to mentor them, and receive specialized instruction about the community, neighborhood, and students they would encounter.

Both Athanases et al. (2008) and Feiman-Nemser (2012) emphasized the importance of pairing newly hired teachers with appropriate mentors in order to foster professional growth and establish effective partnerships that will benefit mentors, mentees, and the entire school. In addition to having effective mentors, Athanases et al. (2008) and Feiman-Nemser (2012) also highlighted the need to establish clear goals and expectations for newly hired teachers in induction and mentoring programs to ensure their success. If these requirements are met, the mentor–mentee relationship can be symbiotic and assist newly hired teachers within the first 2 years of their teaching career, making a long-term impact on their choice to remain in the teaching profession (Athanases et al., 2008; Feiman-Nemser, 2012).

Ultimately, multi-faceted induction and mentoring programs may be the most promising approach to increase new teacher retention. Analyzing a decade of data in the United States of America, Ronfeldt and McQueen (2017) found that new teacher induction programs that combined multiple support methods, including mentorships, training seminars, and supportive communications from school leadership, led to

increased teacher retention after 5 years. The researchers used national survey data from

multiple Schools and Staffing and Teacher Follow-up Surveys (SASS/TFS) and the

Beginning Teacher Longitudinal Survey to determine the impact of induction programs

on teacher retention in the United States. Based on their assessment, teacher migration

and attrition rates were four to five percentage points lower among new teachers who

received four or more types of induction support compared to those who received fewer

types of support (Ronfeldt & McQueen, 2017). In fact, the researchers found that each

additional support measure used in a new teacher induction program decreased the odds

of teacher attrition during their first 5 years by 15% to 18%. Thus, they concluded that

new teacher induction programs should comprehensively package multiple forms of

support together to effectively meet teachers' needs and increase retention (Ronfeldt &

McQueen, 2017).

  Professional development. Professional development is another avenue through

which many school systems have attempted to minimize newly hired teacher attrition.

Teacher professional development programs are designed to guide newly hired teachers

in becoming familiar and accustomed to their new professional experiences in the real

classroom environment to reduce teacher attrition. Not only do these programs have the

benefit of supporting new teachers and reducing attrition, they also directly benefit

students by providing more qualified, trained educators. Studies have shown that teacher

training and collaboration focused on new teaching styles and educational techniques can

have direct positive impacts on student performance and academic achievement (Darling-

Hammond, Hyler, Gardner, & Espinoza, 2017; Fischer et al., 2018; Sharpe &

Schliemann, 2014; van Kuijk, Deunk, Bosker, & Ritzema, 2015).

Klein and Riordan (2009) found a link between effective professional

development programs, student learning, and newly hired teacher attrition. They

conducted a qualitative case study with eight teacher participants in New York City to

understand how some teachers put their professional development into practice in the

classroom (Klein & Riordan, 2009). The teachers interviewed in this study were all part

of the organization Expeditionary Learning Schools Outward Bound (ELS), which

requires significant ongoing training and development for its teachers. All teachers in this

program participate in multiple week-long summer institutes on reading and writing, as

well as their subject of interest, before beginning their first year of teaching. Throughout

the academic year, teachers can participate in regional developmental programs on

leadership and best practices for assessments, grading, and reporting. There are also

onsite instructors at schools that participate in the ELS program who oversee continuing

the professional development of teachers at schools as needed. Klein and Riordan (2009)

found that professional development grounded teachers in both pedagogy and content,

offering them opportunities to put the ideas they learned in professional development

programs into practice in the classroom. Additionally, the researchers highlighted the

need for targeted professional development for teachers at different stages of their career,

as early career teachers need very different professional development training than more

experienced teachers (Klein & Riordan, 2009). This differentiation between development

for early career and experienced teachers is relatively uncommon among professional

development programs for teachers, as most take a one-size-fits-all approach that may not be as helpful for early career teachers (Klein & Riordan, 2009).

Ferguson-Patrick (2011) assessed the importance of training new teachers in pedagogy during their first, formative career years. Analyzing two case studies of early career teachers who underwent professional training on cooperative learning pedagogy, Ferguson-Patrick (2011) found that this type of professional development had a two-fold benefit. First, the early career teachers learned the intended cooperative learning skills to implement in their classrooms. Second, learning the pedagogical strategy itself helped maintain the teachers' enthusiasm and stimulated their intellectual curiosity during the critical first 3 years of their careers (Ferguson-Patrick, 2011). Ferguson-Patrick (2011) concluded that initial professional development for teachers should include a focus on pedagogy in the first few years of their career to enhance the sense of professional accomplishment among teachers in this critical stage.

Mantei and Kervin (2011) and Gaikhorst, Beishuizen, Zijlstra, and Volman (2015) concluded that in order for newly hired teachers to be successful they needed to have greater understanding of the educational climate and how that climate affect their practice. Both experienced and newly hired teachers are expected to perform very well within their own classrooms and demonstrate professionalism beyond their immediate setting. Thus, professional development plays an integral role in all school systems and both newly hired and experienced teachers alike need to keep up with current teaching practices that affect their profession (Gaikhorst et al., 2015; Mantei & Kervin, 2011). Professional development programs designed to target specific areas can provide newly

hired teachers the tools they need to function effectively in the professional setting. Mantei and Kervin (2011) found that the transition from student teaching to early career teaching was abrupt and sometimes very dramatic, with many newly hired teachers experiencing feelings of isolation, loss of idealistic expectations, and lack of proper professional support and guidance. Often, newly hired teachers encounter problems with the curriculum, policy, documentation, and even some professional practices that do not feel appropriate to them (Mantei & Kervin, 2011). To diminish this abrupt transition into professional teaching, Mantei and Kervin (2011) recommended that strategically-designed professional development programs should work collaboratively with Professional Learning Communities (PLC) that will help newly hired teachers bridge the gap between the idealistic and realistic world of the classroom (Mantei & Kervin, 2011).

Targeted or content-specific professional development programs can result in more highly qualified, confident teachers that directly influence student achievement. van Kuijk, Deunk, Bosker, and Ritzema (2015) studied student reading comprehension following a teacher development program that specifically targeted reading instruction. Using a pre and posttest experimental design, the researchers investigated the scores of 2nd and 3rd grade students on standardized tests. By the end of the teacher developmental program, students of teachers that had undergone the targeted professional training were more successful than students whose teachers had not gone through the additional training (van Kuijk et al., 2015). Similarly, Sharpe and Schliemann (2014) investigated the effect of teacher professional development on 7th grade math test scores. In order to teach algebra in an entirely new way, teachers in the Sharpe and Schliemann (2014)

underwent multiple weeks of online training to learn a new teaching method and worked in groups with other teachers during the training to establish a professional learning community. There were 13 teacher participants in the study and over 300 students who took pre and posttests to assess the math skills. All students of teachers who underwent the targeted professional development performed better than students whose teachers had not completed the training (Sharpe & Schliemann, 2014). Thus, the impact of targeted training and development for teachers goes beyond just increasing teacher retention, with positive impacts for student achievement as well.

Further demonstrating the many positive influences of teacher professional development, Nichol, Chow, and Furtwengler (2018) found that professional development programs had long-term benefits for both teacher and student performance. The researchers looked at data from teachers who participated in the Rice Elementary Model Science Lab in Houston, Texas, a year-long professional development course that required teachers to leave their classrooms for one day a week to participate. They also analyzed student scores on standardized state testing in science. During the same academic year as the professional development course itself, they found no difference between the test scores of students whose teachers participated in the program versus those who did not. The researchers concluded that the significant time teachers spent outside the classroom on professional development did not negatively impact student learning. Moreover, in the year following the professional development course, student achievement was higher for teachers that completed the training program. Nichol et al. (2018) concluded that the pedagogy and training gained during the year-long professional

development course took some time for teachers to implement in their classrooms, but eventually improved future student achievement. In other words, investing significant time in professional development not only aided teachers, but also benefitted their future students.

Teachers in rural, urban, or high-need schools may face unique challenges for which their teacher education programs did not prepare them. Berry, Petrin, Gravelle, and Farmer (2017) investigated the specific professional development needs of special education teachers in rural districts through surveys and phone interviews. In this study, teachers planning to leave their schools cited burnout, stress, and lack of support as major reasons for leaving their positions (Berry et al., 2017). Participants also reported feeling underqualified to teach the diversity of students in their care in rural schools, citing the need for more professional development that would enable them to administer quality education to all students (Berry et al., 2017). This particular study highlighted the importance of targeted professional development for teachers based on their specific needs, qualifications, and school district, as opposed to providing a uniform professional development program.

Education researchers believe that quality professional development programs ground teachers in both pedagogy and content, offering teachers a chance to practice ideas in contexts like their classrooms (Klein & Riordan, 2009). When newly hired teachers complete consistent professional development programs, they are embraced as assets to the educational culture and climate of the school setting, which in turn creates an atmosphere in which newly hired teachers want to work and stay because they feel

valued. Key to achieving this desired outcome, however, is consistent professional development, instead of the intermittent workshops that typically characterize professional development programs in teaching (Klein & Riordan, 2009).

Despite all the benefits of professional development for newly hired teachers, very little research has been conducted in the last decade to establish a correlation between such programs in high-stress areas and newly hired teacher attrition rates (Burkman, 2012). Burkman (2012) studied the methods and delivery of professional development programs along with the perceptions of early career teachers of the general support they received through these programs. In a survey of beginning elementary school teachers, 142 participants shared their experience with professional development programs. Burkman (2012) explored the challenges that newly hired teachers faced when creating an engaging environment to meet student needs, if newly hired teachers were provided adequate learning opportunities to meet these daily challenges, and if onsite administrators and district personnel assisted teachers in working through the challenges they faced within the context of onsite training. Burkman (2012) determined that a combination of professional development programs, consistent administrative support onsite, and other induction and mentoring programs were all needed to increase newly hired teacher competence. To create a new teacher support system that would be beneficial to everyone, Burkman (2012) recommended that administrators identify the needs of newly hired teachers and provide professional development programs early in teachers' careers to supplement existing mentoring programs.

When implemented correctly, professional development programs can have long-term positive effects on teacher performance. Gaikhorst et al. (2015) investigated the long-term effects of professional development classes on early career teachers. Using a quasi-experimental study, the researchers followed 72 teachers to determine whether there were positive effects from professional training one year after the end of the program (Gaikhorst et al., 2015). Through interviews with the participants, the researchers found that the development program had a positive effect on teacher self-efficacy, motivation, and career choices. This positive effect was most apparent in schools with an open culture, where teachers who completed the professional development program were able to share their training and knowledge with their principals and fellow teachers (Gaikhorst et al., 2015). For the professional development to have a long-term impact on these newly hired teachers, their schools must give them opportunities to practice their new skills, such as assigning them new responsibilities and roles related to their training (Gaikhorst et al., 2015).

When implemented correctly, professional development opportunities can provide early career teachers the training and tools they need to succeed in the critical first few years of their career. Not only can these opportunities develop new teachers into highly qualified educators, but they can also help smooth the transition from student teacher to the realities of the modern classroom environment. Effective, targeted professional development combined with administrative and collegial support with implementing the acquired knowledge, can provide a significant support system for new teachers.

Conclusion

In light of the significant, negative consequences of high teacher attrition on student achievement and the dramatically high rates of teacher attrition across the United States, it is imperative to identify the complex causes behind teacher attrition and the most effective ways to increase teacher retention. Although much research has been conducted on these topics, as demonstrated by the material included in this literature review, many questions still remain regarding the effectiveness of specific induction and development programs as well as the complex reasons behind high teacher attrition in specific school districts. As I will explore in this study, the implementation of induction and support programs alone may not curtail high newly hired teacher attrition rates, which highlights the need to explore the specific reasons behind newly hired teacher attrition within individual school districts and what can be done to provide more effective support for teachers during the early career period.

Section 3: Research Method

Introduction

The research design that I employed for this study was qualitative case study. A case study design is appropriate for understanding the experiences of newly hired teachers in their professional setting. The aim for using the qualitative case study design was to achieve a deep and nuanced understanding of the professional experiences of newly hired teachers and how those experiences influenced them to leave or remain employed at the district. The purpose for using a case study design was to achieve a deep understanding of participants' perceptions or experiences on specific issues (Lodico, Spauling, & Voegtle, 2010. p. 269). A case study design involves an in-depth analysis of information gathered from interaction with participants that directly focuses on individuals or small group in their natural context (Lodico et al., 2010). In a case study design, the researcher obtains detailed descriptions of the individuals' experiences, and these descriptions are documented and analyzed to seek patterns or themes (Lodico et al., 2010). Yin (2014) defined case study as one of several social science research designs that explores a contemporary phenomenon in its real-world context. Merriam (2009) stated that qualitative case studies can be particularistic, and focused on a particular event, situation, or phenomenon.

This qualitative research study differs significantly from quantitative research. Quantitative research collects broad data to study the relationship between independent and dependent variables to test a hypothesis. I considered both approaches but chose

qualitative research as such a design would allow me to collect rich, thick data that would provide a nuanced and in-depth understanding of the problem.

Selection of a Qualitative Research Design

In qualitative research, there are a number of research designs from which a researcher can choose: Phenomenology, Grounded Theory, Narrative Analysis, Ethnography and Case Study. Though I ultimately chose a case study design, I discuss the defining factors of these other designs to show why case study was the best choice for this study.

Phenomenology. Phenomenology is defined as an "attempt to understand the meaning of an experience from the perspective of the participant" (Lodico et al., 2010, p. 270). Merriam (2009) stated that researchers who conduct phenomenological studies are interested in the "lived experiences" of participants and that the focus of the research is on the experience and how the experience transformed the participants. Because I did not plan to capture the participants "lived experiences," I rejected the phenomenology design.

Grounded theory. Grounded theory design is defined by Creswell (2012) as a systematic study that is used to generate a theory about a substantive topic. In grounded theory the researcher over time explains the process of events, actions and activities related to a particular theory. Based on the definition, I rejected grounded theory as a design because the purpose of my study was not to generate theory but to seek an understanding of newly hired teacher attrition.

Narrative analysis. Narrative Analysis is a type of qualitative research that uses stories as data. The text of the story creates the data set, which the researchers analyze

(Merriam, 2009). I rejected the narrative analysis because my study does not depend on participants' stories as data.

Ethnography. Ethnographic studies aim to discover the essence and unique complexities of cultures and of groups within cultures. The purpose is to present a true portrait of a particular group, including its setting and interactions (Lodico et al., 2010). While the ethnographic design may be relevant for certain aspects of my study, this design was not selected because my study focused on understanding the perceptions of newly hired teachers' experiences in their professional setting and not on achieving an understanding the culture of newly hired teachers.

For my study, I used a qualitative case study design because it was the most appropriate design for a study about newly hired teacher perceptions of their professional experiences, and how those experiences influence their decisions to leave or remain employed at the district. This study provided information about newly hired teachers professional experiences that will assist stakeholders to attain a deeper understanding of the issue of newly hired teachers' attrition or retention.

Research Question

The overall research question for this qualitative case study is: What are the professional experiences of currently employed newly hired teachers and how do those experiences influence them to leave or remain employed in the district?

Research Context

I conducted this study in a suburban K-12 district in the Mid-Atlantic region of the United States. The study district employs approximately 2,000 certificated and

noncertificated teachers and staff with 96.3% of the teachers deemed highly qualified based on Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). The study district is comprised of 19 elementary schools, 5 middle schools, 4 high schools and a career and technology center. The K-12 district has an enrollment of approximately 18,000 students, 31.7% of whom are minority students. The study district has a 94% high school graduation rate. The district has a blend of mostly low, and middle socioeconomic status students with a very marginal group of students who are classified as higher middle socioeconomic status. Students are zoned according to neighborhoods; therefore, some schools cater to students with lower socioeconomic status while others cater to the more middle class or affluent students. The study district is steeped in history, resources and scenic beauty with various cultures inextricably linked.

Participants

Lodico et al. (2010) stated that qualitative researchers select their research participants based on their specialized characteristics and knowledge of and experience with the problem (Lodico et al., 2010). For this study, I purposefully selected a sample of 8 newly hired teachers currently employed in the district. Purposeful sampling uses specific criteria to select participants and to identify key informants for a study (Lodico et al., 2010). Lodico et al. defined purposeful sampling as the selection of participants who have specific knowledge about the topic being explored and who can yield insight and possible solutions to the problem (Lodico et al., 2010). To select a representative sample, the participants were selected based on the following criteria. I selected three participants who were in their first year of employment in the district who were experiencing the

mandatory induction, mentorship programs and other on and off-site professional

development activities, three participants in their second year of employment involved in

mentorship programs and other professional development programs, and two participants

in their third year of employment in the district who were still involved in mentorship

programs and other professional development programs. I attempted to diversify each

group of participants by including in my sample newly hired teachers from each level of

schooling, elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools. I issued invitations to

participate in this study to approximately 50 potential participants who were currently

employed in the district.

According to Creswell (2009) researchers need to gain access to school sites,

receive permission from the district for the research to be conducted and then seek

approval of the participants at the various research sites. I completed the following steps.

1. I completed the district approval form for conducting studies. After I had the

   approval from the district's superintendent or his designee, I obtained a letter of

   cooperation from the district to access research sites.

2. I sought approval from Walden Institutional Review Board (IRB) through the

   application process. My IRB approval number is 06-28-19-0257881 that expired

   June 27, 2020.

3. After, I received the necessary approval, I sent an invitation letter via email to

   approximately 50 currently employed newly hired teachers who met the selection

   criteria. The Human Resource Department provided me with the avenue to access

   names and email addresses of potential participants. In the invitation letter, I

outlined and explained the purpose of the study and why the potential participant

was invited to participate. I outlined and explained the informed consent

document and the voluntary nature of the study. I outlined and explained how I

will protect the potential participants' confidentiality and protect them from harm.

I also included my contact information.

4. I allowed 10 days for the invited participants to respond by email to the invitation

letter. I then contacted by email those who volunteered to begin to build the

researcher-participant relationship. I also sent these respondents an email thanking

them for volunteering.

5. I did not receive an adequate number of responses to the invitation letter, and so I

emailed a second round of invitation letters, waited the required 10 days and then

sent by email the invitation letters again for the final time.

6. I sent via email a thank you letter to all invited participants who responded to the

invitation. I sent by email a thank you letter to the ones who were selected, and

another thank you email to the others who were not selected, informing them of

the possibility of being selected at a later date should a selected participant

withdraw from the study. I also extended a verbal thank you to the participants at

the end of each interview.

7. I sent via email the letter of informed consent to all selected participants. This

emailed letter included a detailed purpose of the study, data collection process,

confidentiality clause, and an invitation to verify the accuracy of data once the

interview was conducted. On receiving the consent forms, I contacted via email

each of the selected participants and discussed his or her participation in the study and scheduled an interview date, time and location for face-to-face interview or scheduled a phone interview, if a face-to-face interview was not possible. I also informed the participants that the interviews would be audio-recorded.

To conduct and present an information-rich, in-depth analysis of the study, I needed to establish a researcher-participant relationship with each participant that would not compromise the integrity of the study. With the aid of various effective communication tools, such as email, telephone conversations, and face-to-face meetings, I sought to maintain professional rapport with the participants, and created an atmosphere of respect, trust, and confidentiality. I reassured the participants before the interview or meeting that their information will be kept in the strictest confidence and their names would not be used in the study and all data collected will be de-identified and given a number or a pseudonym. At the face-to-face meeting, participants reviewed again and signed the informed consent forms. For the phone interview, participants signed an electronic copy of the informed consent form before the interview.

Ethical Protection of the Participants

I considered the ethical issues and concerns when working with participants. In any research study, participants should never be put at risk and all populations need to be respected. To protect the participants' identities and their participation in the study, I asked each participant not to discuss the study with other colleagues at their schools. The proposal was reviewed by Walden IRB to further protect the participants' rights. I sent each participant the informed consent form electronically to peruse with the option to

sign it electronically before conducting the phone interview, or a hard copy was provided

for the participant(s) at the face-to-face interview. All participants were required to sign

the informed consent form before engaging in the research. The consent form

acknowledged that the participants' rights would be respected and protected. For

additional protection of the participants in the study, I conducted the interview in a

mutually agreed upon location where the identities of the participants were protected.

After the interview, I kept details of the interview, audio recordings, and transcripts

confidential, although each participant later had the opportunity to check the interview

responses for authenticity and accuracy of information. To further protect the participants

in the study, I de-identified the participants' names on the interview transcripts giving the

data collected a specific code or different name. I stored the transcripts and other

collected data in a secured filing cabinet at home. I kept computer files locked with an

encrypted or password-protected code, accessible only by myself. I will store the data for

a period of 5 years after completion of the study. In reporting the findings, I used

pseudonyms to further protect the identities of the participants.

Role of the Researcher

I am a doctoral student at Walden University and a middle school teacher with 26

years' experience in the classroom. I have been employed in my current district for 11

years. My role is an 8th grade Reading/English Language Arts and Foundations of

Computer Science teacher with responsibilities to instruct students to become proactive,

college-ready enthusiasts of the 21st century, prepared to meet the demands of a culturally

diverse global marketplace. This role has afforded me the opportunity to informally

mentor newly hired teachers, my colleagues within my Professional Learning Community (PLC) and assist student teachers with their internship from local colleges in the community. I hold no supervisory role. I am a teacher in the district and a researcher in this study.

My role in this study is primarily to conduct a qualitative study on a topical issue, one that I am passionate about and that affects my local setting. The study was conducted in my K-12 district, and the participants were not employed at my school. I carefully selected participants with whom I have had no extended contact except during district-wide professional development. I developed a researcher-participant relationship with the participants by communicating with them about the study, through phone calls and emails prior to conducting the interviews. As the researcher, my role throughout the data collection and analysis phases of the study was to establish and maintain open communication with all participants involved in this study.

Researcher Bias

Qualitative research or interpretative research requires the researcher to become involved in the intensity of the shared experiences of participants' ethical, strategic, and personal issues (Creswell, 2012). Creswell (2012) stated that researchers can explicitly identify reflexively their biases, values, and personal background, which can sometimes shape their interpretation during the execution of the study. As the researcher, I was aware that my personal biases and experiences could influence my interpretation of the collected data; however, I took a clinical stance, and interpreted and analyzed the data objectively.

The biases that I brought to the analysis of the data were a result of my previous experiences as a newly hired teacher in this district. I brought to the study my knowledge, experiences, and beliefs as a veteran teacher in the district who had experienced the induction and mentorship processes and who holds several beliefs:

1. I believe that newly hired teachers will remain employed at the district for three or more years if they are provided a supportive professional environment.

2. I believe that newly hired teachers should be "nurtured" and "encouraged" regularly to overcome the many challenges they will experience daily in the classrooms.

3. I believe that there should be an "individual needs-based" initiative for each newly hired teacher, as all newly hired teachers are not the same. Some newly hired teachers have different teacher preparation experiences. For example, some are from out of the state, and some are from out of the country.

I examined my interview questions and analysis of the data to ensure that my biases did not appear in either my questions or my analysis. I employed bracketing as described by Tufford and Newman (2012). Bracketing is a method the researcher uses to protect him or herself from the adverse effects of examining closely data that may be emotionally challenging. It is used by researchers to mitigate the potential effects of some research preconceptions (Tufford & Newman, 2012). When bracketing is used in qualitative research it facilitates the researcher reaching a deeper level of understanding and reflection across all stages of the research (Tufford & Newman, 2012). The specific

bracketing method that I used was the reflexive journal. In this journal, I examined my

reasons for doing this research study, my personal value system, and my ability to

maintain a reflexive stance throughout the research. In doing so, I increased the rigor of

the research.

Data Collection

In this study, data were collected through individual interviews of currently

employed first year, second year, and third year newly hired teachers. Creswell (2012)

stated, "A qualitative interview occurs when researchers ask one or more participants

general, open-ended questions and record their answers" (Creswell, 2012, p. 217). I

created the interview question protocol that will be used to collect the data for analysis.

Interviews

The interviews were audio recorded and transcribed verbatim into a Microsoft

Word document within 48 hours of each interview, to be later inserted into a Microsoft

Excel sheet. I explained the interview process protocol prior to the interviews. I reiterated

the information outlined in the informed consent document that was signed by the

participant on the day of the interview. I interviewed each participant for approximately

an hour with time and location arranged two weeks in advance. I sent each participant an

email of the interview date and time.

Interviews followed the semistructured interview protocol, which allowed me to

ask the participants follow-up or probing questions for clarity if needed. Semistructured

interview questions intentionally invite interviewees to express themselves openly,

candidly, and freely and to define the "world" from their perspectives (Hancock &

Algozzine, 2011). The interview protocol contained the newly hired teachers' interview questions that were sufficient to answer the overall research question (See Appendix A).

Creswell (2012) defined the semistructured interview protocol as useful for asking sensitive questions and enabling open dialogue that goes beyond the initial questions. Yin (2014) stated that semistructured interview data are targeted, focused directly on the topic being explored, insightful, providing explanations as well as personal views, attitudes, and perceptions on the issue. Interview questions were designed to engage each participant in a discussion of his or her perceptions about how he or she experienced the teaching and learning environment on the whole, including school climate, student discipline, collegial and administrative support, and support programs or initiatives.

Each participant had the opportunity to openly express his or her thoughts, perceptions, and ideas on the study's topic for approximately one hour in a setting mutually agreed on by the researcher and the participant. Participants were reassured again of the confidentiality of the interviews and the precise use of the data collected. Participants were interviewed once, with a follow-up or second meeting to examine the transcripts or for addition questions or clarity if necessary.

The face-to-face interviews were audio recorded, and to avoid any technical problem I used more than one recorder. I also took abbreviated field notes of the interview to capture the participant's gestures, body language, and inflections where appropriate, as this assisted in the data analysis of the interview. Phone interviews were audio recorded using a phone application designed for that purpose. After each interview, I thanked the participants for their participation in the study.

Data Analysis

Data analysis is about making sense of the data to address the research questions.

According to Creswell (2012), data analysis requires the researcher to understand and

make sense of text so that the researcher can form answers that relate to the research

questions. Data analysis involves "preparing and organizing the data, exploring and

coding the database, describing findings and forming themes, representing and reporting

findings, interpreting the meaning of the findings, and validating the accuracy of the

findings" (Creswell, 2012, p. 236).

Organizing and Managing the Data

The individual interview audio recordings were fully transcribed by me and later I

was assisted by a third-party transcription company, from the audio recordings into a

Microsoft Word document within 48 hours of each interview. I completed the following

steps to organize and manage the data. After I had coded each transcript, I created a

separate Microsoft Excel spreadsheet for each interview question, and in columns I

inserted the interview responses of each participant linked to specific interview questions.

I also organized the data in a spreadsheet by code and cross referenced the data to aid in

further analysis.

Data Coding

Coding is an analysis used in qualitative studies, it is the "process of assigning

meaning to data" (Ravitch & Carl, 2016, p. 248). Coding is descriptive and captures

significant details from the interview transcript. Coding and organizing data into patterns

and themes are analytical steps. Coding is the starting point from which to find patterns,

explanations, and make comparisons (Glesne, 2011). Coding is a cyclical act, the data

collected go through various cycles of interpretation, that create patterns for analysis of

the data (Saldana, 2013). For this study, I used open coding. Open coding as defined by

Saldana (2013) is a starting point that gives researchers analytical leads for further

exploration. Transcripts when open coded give the researcher a period to digest and

reflect on the data before extensive analysis. It is a preparatory approach to data before

more detailed thematic analysis. Saldana (2013) strongly suggested that time spent

becoming thoroughly absorbed in the prepared data very early in the analysis stage may

save considerable time in the later stages, as challenges are less likely to occur later in the

analysis process.

I completed the following steps:

1. I open and pattern coded each transcript. I inserted codes in a column next to
   specific interview questions and participants responses.

2. I created a separate Microsoft Excel spreadsheet for the codes and inserted all
   the information from the respondents by the specific appropriate code.

3. I then identified and recorded emerging themes and reflections in a separate
   column on the second Microsoft Excel spreadsheet that contains the codes.

Data identified as not directly related to emerging themes were noted as

discrepant data and I put that information in the reflection segment of the data analysis in

the ensuing section.

Open Coding

In cycle one, I open coded all interview data. Glesne (2011) suggested that

qualitative researchers should begin to code the transcript or field notes methodically,

line by line, and start a codebook as soon as possible after beginning the data collection

process. In open coding the transcripts line by line or paragraph by paragraph, I paid

"meticulous attention to the rich dynamics of the data" (Saldana, 2013, p. 103) in order to

identify patterns, categories, similarities or emerging themes in the data. I assigned codes

identified in the open coding process in a column by each interview question in the

Microsoft Excel spreadsheet. In the first round of the open coding process I focused on

what was obvious from the collected data. In the ensuing rounds I focused specifically on

aspects of the research question (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Open coding is designed to

identify repeated concepts in words or phrases after "multiple rounds and readings"

(Ravitch & Carl, 2016, p. 250), and it is possible to have as many as 50 or more open

codes at this stage of the data analysis process.

Pattern Coding

During the second cycle of the data analysis process, I pattern coded the data. I

organized or grouped the open coded data into patterns, categories, or clusters. I focused

on "sets of constructs or concepts in relation to each other to make arguments and

develop findings" (Ravitch & Carl, 2016, p. 250). Putting codes into patterns or

categories is seen as a method that enables the researcher to organize and group similarly

coded data into categories that share common characteristics (Saldana, 2013). As patterns

emerged, I placed the pattern codes in a specific column on the transcripts. As a novice

researcher, I started broadly and then worked to narrow to specific codes as the analysis of the data progressed. I maintained a list of the patterns or emerging cluster codes to be consistent throughout the process.

Theme Development

I conducted a thematic analysis of the categories to capture the essential meaning of the data. I combined or deleted codes, looked at and considered overlaps, and examined the research question for relationship of the codes to themes (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Creswell (2012) stated that researchers should identify a small number of themes that will provide detailed information instead of generating too many themes and provide generalized information. Creswell defined thematic analysis as joining similar codes aggregated together to form a few major ideas from the database (Creswell, 2012). Based on the categories, I developed two major themes and seven subthemes that addressed the research question, and I included the data that supported the emerged themes. The themes that were derived from the data analysis were used to address the overall research question and supported the findings of this research study. Table 1 below provided a synopsis of the pattern codes, themes and subthemes identified from the analysis of the data.

Table 1

Codes, Subthemes, and Themes Derived from the Transcribed Interview Data

Codes	Subthemes	Themes
Community is very supportive; feel really supported; support groups; organized team; always having conversations; super supported; feel very welcome; have support from other adults; school environment filled with teachers that are supportive; collaboration with other teachers; networking; family atmosphere; support from team members; feel valued on a team; share personal problems; opening up; good advice; supply different resources, assistance with deadlines; ask meaningful questions; collegial support; professional learning communities; department meetings; mentors	Newly hired teachers value community with a supportive and collaborative atmosphere	
Getting to know students; building relationships with students; opportunity to really get to know your students; real conversations with students; build a community in your classroom; students' responses; student engagement; students know you care; effective communication with students; students feel special; day to day interactions; relationships that foster openness and honesty among students; student growth; students becoming autonomous leaners; investment in student success	Newly hired teachers value building relationships with their students	Factors that influenced newly hired teacher retention
Resources for new teachers; mentees and mentors' relationship, mentorship; induction programs; professional development; support; time-consuming; redundancy; requirements; benefits; new teacher initiatives; professional detainment vs. professional development; meaningful seminars; different perspectives; monetary interests; applicability; actual interest; random topics; professionalism; flexibility; mandatory; essential and informative; balance; team building; positive vs. negative experiences; learning curve; networking; timely schedules; advice; technology; answering real questions; clear expectations; providing more incentives; teacher retention; attrition rates	How support programs meet newly hired teachers' needs	
	How support programs did not meet newly hired teachers' needs	

(table continues)

Open and honest dialogue; accountability of administration; accountability left on the teachers; teacher reprimanded; backed into a corner; disappointment in administration; lack of support from admin; listening to teachers; inconsistency vs. consistency; develop personal relationships; transparency; teachers get frustrated; negative body language; teacher isolation; lack of teacher recognitions; teacher meltdown; teacher evaluations; lack of respect; negative experiences; teachers quitting mid-year; push back; treated as professionals	Newly hired teachers value transparency and accountability of administrations	
Student accountability; no smooth transitions; incentives; heavy burden on teachers; lack of student resources; positive vs. negative behaviors; self-regulation; on task behaviors, paying attention; finding balance between academics and behaviors; unrelatable curriculum; lack of respect; student consequences; being consistent with policies; stereotypes; below average achievement; achievement gap; lack of parental support; communication between student and teachers; unrealistic consequences; figuring out the problems; not setting students up for success in the real world; skipping class and attendance; class structure; continuity and flow of instructions; poverty	Below average academic achievement and negative behaviors of students were deterrents for newly hired teachers	Factors that influenced newly hired teacher attrition
People resources; intervention resources; random meetings; frustrations; stressors; overwhelmed; timely deadlines, workload; meet all responsibilities; higher expectations; constant communication; put on the back burner; gradebook; classroom management; daily expectations; change my outlook; teacher responsibilities; discouragement; struggles; confidentiality; integration of technology; Title 1 schools; routines and procedures	Newly hired teachers' daily expectations	

Interpretation of Findings

In qualitative case study, researchers provide a written discussion of the data analysis. Themes are identified that complement the understanding of the data. Through discussion, the relationship between the themes, the research question, and the many ways the theory of the conceptual framework supported the themes are presented through rich, thick descriptions (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). According to Creswell (2009) preparing the data for analysis, conducting different types of analyses, delving deeper into understanding fully the data, representing the data, along with making an interpretation of the larger meaning of the data collected is necessary in a qualitative case study. As the researcher, I provided a written discussion that included a summary with supporting details that provided the readers with the necessary information they needed to fully understand the findings. In my discussion, I presented the data, discussed the themes and their meanings, with reference and support from the data. My aim was to present to the reader, the analysis, in a manner that could be easily read and comprehended.

Trustworthiness of the Data

Trustworthiness of the data is where the researcher checks for accuracy of the data by employing certain criteria. These criteria entail credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985) credibility as it relates to trustworthiness of the data, is the truth of the research findings, the confidence that the researcher has correctly interpreted the participants original views and that plausible information was drawn from the participants' original data. Lincoln and Guba defined transferability as the findings or results being transferable to other contexts and

settings with other participants. Dependability as defined by Lincoln and Guba discusses whether the findings have stability over a period of time. It involves the evaluation and interpretation of the findings supported by the data. Lincoln and Guba defined confirmability as the findings of a research study being confirmed by other researchers, confirming that the data and its interpretations or findings are not conjecture but supported by data.

I established trustworthiness of the data by employing member checking. Member checking also known as respondent validation, requests feedback on the emerging findings from some or all the participants who were interviewed by the researcher (Merriam, 2009). With member checking, participants should recognize their experience through the researcher's interpretation and maybe suggest some fine-tuning to better capture his or her perspectives on the study topic. Merriam (2009) explained that member checking was the single most important way of ruling out the possibility of misinterpreting the meaning of what the participants said and the perspectives they had on the research topic and it was an important way of identifying the researcher's own biases and misunderstandings of what was being discussed or observed. Creswell (2009) defined member checking to determine the accuracy of the data findings by showing the participants the final report or specific descriptions or themes, so that participants can vouch for the accuracy of information.

Validity of the Analysis

Validity is the development of evidence that shows that the data interpretations match its proposed use (Creswell, 2012). To establish validity of the analysis I used

multiply validity strategies. According to Creswell multiple validity strategies need to be explored to assess the accuracy of the research findings, as well as convince the readers of that accuracy (Creswell, 2009, 2012). To establish validity of the analysis, I used the following methods: rich, thick description, peer debriefing, and triangulation.

Rich, Thick Description

The use of rich, thick description is important when conveying the findings and establishes transferability. As the researcher, I described the data and provided sufficient, detailed descriptions. I ensured that persons unfamiliar with the research context could accurately understand the setting and the context. I provided adequate information about the participants' experiences and thoughts and contextual factors, so the readers can draw their conclusions or their own interpretations of the data (Ravitch & Carl, 2016).

Peer Debriefing

Lodico et al. (2010) stated that a peer debriefer asks the researcher questions to reexamine assumptions or think about alternative ways to look at the data analysis. I used a peer debriefer to validate that the analysis is accurate, authentic, and transparent. I used a graduate of the EDD program who was experienced in conducting qualitative research as my peer debriefer. The peer debriefer, examined all the raw data and reviewed the coding and thematic analysis of the data. The peer debriefer provided clear and concise feedback on the analyzed data to ensure that it aligned with the coding of the data, as well as monitored the reliability and validity components. The peer debriefer reviewed the transcript to "keep the inquirer honest" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 77). I reviewed the feedback from my peer debriefer to determine whether there are areas of concern that

needed to be reconsidered. I incorporated the peer debriefer's results in the data analysis section.

Triangulation

Creswell (2012) defined data triangulation as the process of verifying evidence from two or more sources of data. In this study, I triangulated the data I collected from three sources: employed newly hired teachers in their first, second, or third year of employment in the district, from elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools. Merriam (2009) stated that triangulation is the process of comparing and cross-checking data collected from individuals with different perspectives on a similar topic. I compared the data from the three sets of participants, which contributed to developing a report that was both credible and accurate.

Discrepant Cases

As the researcher, I was aware that discrepant cases may emerge during the study. In analyzing the data, or the process of refining the analysis, I discovered elements of the data or analysis that did not support the emerging themes and patterns. Since such discrepant cases occurred, to ensure the best possible results, I included the information in the data analysis section and allowed readers to draw their own conclusions.

Summary

In Section 3, I explained and justified the research methodology, which included the research design and approach. I included information about my role as a researcher, the context for my study, the protocol governing participants and ethical protections, and the procedures entailed in data collection and data analysis. In Section 4, I present the

results based on the findings from the data analysis. In Section 5, I conclude with

discussions, conclusions, recommendations, and direction for future research.

Section 4: Results

Introduction

The purpose of this research study was to achieve a deep and nuanced understanding of the professional experiences of newly hired teachers and how those experiences influenced them to leave or remain employed at the district. The findings will provide district leaders an understanding of and deeper insights into the professional experiences that influence newly hired teacher attrition or retention. The findings also could be used to inform the development of additional or revised district initiatives that are targeted to retain newly hired teachers. The findings from the data analysis of the study are presented in this chapter. The findings represented the perceptions of eight newly hired teachers in their first, second, or third year in the district, from elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools. The eight newly hired teachers described their professional experiences in the district, schools, and classrooms, and explained how these experiences influenced their attrition and/or retention.

Demographic Description of the Sample

The demographic factors such as gender, age range, grade levels, number of years in teaching, subject areas, years in the research district, teacher preparation programs and highest degree achieved for interview participants are presented in Table 2. The sample included 7 females and 2 males. Participants were between the ages of 25 and 55. The youngest participant had been teaching an elective subject for 1 year and the oldest had been teaching elementary education for 10 years. I assigned each participant a number ranging from 1 to 8 to protect his or her identity.

Table 2

Demographic Data for Teacher Participants

Participants	Gender	Age Range	Grade Level	Years in Teaching	Subject Area(s)	Years in District	Teacher Prep. Program	Highest Degree Achieved
1	F	31-40	Elem	16	ELA/SS	3	Trad	M.Ed.
2	M	31-40	Elem	12	Math/Sci	2	Alt	M.S.
3	F	50+	Elem	10	All	1	Trad	B.Ed.
4	F	31-40	Middle	10	Science	2	Alt	B.S.
5	F	25-30	Middle	1	Elective	1	Trad	MAT
6	F	25-30	Middle	1	Science	1	Trad	B.S.Ed.
7	M	50+	High	7	SPED	2	Trad	M.Ed.
8	F	31-40	High	5	Chem	3	Alt	B.S.

Interviews were conducted with newly hired teachers from elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools. I interviewed three participants who were in their first year, three participants in their second year, and two participants in their third year of employment in the district. I interviewed seven females and two males who taught in the fields of mathematics, science, language arts, special education, social studies, and an elective content. All participants held a bachelor's degree before entering the profession, four of the eight participants have a master's degree, three participants (3, 4, and 6) are currently enrolled in master's program, and one participant (1) has National Board Certification. Five participants (1, 3, 5, 6, and 7) completed their teaching programs in colleges and universities the traditional way, completing student teaching in middle schools and high schools. Three participants (2, 4, and 8) completed alternate pathways for their teaching certificate that included a teaching residency.

Findings

This research study was designed to understand the professional experiences of newly hired teachers and how those experiences influence them to leave or remain employed at the district. The interview questions were structured to elicit the candid perceptions of each interviewee. I used prompts and question restatements to encourage participants to thoroughly respond to each interview question. As a result, the interviews were personalized and fluid, which facilitated a low stress and casual phone or face-to-face interview that prompted thoughtful, straightforward responses and maximum participation. All interviews were audio-recorded. I transcribed three of the interviews and then hired a third party, who signed a confidentiality agreement, to assist with the transcriptions of the remaining audio-recorded interviews.

I read the transcriptions numerous times to identify patterns, themes and relationships among participants' perceptions. I open coded and patten coded each participant interview transcript and inputted the data into Microsoft Word and Excel files. Two major themes and seven subthemes were developed from the pattern codes (see Table 1).

The overall research question that was the focus of this qualitative research study was "What are the professional experiences of currently employed newly hired teachers and how do those experiences influence them to leave or remained employed at the district?" Based on the overall research question, I developed semistructured interview questions and conducted phone (Participants 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7) and face-to-face

(Participants 1 and 8) interviews with eight newly hired teachers from elementary, middle, and high schools.

Themes

Through analysis of pattern codes, two major themes and seven subthemes emerged during the data analysis. The two major themes were (a) factors that influenced newly hired teacher retention and (b) factors that influenced newly hired teacher attrition. The seven subthemes were (a) newly hired teachers value community with a supportive and collaborative atmosphere, (b) newly hired teachers value building relationships with their students, (c) how support programs meet newly hired teachers' needs, (d) newly hired teachers value transparency and accountability of administration, (e) below average academic achievement and negative behaviors of students were deterrents for newly hired teachers, (f) newly hired teachers' daily expectations, and (g) how support programs did not meet newly hired teachers' needs. An in-depth discussion of each theme and sub-theme are explored below.

Table 3

Themes and Subthemes Derived from the Transcribed Interview Data

Themes	Subthemes
1. Factors that influenced newly hired teacher retention	(1) Newly hired teachers value community with a supportive and collaborative atmosphere (2) Newly hired teachers value building relationships with their students (3) How support programs meet newly hired teachers' needs
2. Factors that influenced newly hired teacher attrition	(1) Newly hired teachers value transparency and accountability of administration (2) Below average academic achievement and negative behaviors of students were deterrents for newly hired teachers (3) Newly hired teachers' daily expectations (4) How support programs did not meet newly hired teachers' needs.

Theme 1: Factors that Influenced Newly Hired Teacher Retention

Three subthemes were categorized in the theme *factors that influenced newly hired teacher retention*. These subthemes were (a) newly hired teachers value community with a supportive and collaborative atmosphere, (b) newly hired teachers value building relationships with their students, and (c) how support programs meet newly hired teachers' needs.

Subtheme 1: Newly Hired Teachers Value Community with a Supportive and Collaborative Atmosphere

Reitman and Karge (2019) stated that newly hired teachers found colleagues to walk alongside and support them most helpful. They relied on and valued peer-to-peer

relationships that were beneficial. All eight newly hired teachers who were interviewed

described how they gained confidence and experienced levels of successes from being in

a supportive and collaborative school environment. The participants expressed the value

of having colleagues who appreciated their input regarding student discipline, curriculum

development, and classroom management strategies, as newly hired teachers in their

individual school settings. Participants were vocal about the many benefits they received

from having support inside and outside the classroom. Participants discussed the family-

type atmosphere they experienced, the bonds they shared with many of their colleagues

and the important collegial support. They discussed the personal assistance received from

colleagues in setting up their classrooms, receiving classroom supplies, frequent

supportive email messages, lesson planning, dealing with challenges with students,

communicating with parents, and understanding students' Individual Education Plans

(IEP). They talked about being a part of organized, mutually respectful teams, and

engaging in collaborative discussions and professional learning communities.

Participants 1, 2, 4, and 6 stated that they valued a school environment that offered a

supportive family atmosphere. For example, Participant 2 said,

> The first time I walked into the door, I felt the family atmosphere and it was
>
> contagious throughout the school. That definitely helps us as new teachers
>
> throughout the day. Having that calm familial presence and that serene
>
> environment is definitely something that I think is beneficial to all teachers.
>
> Participants 3, 5, 8, and 7 expressed strongly the bond they developed with

colleagues who taught the same subject, colleagues who were master teachers or veterans

and also other newly hired teachers. Reitman and Karge (2019) described that experience as one of appreciation for kind of help newly hired teachers received from their colleagues inside and outside of the professional environment. For example, Participant 3 stated,

> I am blessed to have been placed with a team of amazing women. We're close in the building and out of the building. We share everything. I've learned so much from them…each one of us brings something different to the teaching table…we each have our strengths and weaknesses. We really learn from each other. I love working with my dear friends.

Participant 8 expounded on collegial support being a positive experience that helped newly hired teachers feel valued. She stated that, "…most positive experience for a new teacher is working in a school environment where the teachers and all the staff are very supportive of each other and openly value your contribution."

Participants 3, 4, 7, and 1 talked about being a part of an organized team, feeling supported by the professionals in their school building, and having conversations with staff that yielded answers to the many questions newly hired teachers had that could not have been answered otherwise. For example, Participant 1 stated,

> I have asked questions inside and outside of my team…I feel like the school environment is filled with teachers that are supportive…it is the culture at my school. I have colleagues in my school that are seasoned veterans, and I feel like I can go to them and get the support I needed…just talking to them really helped

me get through whatever crisis I was experiencing…I got a lot of great advice

from them.

Participants 2, 4, 5, and 6 discussed being engaged in collaborative meetings and

communities that help them to become immersed into their school environment. For

example, Participant 6 said,

Being able to collaborate with the other teacher in my professional learning

community was great for me because it was my first-year teaching. Having that

support from her and others were amazing…lesson insights, how to do certain

labs, how to assess students' work…she was a great source of information. My

district supervisor was also supportive, I had regularly scheduled meetings with

him weekly…provided me with several online resources, and paper resources for

me to use in my classroom. So, I definitely felt like I was given a lot of resources

and support all around.

Reitman and Karge (2019) stated that new teachers who were provided with

support and resources, such as, lesson planning, phone calls, or emails to quickly address

concerns in the classrooms, classroom visits, guidance on documents, and so on

perceived themselves as successful in the professional setting. All participants' responses

revealed that having a sense of community in their school environment and being

engaged with colleagues daily had a positive effect on them. Newly hired teachers

benefitted from being on organized teams, having conversations and asking questions,

they appreciated feeling welcomed in their schools and feeling like a part of a family that

gave them a sense of belonging. They experienced formal and informal support that

allowed them to grow professionally and personally. Schuck, Aubusson, Buchanan,

Varadharajan and Burke (2018) stated that new teachers appreciated welcoming and

supportive colleagues and were more likely to develop confidence which eventually

empowered them to engage with and influence their professional settings. New teachers

valued friendly, and intentionally inviting colleagues that provided time to talk, and

shared ideas and resources that helped to ease their transition into the profession (Schuck

et al., 2018).

**Subtheme 2: Newly Hired Teachers Value Building Relationships with their
Students**

The eight participants discussed the value of building relationships with their

students. Participants explained that students were the reasons they became teachers, and

they discussed having real, open, and honest conversation with their students. They

described how they celebrated their students' successes and how their daily interactions

contributed to building strong relationships that fostered student engagement in the

teaching and learning environment. For example, Participant 5 stated,

> My students are literally the only reason I am a teacher. I am about working with
>
> the students daily, seeing their growth, seeing how they become great human
>
> beings and just develop their own ideas and perceptions of the world. That's what
>
> I enjoy. That's literally it.

Participants 1 and 2 talked about having open and honest conversations with their

students. "Building positive relationships with students can be rewarding. I'm real with

my students. I have real conversations. They really know that I care. It is important to

build that community in your classroom" (Participant 2). "I feel like this is the most valuable thing in education is building relationships with students. I really feel like that is a deciding factor when instructing students, I really do" (Participant 1).

Participants 3, 4, and 5 discussed that students in their classrooms remembered the content of the subject because of the relationship they had built with them. For example, Participant 4 stated,

When you build strong relationships with your students, you will hear students say…remember in her class, remember when we did this…do you remember that…that was so much fun. That's how I know students are engaged in the lesson because of the community that exists in my classroom. Providing that inspiration or even making a long-lasting memory with my students that they're going to still comment several weeks or months or years down the road is a huge motivation.

Participants 5, 6, 8, and 1 discussed how building relationships with their students that were reciprocal. For example, Participant 5 stated

Sometimes students are having a rough day or I'm having a rough day. They do little check-ins with you to make sure you're okay and I just love that. And then if I'm having a rough day, I can just be honest. The openness and honesty I share with my students are really eye-opening because they pick up on what you're dishing and so I really like that. And they just make you feel special, just every day, honestly. If it weren't for the students, I would just not be a teacher.

Participant 1 and 7 pointed out that building relationships with students can have a lasting impact. For example, Participant 1 stated,

I had a student who academically was just amazing. She's a beautiful writer, and does well in all her subjects. She is one of those kids that enjoy you, but they really don't need you. You give them enrichment work, but they really are ahead of the other kids, not just academically but socially. I had no idea that she felt like I was the best teacher that she ever had until she gave me a card. I was teaching in Trailer 33 and I used to always tell my students we're a family. In the card she said, no matter where I go, my heart will always be in Trailer 33.

The eight participants described their many stories about the students they taught and continued to teach. Participants discussed the value of getting to know their students, building relationships, and communities in their classrooms with students, having effective communication and connections, having relationships that foster openness and honesty among students and themselves, observing students becoming autonomous leaners and investing in student success. Participants repeatedly stated that building relationships with their students was the main reason they remained employed in schools and continued in the profession. Reitman and Karge (2019) stated that newly hired teachers were invested in building relationships with their students and that became an integral part of the professional growth. They (newly hired teachers) wanted to make a difference in the lives of their students and support their students' learning and academic achievements.

Subtheme 3: How Support Programs Meet Newly Hired Teachers' Needs

Support programs provided newly hired teachers a foundation to make meaningful educational and social impact in their schools (Reitman & Karge, 2019).

Support programs offered in the district were discussed extensively by the participants.

All participants talked about their varied experiences in completing the one year

induction program where they met together monthly which created a collaborative

community, having a mentor for their first three years in the district which helped

participants create a positive professional environment, and attending multiple onsite and

district professional development which provided participants with passionate and caring

professionals who were invested in their success in the classroom. Participant 2, 3, and 5

commended the initiatives offered in the district for newly hired teachers. For example,

Participant 2 stated,

> There were lots of initiatives offered in the district for us…a year-long induction
>
> program, had a mentor and attended sessions on curriculum development,
>
> classroom management, even as far as building relationships with your students.
>
> The district allowed us to get together and collaborate. They've been very
>
> supportive in the fact whatever you needed they were there for you…the district
>
> has supported us very well since we've been here so far.

Participants 1, 4, 5, 6, and 8 discussed having meaningful experiences with the district

offered support programs. For example, Participant 5 stated, "I liked the induction

program as I got to hear other new teachers' perspectives on what they are going through

and I got useful advice that was helpful."

Participants 5, 6, and 8 discussed the importance of networking with other newly

hired teachers at the year-long induction program proved rewarding for most of the

participants. The participants who had never taught before and were new to the district

found the induction program provided a variety of resources to be used in the classroom

setting that were most beneficial. For example, Participant 6 stated,

> At induction meetings, we were given online resources, and presenters shared
>
> with us the district's website, which had a lot of resources for new teachers. We
>
> were given paper resources, with helpful tips we could try out in our classrooms,
>
> and support from our district supervisors at some of these meetings helped us. It
>
> was all beneficial.

Participants 3, 5, and 7 stated that the induction program allowed newly hired teachers to

talk about their experiences in the profession in a safe space. For example, Participant 5

stated, "I feel like it was an open platform for new teachers to share what they are

experiencing at their different schools and say how they are feeling without any

judgement. I always left these sessions feeling better." Reitman and Karge (2019) stated

that newly hired teachers learning from each other and receiving resources in the

induction program provided them with skills, tools and techniques that were pivotal to

becoming effective educators and remaining in the profession.

Mentorship was another support initiative offered by the research district that

proved beneficial to the participants. All participants discussed how positive, accessible,

open, and supportive their mentors were in providing the help they needed. Participants 1,

2, 3, and 6 discussed the benefits of having successful mentor-mentee experiences in the

mentorship program. They explained how having effective mentors helped them become

acclimatized to their new schools. For example, Participant 6 stated,

I like my mentor. I see her a lot; she checks up on me all the time…I'm very

comfortable going to her and asking…questions. She makes the environment

comfortable as well...I think it's important for first year teachers to have a mentor,

because there's so much stuff that's overwhelming your first year, that having a

very good mentor, really counts. I think it's beneficial to have a great mentor

that's really supportive.

Participants 1, 2, 4, and 8 talked about their mentors effectively helping them navigate

their school's culture their first year in their schools. They discussed their appreciation

for having veteran mentors that were knowledgeable and candid. Mentors that validated

the challenges of teaching and helped them explore their options for the best results in

given situations. For example, Participant 2 stated,

My mentor was great. She has been in the school system, I want to say 15 years in

the district, very knowledgeable, has seen the regime change in the school many

times. She was very beneficial in helping me with lesson planning, classroom

management, meeting deadlines and understanding the culture of the school. She

was very helpful…kept it real with me at times, and I appreciated her candidness.

Mentoring and coaching need to be a systematic effort to help newly hired teachers

achieve a level of confidence and competence in order to experience career satisfaction

and success that lead to greater self-efficacy (Zugelder, 2019).

Professional development was another meaningful support initiative that all

participants discussed as helpful for them as newly hired teachers in the district.

Participants 3, 4, 5, 7, and 8 explained that they engaged in professional development that was extremely helpful in their content areas. For example, Participant 5 stated,

> At the beginning of the school year, on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, we went to a conference out of the district, and it was really great. It was a huge conference; there were a bunch of different meetings we could go to and talk to different people and I really enjoyed that. I attended a few more professional development workshops like that in my district which were beneficial.

Participants 1, 2, 8, 7, and 4 also participated in professional development workshops that supported them in the teaching and learning environment as newly hired teachers. For example, Participant 8 stated, "A lot of the professional development provided by the district at the beginning of the year were very useful and very informative. The PD that I engaged in opened my mind and helped me in my content area."

Based on the participants' perspectives of their experiences, the induction programs, mentorship, and professional development offered to newly hired teachers the support they needed to remain employed in the district. Reitman and Karge (2019) stated that teaching was an integral part of the wider educational community, and support programs belonged in that community. Support programs enhanced newly hired teachers' experiences by providing high-quality training that went above and beyond what is typically experienced in support programs.

Theme 2: Factors that Influenced Newly Hired Teacher Attrition

Four subthemes explained the *factors that influenced newly hired teacher attrition*. These subthemes were (a) newly hired teachers value transparency and accountability of administration, (b) below average academic achievement and negative behaviors of students were deterrents for newly hired teachers, (c) newly hired teachers' daily expectations, and (d) how support programs did not meet newly hired teachers' needs.

Subtheme 1: Newly Hired Teachers Value Transparency and Accountability of Administration

The eight participants discussed the importance of transparency and accountability of the administrators they have worked with and how not having either influenced their relationships, and the culture of their working environment. They talked about the lack of support from administrators that prevented them from building honest relationships with their administrators. Some participants explained experiencing fear of repercussions from their administrators on evaluations and the frustrations they felt no being able to create a bond with their administrators. Participants 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 expressed their frustrations, and moments of uncertainty about continuing in the profession when administration showed limited accountability regarding lack of student discipline support. Participants felt their administrators lost sight of the vision of their schools, and that some of the staff members did not feel supported or no longer trusted the leadership within the school. For example, Participant 6 stated,

…where I really needed it, for administration to come in and step up, I felt a lot of times the accountability was left more so on the teachers…you do your job to report an incident as the teacher, I feel like it would backfire, and the teacher was getting reprimanded instead…it was a little discouraging because sometimes, you feel like you're backed into a corner…there was an incident and we knew exactly who did it. It was reported to the school's administration, but nothing was ever done…the administration was more of why didn't you do this…why didn't you do that...which were discouraging and frustrating at times.

Participant 4 talked about an unresolved issue she experienced with her administration which is still a bother to her today. She felt that other new teachers should not have similar experiences like the ones she "survived through" without support. With one specific issue, she felt unsupported, and lost trust in the objectivity of her administrators, who sided with the parents and the students.

Participants 1, 3, 5, and 7 discussed how lack of transparency with administrators prevented them from building open and honest relationships with them. They described how not having supportive relationships with their administrators added to their apprehensions as newly hired teachers. For example, Participant 5 stated,

I don't feel like I had much support from my administrator…It feels like a constant battle…do you know when you can feel welcomed to talk to someone. I didn't feel that from my administrators…that was a huge struggle for me…I'm a person that if I don't feel comfortable with someone, I shut down…that typically happened with my administrators.

Participant 7 discussed his experiences with his administrators and the value of having

administrators who were supportive rather than critical. For example, he commented,

> I really feel like administrators can do more to support new teachers, so they feel
>
> that what they have to offer is valuable. I've had doors slammed in my face. I had
>
> evaluations where my administrator said, I don't think you're fit to be a
>
> teacher…which I said to the person at the time, I disagree with you. After my
>
> many experiences, I'm not going to be as open with administrators. I feel the
>
> administrators are there to evaluate me critically…and not to really encourage me
>
> to be better. I felt that way. I still feel that way.

Participants 6 and 4 talked about their frustrations and hesitation to discuss their

experiences with their administrators for fear of repercussions, especially concerning

their teacher observation evaluations. For example, Participant 6 stated,

> Administrators need to lessen the burden of teachers feeling like they're the ones
>
> that have to be accountable. I think a lot of new teachers get frustrated with that
>
> and it makes them a little fed up. Like if teachers are saying, I need help…and
>
> administrators are not providing the help that they need that's when we get the
>
> teachers that quit, or leave after a year or two.

Not having adequate support from administration can be a deterrent for newly

hired teachers to continue in the profession. Kutsyuruba and Walker (2020) stated that

when school administrators were not actively involved and supportive of their early

career teachers there were negative outcomes. The researchers found that when

administrators were invested in their new teachers' progress beyond recruiting, hiring,

placing new teachers, and providing summative evaluations, there were more positive

outcomes. The researchers also stated that studies have showed that direct or indirect

supportive behaviors of school administrators toward new teachers ultimately led to

higher new teacher retention and development (Kutsyuruba & Walker, 2020).

Subtheme 2: Below Average Academic Achievement and Negative Behaviors of

Students were Deterrents for Newly Hired Teachers

Students' misbehaviors not only hindered the effectiveness of instruction but also

impeded the opportunities for misbehaving students and their peers to learn (Scherzinger

& Wettstein, 2019). All eight participants described various student behaviors that

deterred them from wanting to continue in the profession. Students presented

misbehaviors in various ways. Some students disrupted the teaching and learning

environment to avoid completing academic tasks, some students acted out and did not

care about the class disruptions they caused because they would get the class credit

anyway, and participants observed the direct correlation between students' misbehaviors

and their academic achievements. For example, Participant 2 stated,

When you have a student that is constantly misbehaving it throws off your

instruction because now, you're giving your attention to someone whose aim is

really not to do the work, that's why he or she is misbehaving. When you think

about that, it disrupts 20 other children because our focus is now on this one child

that is misbehaving, so it throws off your instruction. It's huge, it's really huge.

Participant 6 discussed how students sometimes misbehave because they are

embarrassed of the fact that they cannot achieve certain academic goals due to certain

learning limitations. She stated that some students will sit in classrooms and misbehave because they do not want anyone know that they do not really know what is going on academically. She talked about how some of her students are from tough and challenging backgrounds, and the misbehaviors could represent her students trying to communicate their struggles. She does not excuse the students' misbehaviors and has gotten annoyed and discouraged as did her other non-tenured colleagues.

Participant 5 talked about the lack of effective consequences for misbehaviors. She discussed the need for effective disciplinary actions for misbehaving students when restorative practices do not work. She explained that having conversations with misbehaving students are vital, but they also need to be accountable for their inappropriate, disruptive, and disrespectful behaviors that hinder effective classroom instructions. Participant 5 stated that realistic consequences need to be implemented as schools should teach the pedagogy as well as life skills. She talked about her frustrations with classroom disruptions and the handling of misbehaving students, and discipline in the school, which does not support her classroom and professional expectations.

Participants 4, 5, and 6 discussed how below-average academic performances of their students compounded by misbehaviors did not motivate them to remain in the classroom or the profession. Participant 5 explained that students' academic accomplishments and misbehaviors sometimes "go hand in hand." She explained that it was a huge struggle for her when students do not behave according to school policy and she is unable to effectively deliver instructions in her content area. Participant 4 agreed with Participant 5 who expounded that the classroom environment can be a challenging

one. She stated when students display various behavioral issues, they are less likely to show academic growth and vice versa.

The correlation between below-average academic achievement and misbehaviors was evident in the experiences described by many participants. Participant 6 described her experiences with students' misbehaviors and learning achievements. For example, Participant 6 stated,

> That [below-average work and misbehaviors] get a little frustrating at times. That can become a burden as well. I noticed that a lot of my students are at low reading levels which play a huge part in their comprehension in class, and what they're able to do…you can see them struggling. I think it's an unfortunate situation because I feel like a lot of them are just pushed through the system, and we're left with a heavy burden of what to do with them…students are struggling academically, they tend to misbehave to avoid doing the work. I've given misbehaving students incentives, to try to get them to not act out, but it makes me hesitate, because in the real world you're not going to get an incentive for behaving appropriately. So, I try to find a balance with doing that, just so that kids don't always expect something when they do what they're supposed to do in the first place. It's hard.

An orderly classroom environment supports learning, responsible student behaviors, and academic achievement (Scherzinger & Wettstein, 2019). Participants discussed the need to have effective disciplinary actions support their classroom and professional expectations. They discussed the loss of instruction time and academic

achievements when students' misbehaviors were continuous, and not handled effectively by the school's administration. Participants explained that students' misbehaviors and low academic achievement were deterrents to continue in the profession. Boyd (2012) stated that many school systems lack a coherent structure of discipline, and teachers will experience problems with students' misbehaviors. Boyd explained that behavioral issues do not occur occasionally but hourly, daily, and everywhere. School administrations need to actively respond to students' misbehaviors in the classroom and everywhere in the school with a consistent, schoolwide, and effective disciplinary system. Because without such measures most teachers cannot meet their academic priorities in a learning environment deemed chaotic, unproductive, and dangerous (Boyd, 2012).

Subtheme 3: Newly Hired Teachers' Daily Expectations

Each participant described their daily expectations in the professional setting as overwhelming and daunting. The participants who had previous teaching experiences explained how they struggled with the required professional daily expectations, such as, lesson planning, gradebook, parent conferences, multiple meetings, and other unforeseen events, even though they have been teaching for years. Jones (2012) stated that when teachers are too overwhelmed, they cannot get excited about their job. New teachers are too busy with routines tasks, burdened with lesson planning, and worried about test scores to reflect on the lessons taught and make time for critical thinking and creativity. Participants 2, 4, and 6 discussed how they experienced many moments of being overwhelmed by their professional responsibilities, and how the strain of those responsibilities impacted their confidence as newly hired teachers. When asked about her

perceptions about professional responsibilities, Participant 4 stated that she was extremely overwhelmed and was constantly trying to "keep up" with all of the professional expectations. She often worked late at school and neglected some family duties when she brought schoolwork home with her in an effort to get all tasks completed. She discussed feelings of stress, incompetence, and whether she had chosen the "right" profession. Participant 2 talked about compartmentalizing and prioritizing when he became overwhelmed. He discussed feeling impending doom when he did not meet the required expectations or deadlines. He said being a newly hired teacher can be tough when professional responsibilities are not met.

Participant 6 discussed being extremely overwhelmed for months. For example, she stated,

> It was really overwhelming, from unknown abbreviations/acronyms, to you got to know this, you have to be at this meeting. I had to be at two meetings at the same time, you have to figure out how to put the grades in the grade book, how many points do I give on this worksheet? It was definitely overwhelming, and I struggled for a long while, for months trying to get the hang of it.

Participant 5 and 7 talked about experiencing confusion and feelings of being lost all the time. Participant 5 said she felt like she was in "survival mode" for months and did not understand why a profession she trained for had so many challenges. Participant 7 stated that he has always been excellent at whatever he did, and he never felt like an excellent teacher in his first year. He discussed feeling overwhelmed and never able "to keep his head above water" in the professional setting. He explained that whenever he felt like he

had made positive steps in the right direction in managing the daily expectations of the profession, he would feel a sense of dread. He stated that he had shared his feelings with other new teachers and they felt the same way. Participant 7 said it felt like a "Herculean effort every day to be super organized and to meet all the daily expectations."

Participant 3 and 8 described the professional and personal challenges they faced in the professional environment as newly hired teachers. Both participants felt burdened with the multiple meetings they had to attend along with completing their professional responsibilities at their schools. They talked about neglecting basic needs to fulfil their professional expectations. Participant 8 stated that it was "…hard to balance all the teacher expectations with what new teachers were required to do. It was overwhelming every day. When I get home, I am so worn out, it was hard to spend quality time with my family." Participant 3 added that having to attend too many meetings was not the best use of the new teachers' time. She stated that school administrators expected way too much from new teachers even though they had the training and made unrealistic assumptions about their capabilities in the teaching and learning environment.

Jones (2012) stated that new teachers' experiences of overwhelming feelings can lead to stress and frustrations, which eventually leads to burnout early in the profession. New teachers need to be provided with time to talk about their challenges and whatever difficulty they may be facing in the professional setting. New teachers need to be provided with additional resources so that they would not go about reinventing the wheel during their first year, while they are still learning to navigate the nuances of the profession.

Subtheme 4: How Support Programs Did Not Meet Newly Hired Teachers' Needs

All participants described their perceptions about support programs that were mandatory for them to attend as having some negatives. Each participant spoke about the challenges of being fully involved in the mandatory induction program, mentorship, and professional development programs that did not meet all their needs as newly hired teachers. Participant 4 and 5 described some aspects of the induction as a waste of time that could have been spent productively planning lessons or collaborating with colleagues. They felt frustrated to have to attend meetings with nonrelated or farfetched topics that could have been handled in an email as opposed to sit down meetings after seven hours in the classroom. Participant 5 and 8 would prefer to have flexibility in schedule and optional interactive sessions instead of requiring all newly hired teachers to attend one monthly meeting on topics not specific to their needs. For example, Participant 8 stated, "I felt that those meetings did not always have to be in person. It's very stressful and there's no flexibility. To be honest, when I was a first-year teacher, every day is kind of a struggle."

Participants 1, 2, 3, and 7 who had previous teaching experience found the topics somewhat repetitive and uninteresting. For example, Participant 7 stated, "Half the time I'd rather just have worked on the paperwork requirements, get those goals and objectives written instead of sitting in another meeting. Especially in the evening when I was worn out from the day anyway." Participant 3 complained about the length of time of the induction meetings after working 10-hour days. She would rather not sit for 2 to 3 hours

to be lectured to on a topic that was not relevant to her immediate experience in the classroom.

According to Zaharis (2019), induction programs must reflect high quality and be intentional. The process needs to be comprehensive, coherent, and sustainable for new teachers. It should be organized by the school district with the intention to train, support, and retain new teachers in the profession. Induction programs need to be complemented by other support programs and should not be viewed as a stand-alone or crash course. Carroll (2007) stated that effective induction programs bring new teachers, colleagues, and leaders together in a collaborative environment that leads to a professional community riddled with positive change.

Participants talked about their experiences with having mentors that were not very effective in their first, second, or third year. Participant 7 stated that he needed a mentor who was willing to be available to answer the numerous questions he had in his first year. For example, Participant 7 stated,

> I think you have to have a mentor that's similar to you, that will be somebody you can trust. Somebody you can go to. I really think the district needs several professionals whose job is just to work with new teachers, to meet with them as often as possible and just to be available. I never felt like I had anybody that was purely dedicated. I felt like my mentors are always overwhelmed with all the responsibilities they have and I didn't want to overburden them. I know they had things to do but as a new teacher, I needed to have somebody that I felt like know

that his or her whole job was to make sure that I succeeded. I didn't really feel

that as a new teacher.

Participant 8 talked about how the mentorship program needed to be more flexible and

shorter than three years. She described the program as overwhelming and stressful. For

example, Participant 8 stated,

I understand the purpose of the mentor program, but I think three years is just

overall too much. I think the first year was enough. Do the first couple months

where you meet monthly with all the new teachers in the district and then after

that make it where you meet weekly with the people in your school. So maybe do

a combo of the first two years in one year and leave it at that. Keep it simple

because even though those things are helpful and they're meant to be helpful, they

tend to be stressful because they're a requirement. And so, I am in meetings

instead of getting my grades done or spending time with my family. Overall, I am

appreciative of those supports I just wish it was more flexible.

Participant 3 discussed the incompatibility between herself and her mentor. She discussed

that her mentor did not share grade level, subject area, and was not familiar with specific

curriculum demands. She described her mentor as a veteran with a wealth of experience

but did not meet her specific needs as a newly hired teacher. She talked about the

administrator assigning this particular mentor to a group of newly hired teachers as an

experiment to try and improve the mentorship program in the school. Participant 3 stated

that the experiment failed, as neither herself nor her colleagues assigned to this mentor

had a rewarding first year as mentees in their school. Reitman and Karge (2019) stated

that the mentor-mentee relationship should create a positive effect and develop renewed perspectives for the mentee, while the experience should validate the knowledge and skills of the mentor.

Participant 5 discussed being placed with a mentor who did not care about being her mentor, which she described as quite unnerving. She described her entire first year as one she "survived" and would never want to repeat. She discussed not knowing who her mentor was for the first 2 months of the school year. She had to speak with her administrator when she realized that all the other newly hired teachers were assigned a mentor. It became uncomfortable for her when asked at induction meetings how her relationship with her mentor was progressing and she had nothing positive to report. Because of her first interaction with her mentor she said she avoided him or her the entire first year. In her own words, she stated,

> I didn't even know who my mentor was the first two months of school. The first
> conversation I had with my mentor, this is what the person said, I am a hands-off
> mentor. I won't talk to you unless you have a question. So basically, the person is
> saying, if I need help, I can ask someone else. That was our conversation and
> from there I was like, I'm not going to have support. There is no help here. I
> didn't even talk to the person, honestly. From that conversation, I could see that
> the person's interest in the program was monetary, and not to help actual people.

According to Zaharis (2019), new teachers want friendships, professional ideas, support, respect from their mentors, and to be seen as emerging professionals. They want mentors to help them understand how to build positive and effective relationships with

their students and their families, how to set up an inviting classroom, and create

classroom expectations. New teachers want mentors with patience, flexibility, to be good

listeners, confident, and possess excellent communication skills with a sense of humor

(Zaharis, 2019).

Professional development programs were the third component of the support

programs offered by the research district to aid newly hired teachers. All participants

expressed mixed perceptions of the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of various

professional development programs they were mandated to attend. Participants talked

about some of the workshops being irrelevant to their content area and lacking audience

engagement and interaction. Other participants discussed the length of time spent at the

workshops that did not add to their professional growth and development. For example,

Participant 3 stated,

> PD stands for professional detainment because we are just sitting there, hearing
>
> somebody talk, and they're not trying to get you to understand or engage in the
>
> discussion. Most times, it's a teacher teaching new teachers…I feel like if some of
>
> these professional development leaders/teachers were in a classroom and they
>
> taught their students the way they ran PDs, there is no way they would be able to
>
> engage students in their lesson, there's no way. I sat almost 3 hours listening to
>
> lectures that I did not benefit from at all because it was required.

According to Zaharis (2019), school systems and their leaders face the problem of losing

their newly hired teachers during the first 3 to 5 years of their service. In order for this

trend to be reversed, leaders and stakeholders need to develop high-quality support

programs, specifically geared toward newly hired teachers to decrease the attrition rate, and increase the effectiveness and retention of these teachers. Induction, mentorship, and professional development programs should be well-designed to support new teachers beyond their first years of being in the profession.

Discrepant Cases

In analyzing the data, or the process of refining the analysis, I discovered elements of the data analysis that did not align or support the findings or results. During the data analysis, all the participants discussed and communicated their perceptions on their experiences in the professional setting as newly hired teachers. Participants described their experiences with colleagues, administrators, students, and support programs. However, I recognized discrepant data from Participant 3's interview transcript that involved a conversation about lack of parent participation and communication, which was a major deterrent for her in the profession. The participant stated that having all stakeholders' involvement, including parental support would assist her to remain employed in the profession. The data were unrelated to the research question but relevant to be mentioned in the discussion.

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Evidence of Quality

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This qualitative research study was conducted with objectivity, and the best possible accuracy, to ensure that the credibility of the findings was maintained throughout. I conducted and collected the interview data, transcribed 3 interviews and hired a third party, who signed a confidentiality clause, to complete the other transcriptions of the interview recordings. I followed the required protocol outlined by

the university before I began the data collection process. I filed the appropriate paperwork with Walden University's IRB and obtained approval to begin face-to-face or phone interviews. I established and maintained honest working relationships with my participants throughout the data collection and data analysis processes. I described the steps involved in the data collection process via email before the face-to-face or phone interviews and I also reiterated verbally the confidentiality and interview protocol with each participant on the day of his or her interview. The participants and I also discussed the positives of the study for the research site, and how their participation in the study may affect them.

To demonstrate validity and reliability of the data analysis, three methods were employed. The methods used were rich, thick descriptions, peer debriefing, and triangulation. These methods were selected as they are often used in qualitative research (Creswell, 2012). I described these three methods in Section 3 of the study. As the researcher, I ensured the trustworthiness of the data by employing certain criteria. These criteria entailed credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Lincoln and Guba (1985) stated that there should be truth in the research findings, confidence that the researcher has correctly interpreted the data, results or findings may be transferable to other contexts, findings should be supported by the data, and stable over a period of time.

Section 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction

I designed a qualitative research study to achieve a deep and nuanced understanding of the professional experiences of newly hired teachers and how those experiences influenced them to leave or remain employed at the district. One broad research question guided the research study:

What are the professional experiences of currently employed newly hired teachers and how do those experiences influence them to leave or remain employed at the district?

The participants were either brand new teachers or newly hired teachers who had previous teaching experience in other school districts. I selected a representative sample from elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools. Participants had to be involved or experienced the district-designed support programs, namely, the 1-year induction program, the 3-year mentorship program, and on or offsite professional development programs. I conducted face-to face-and phone interviews using semistructured interview questions that intentionally invited interviewees to express themselves honestly and openly and afforded the researcher the opportunity to ask follow-up or probing questions. Semistructured questions provided rich and descriptive information that was key to answering the research question (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Two major themes and seven subthemes emerged from the data analysis of this qualitative research study. The themes and subthemes were as follow: (a) factors that influenced newly hired teacher retention and (b) factors that influenced newly hired teacher attrition.

The seven subthemes were (a) newly hired teachers value community with a supportive and collaborative atmosphere, (b) newly hired teachers value building relationships with their students, (c) how support programs meet newly hired teachers' needs, (d) newly hired teachers value transparency and accountability of administration, (e) below average academic achievement and negative behaviors of students were deterrents for newly hired teachers, (f) newly hired teachers' daily expectations, and (g) how support programs did not meet newly hired teachers' needs.

Interpretation of Findings

The findings of my research study revealed that the participants experienced various forms of support from colleagues, and from the district-designed support programs created to retain newly hired teachers and decrease the number of new teachers who leave on or before 5 years. All eight participants discussed the value of having collegial support for the first few years in the classroom, they described the connections they shared with their students, and their active involvement in induction, mentorship, and professional development programs. Participants talked about the need to have transparency, accountability and support from their administrators, the deterrent of students' misbehaviors and below-average achievement, being overwhelmed with the daily expectations in the profession, and the desire for needs-based support initiatives to assist them to become acclimatized to the teaching and learning environment.

The findings of my study revealed that all participants appreciated having colleagues who were willing to support and help them get accustomed to the culture of their new schools. They described the selflessness of most of their colleagues who were

willing to help them set up their classrooms, assist them with curriculum resources, and provided them answers to the many questions they had. The participants talked about feeling a part of a school family where they engaged in professional, as well as social interactions with their colleagues. All participants discussed being involved in professional learning communities and being commended for making valuable and worthwhile contributions to the teaching and learning environment. Participants stated that they benefited immensely from having collegial friendships as they felt supported when they faced challenges in the classroom setting.

The findings of my study revealed that the participants valued building real and rewarding connections with their students. They discussed having open and honest conversations with their students which fostered positive student engagement in their classrooms. All participants talked about creating strong communities in the classroom focused on teaching the whole child. They described establishing rapport with their students that motivated students to meet academic and classroom expectations. Participants stated that they chose to become educators because of their love for the students and they wanted to make a difference in the profession. All participants stated that it was rewarding to observe their students become autonomous learners. All participants shared many endearing stories and teachable moments of their students in the classroom with enthusiasm and passion. One participant commented that students made her a better teacher.

The findings of my study revealed that the participants benefited from the support programs and initiatives provided by their district. They stated that aspects of the

induction, mentorship, and professional development programs helped to immerse them into the culture of the district and their schools. Participants talked about receiving electronic and paper copies of resources in their content area, as well as classroom management strategies along with "getting to know you" activities for the first week of school. They discussed having mentors that were resourceful, knowledgeable, and available to assist their transition into their schools and classrooms. Participants discussed that the induction program fostered collaboration and networking among new teachers in the district. Participants stated that the mentorship program afforded them the opportunity to work alongside a veteran or master teacher for their first three years. They discussed that they appreciated being treated like a colleague who could make valuable contributions to the professional setting. Participants described their involvement in various onsite or district required professional development workshops that proved insightful and useful.

The findings of my study revealed that participants would benefit from having the support of their schools' administration. Participants discussed feeling disconnected from their schools' leaders as they see themselves as novices and not comfortable to have open and honest communication with their administrators. A few participants stated that they felt anxious to have conversations with their administrators and tried to avoid such meetings when possible. Many participants described feeling a lack of transparency and accountability, specifically with student discipline and felt blamed for their students' misbehaviors, and their classroom management strategies, or lack of, were questioned by their administration. Some participants talked about feeling targeted by their

administrators when they did not meet the administrations' expectations and they felt that the expectations were unrealistic for new teachers who were brand new to the profession or new to the district. Many participants spoke about feeling intimidated by their administrators during the teacher evaluation process and felt that their administrators evaluated them on the years in the profession as opposed to the implementation and execution of their lessons and interactions with their students. Participants discussed the need to feel connected and supported by the administrators in order to become successful teachers in the profession.

The findings of my study revealed that the participants experienced moments of frustrations when students' misbehaviors prevented effective classroom instructions. Participants discussed their limitations in dealing with students' misbehaviors based on school policies and disciplinary regulations. Participants explained that the many inappropriate, disrespectful, and disruptive behaviors demonstrated by students interrupted the academic flow in the teaching and learning environment. Most participants talked about administrators mishandling of students' misbehaviors, or the lack of effective disciplinary consequences for students' misbehaviors. They stated that due to the lack of effective disciplinary measures there were little or no student accountability for their behaviors. Participants described the correlation between students' misbehaviors and below-average academic achievements which compounded the classroom environment and made it more challenging for new teachers. Participants complained about loss of instruction time due to students' misbehaviors which affected their academic growth and content mastery. Participants stated that a coherent structure

of discipline and complementary school policies can support new teachers' classroom management strategies and professional expectations for their students. Participants said that they believed that if students' misbehaviors were managed then they would eventually become better students and the possibility for increases in academic growth.

The findings of my study revealed that the participants felt overwhelmed by the daily expectations of the profession which impacted their confidence as newly hired teachers. The participants explained their struggles with the required professional daily expectations that limited their abilities to reflect on best practices. Participants discussed being so busy with routines or tasks that they did not have time for constant infusion of creativity and critical thinking into their lessons, which is sometimes compounded when they had to teach to standardized tests that had its own set of requirements. Participants described bringing home school work in an effort to complete their professional responsibilities, which impeded quality family time. Participants stated that they were still unable to complete or fell behind some of these tasks anyway. They talked about struggling to meet multiple deadlines and prepare for daily classroom instructions while still at school. Participants talked about having feelings of impending doom, confusion, incompetence, being in "survival mode," when they were unable to meet their professional responsibilities. Participants stated that they felt that their administrators and supervisors had lofty expectations for them (new teachers) because they assumed that they have had the educational training and the certification, but participants felt they also had unrealistic assumptions about their capabilities as newly hired teachers in the classrooms. Participants, as newly hired teachers, discussed the need to have specialized

schedules for at least the first 3 years in the profession. For example, one participant

described that schedule as not having classes with all the misbehaving students, students

with Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPs) or students with Individual Education Plans

(IEPs) until they (new teachers) have had additional training in those areas. The

participant also stated that new teachers should be provided with "need to know"

resources so that they don't have to create their own. They (new teachers) know they

cannot dictate their schedules but having minor adjustments will help them as they

become more acclimatized to and immersed in their professional responsibilities in the

teaching and learning environment.

Lastly, the findings of my study revealed that all of the participants discussed that

aspects of the support programs and initiatives offered by the district need to be improved

in order to increase newly hired teachers' retention. Participants described some of the

support initiatives such as the predesigned induction meetings and professional

development workshops as burdensome and redundant that did not meet their

professional needs. Participants stated that some of the presenters who were selected to

share their expertise in their specialized content area utilized the lecture method that did

not interact or engage the audience (new teachers). Participants discussed the inflexibility

and timing of the induction meetings that were scheduled for late evenings for 2 to 2.5

hours after they had completed their work day, and although it was scheduled once a

month, participants thought that it would have been more feasible to add online

components to the program to eliminate the 45-minute drive within traffic to sit through a

2-hour lecture. Participants explained that some of the topics discussed in the induction

meetings and some of the training received through the professional development

workshops were nonrelated or farfetched and not what they needed to assist them in the

professional setting. Some participants discussed having minor problems with aspects of

the mentorship program where their mentors were not accessible to assist them with their

professional needs. Participants stated that they needed mentors who shared the same

content area, grade level, and planning time to foster a more meaningful mentor-mentee

relationship for their first year.

I conducted this research study to answer one broad research question about

newly hired teachers and their attrition and/or retention. The interview data collected,

transcribed, and analyzed produced two major themes and seven subthemes that provided

answers to the research question. All themes and subthemes were discussed in Section 4.

Research Question: What are the professional experiences of currently employed

newly hired teachers and how do those experiences influence them to leave or

remain employed at the district?

This research question was answered with two major themes and seven

subthemes. The themes were as follow: (a) factors that influenced newly hired teacher

retention and (b) factors that influenced newly hired teacher attrition. The seven sub-

themes were: (a) newly hired teachers value community with a supportive and

collaborative atmosphere, (b) newly hired teachers value building relationships with their

students, (c) how support programs meet newly hired teachers' needs, (d) newly hired

teachers value transparency and accountability of administration, (e) below average

academic achievement and negative behaviors of students were deterrents for newly hired

teachers, (f) newly hired teachers' daily expectations, and (g) how support programs did not meet newly hired teachers' needs.

Based on the findings, participants stated that they needed to be treated as valuable contributors in a supportive and family-themed atmosphere in the professional setting. They wanted to positively impact the lives of their students through their daily interactions. Participants discussed the need for support, transparency, and accountability from their administration. They talked about becoming despondent with students' misbehaviors and below average academic performance. Participants expressed being overwhelmed by some of the required daily expectations related to the profession and the need to bring school work home with them regularly to meet their deadlines. Participants described the many positives and negatives associated with the district-designed support programs and initiatives and the need for improvements in specific aspects of the program.

The conceptual framework for this qualitative research study was the concept of teacher turnover as developed by Ingersoll (2001). Ingersoll stated that "organizational characteristics and conditions of schools" (p. 499) influenced teacher turnover and job satisfaction. This conceptual framework was validated with the findings derived from the participants' discussion throughout the research study. Participants described being overwhelmed by their professional responsibilities. The research showed that working conditions played a role in newly hired teacher attrition or turnover as job dissatisfaction in the working environment helped them to decide to leave the profession (Greenlee & Brown, 2009; Kukla-Acevedo, 2009; Lynch, 2012; Wang, 2007). Participants stated that

due to the various job stressors such as students' misbehaviors and below-average academic performance, they may reconsider continuing in the profession. According to the research, job stressors, such as lack of student motivation and student disciplinary problems were other factors related to new teacher attrition (Perrachione, Rosser, & Petersen, 2008). Participants expressed the need to have administrative support, transparency, and accountability. Based on the research, newly hired teachers reported that one of the major factors that influenced their decision to leave the teaching profession was lack of adequate administrative support (Certo & Fox, 2002; Ingersoll, 2003; Ingersoll, 2004; Ingersoll, Merrill, & May, 2012). Participants discussed the need for improvement in aspects of the district-designed support programs. Researchers stated that mentoring or support programs provided newly hired teachers with "packages" or "bundles" that were often ineffective and did not influence the teachers' decisions to remain in the profession (Corbell, Osborne, & Reiman, 2010; Leimann, Murdock, & Waller, 2008; Lynch, 2012; Oliver, 2009; Parker, Ndoye, & Scott, 2009).

Ingersoll (2001) stated that improvement in organizational conditions, which include an increase in new teacher support from the administration of the schools, a decrease in student disciplinary problems, improvement in support programs would contribute to a decrease in new teacher turnover, which would diminish staffing problems and eventually aid student academic performance. Ingersoll (2001) stated that making deliberate changes to how new teachers are immersed into the profession would be beneficial and would decrease teacher turnover but would take time to be fully realized.

Implications for Social Change

According to many researchers, a key path towards minimizing teacher attrition lay in the recruitment of qualified and committed educators who were well prepared to take on the diversity, challenges, and rigor of the modern classroom (Burke et al., 2013; Greenlee & Brown Jr., 2009; Sullivan, Johnson, & Simons, 2019). This research study focused on achieving a deep and nuanced understanding of the professional experiences of newly hired teachers and how those experiences influenced them to leave or remain employed at the district. The findings from this study provided the local school district or research site with pertinent information that will lead to positive social change. This change would involve transforming overall district and school support for newly hired teachers, improving the status quo, and guiding future research. This transformation has the potential to increase the retention rate of newly hired teachers, expand their professional experiences, and improve student achievement.

Recommendations for Action

Teaching is a profession where newly hired teachers are required to perform tasks at a level similar to that of veteran teachers. Hence, districts need to provide support initiatives for newly hired teachers critical to their success and the success of their students (Zaharis, 2019). Based on the findings of my research study, I recommend the following actions.

Recommendation 1

I recommend that newly hired teachers be provided with multiple opportunities to learn from experts. Newly hired teachers should complete several observations of veteran

or master teachers throughout their first year in the profession and be mentored by them as well. Cuddapah and Burtin (2012) stated that new teachers need to observe high-quality veteran teachers and receive observation and feedback from them. The researchers discussed that new teachers wanted opportunities to talk formally and informally with veteran educators.

In learning from these master or veteran teachers, newly hired teachers will receive guidance and coaching on instructional strategies to use to teach their content areas in meaningful and age-appropriate ways. New teachers need to learn how to deliver their subject matter with expertise and passion to their students in the teaching and learning environment to their students (Cuddapah & Burtin, 2012; Zugelder, 2019).

New teachers could learn from their veteran colleagues the logistics of teaching, from designing an intentionally inviting classroom to creating and implementing effective lessons, and setting up behavior management systems (Cuddapah & Burtin, 2012).

Recommendation 2

I recommend that newly hired teachers receive adaptive versions of the support programs or initiatives offered by the district. For example, newly hired teachers with previous teaching experiences should be afforded the opportunity of choice to attend at least 50% of the induction meetings designed by the district instead of mandating that they attend all sessions.

The district leaders should issue surveys periodically throughout the year to identify "needs" areas for newly hired teachers and provide professional development training in these areas. The district could also design an online component, for example, a

discussion board, of the support program to decrease newly hired teacher travel to physical locations. Zaharis (2019) stated that early-intervention strategies implemented in support programs have led to improved practices in teaching and successful new teacher retention.

Recommendation 3

I recommend that newly hired teachers be assigned "modified" schedules their very first year in the profession. Assigning newly hired teachers schedules that do not include misbehaving students on behavior intervention plans, or too many students with individualized education plan, and if possible smaller classroom sizes, 25 students or less, could help new teachers gradually immerse into the professional setting. Ingersoll (2012) stated that new teachers "tend to end up in the most challenging and difficult classroom and school assignments akin to a trial by fire" (p. 47). Hence, assigning newly hired teachers a manageable schedule in their first year may help them to feel less overwhelmed in the profession in their early years.

Newly hired teachers should also be afforded time to reflect on their practice, to think about what has happened in the classroom and consider implications for future practice (Cuddapah & Burtin, 2012). This reflection time involves reexamining experiences and looking at the evidence to enhance his or her personal growth over time (Reitman & Karge, 2019).

I will provide a two-page summary of the findings of the research study to the district's Department of Strategic Planning and Communication which is responsible for providing the support programs and initiatives for newly hired teachers. I will offer to

describe the findings of my study, if required. I will encourage the district's leadership team to amend aspects of the support programs based on my recommendations and the description of the findings.

Recommendation for Further Study

After conducting this research study, I have the following recommendations for further studies. I recommend that researchers develop a statewide quantitative study that issues surveys and questionnaires to newly hired teachers on factors that influence attrition and retention. I recommend that studies be developed statewide to understand or learn about specific support programs or initiatives that are effective to decrease newly hired teacher attrition and increase their retention.

Summary

The purpose of this qualitative study was to achieve a deep and nuanced understanding of the professional experiences of newly hired teachers and how those experiences influenced them to leave or remain employed at the district. The school district that was the research site has experienced a higher rate of attrition that their neighboring districts. The research district has provided predesigned and structured professional development and other support programs geared toward lessening newly hired teacher attrition. Despite these support programs or initiatives, newly hired teachers left within 3 years, and some have left during the school year which interrupted the continuity and delivery of instruction. I conducted a qualitative research study to gain deeper understanding of newly hired teachers' perceptions of their experiences in the profession in their first 3 years. The findings of my study revealed that newly hired

teachers need to feel supported by colleagues and administration in the professional

setting. They need to feel confident and competent in the classroom, and need to have

mentors who shared content and grade level, along with being open and helpful to them

academically, and help them socially navigate the nuances of the cultures of their

schools. Newly hired teachers stated that they valued the connections they made and the

positive impact they had in the lives of their students. They discussed that some aspects

of the support programs and initiatives provided by the district were beneficial while

some aspects needed improvement. The findings indicated that newly hired teachers

appreciated the successes they experienced in the profession, namely, the collegial and

mentor support, interactions with their students, and aspects of the support programs,

while they needed help with students' misbehaviors, administrative support with

transparency, and improvement in parts of the support programs. Reitman and Karge

(2019) stated that newly hired teachers must be provided with support from their first day

in the profession until they are able to demonstrate that they have achieved confidence

and competence. Newly hired teachers will remain in the profession when time and effort

are planned into their professional development based on research and individualized

support and other support initiatives are consistent with the vision of the district (Reitman

& Karge, 2019). It is important for research to continue to be done in newly hired teacher

attrition and retention in order to decrease the attrition rate and increase the retention rate

of new teachers in public schools.

Over the past 10 years, I have learned how to design and conduct a qualitative

research study on a topic that is current, one that affects my local school district, and one

that I am passionate about. The development of this research study has given me the opportunity to conduct extensive research, synthesize literature, analyze, and evaluate data that related to the attrition and retention of newly hired teachers in public schools. Conducting this research study increased my knowledge of the factors that influenced newly hired teachers' attrition and retention and provided findings that can affect positive social change and increase retention rates of newly hired teachers. I am now equipped with information that I will share with my research site leadership team on how to use the district-designed support programs and initiatives to meet the needs of newly hired teachers for the first 3 years in the district in order to retain their professional services. With this new information, the research district will be able to decrease their newly hired teacher attrition rate, increase the retention rate, and maintain the continuity and uninterrupted flow of instruction for students. Being a teacher leader, a scholar-practitioner, and a recently trained mentor/coach, I am now able to provide the research district with professional development trainings/workshops on effective support programs and initiatives for newly hired teachers. The conclusions of the study confirm Ingersoll's (2001) findings that decreasing newly hired teacher turnover by improving organizational support and school conditions were better solutions than continual cycles of new teacher recruitment.

In conclusion, the ultimate goal of this qualitative research study was to understand the perceptions of newly hired teachers' experiences in the profession for their first 3 years and how to retain them beyond those years to become highly qualified, confident, and competent experienced teachers in the profession.

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Appendix A: Interview Protocol

1. What have you experienced that led you to feel like a valued employee in this school district? (Ask the participant for more explanation and or continue to probe for more information).

2. How could the district make you feel like a valued employee? (Ask the participant for more explanation and or continue to probe for more information).

3. In what ways has the district provided support and resources to help you grow as a newly hired teacher? (Ask the participant for more explanation and or continue to probe for more information).

4. In what ways has the district not provided support and resources to help you grow as a newly hired teacher? (Ask the participant for more explanation and or continue to probe for more information).

5. What are some of the positive experiences you have had as a newly hired teacher? (Ask the participant for more explanation and or continue to probe for more information).

6. What are some of the negative experiences you have had as a newly hired teacher? (Ask the participant for more explanation and or continue to probe for more information).

7. What personnel or resources at your school have helped you feel supported? (Ask the participant for more explanation and or continue to probe for more information).

8. How do school administration and colleagues support you as a newly hired teacher?

9. What makes you an integral part of your school? How does your school make you feel like an integral contributor? How does your school help you to become integrated into the faculty?

10. What are your perceptions of your students at your school in terms of their behavior and academic achievement?

11. What have been your experiences with daily expectations? (Parent conferences, grade book, other multiple documents you need to complete, deadlines, lesson planning, classroom management, PLC, department and faculty meetings).

12. During the past year have you considered leaving your current school or the teaching profession? Why or why not? (Ask the participant for more explanation and or continue to probe for more information).

13. Explain specific factors that would lead you to remain employed in this school district?

14. What experiences have you had that made you consider leaving your school, the district or the teaching profession? (Ask the participant for more explanation and or continue to probe for more information).

15. As a newly hired teacher what were your experiences with the mentoring process?

16. In what ways did the mentoring relationship support you professionally?

17. As a newly hired teacher, what were your experiences with the induction program?

18. As a newly hired teacher what were your experiences with the professional development programs?

19. Describe how the professional development programs helped you to develop as a professional.

20. What recommendations would you make to improve the present support programs offered by the district for newly hired teachers?

21. What other support could the district offer to assist you and or retain your professional/teaching services for 3 or more years?

22. What other comments would you like to add about your experiences?