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Novice Teachers' Experiences of Success in a Mentoring Relationship at the Secondary Level

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2019

Abstract

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by

Felicia R. Roberson

MA, Lesley University, 2005

BS, University of Tennessee at Martin, 1989

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

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February, 2019

Abstract

Many new teachers in the United States leave the profession within 3 to 5 years of service. School district leaders often fall short in their efforts to efficiently mentor novice teachers and examine the novice teachers' perspectives of effective mentoring relationships. The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to examine novice teachers' mentoring relationships during the critical first year. The conceptual framework was Bandura's self-efficacy theory, a tenet of which is that people believe in their ability to attain certain goals if they possess self-efficacy. The guiding research questions focused on what roles mentoring relationships play in the first year of teaching, what their impacts are on novice teachers remaining in the profession, and how the choice of mentor affects the outcome of the mentoring relationship. A purposeful homogenous sample of 6 Grade 9 and 10 novice teachers who were also involved in mentoring relationships with experienced teachers was used. Data were collected through semi structured interviews and a group observation during an administrative support meeting for new teachers. Relationship and social code analysis of data followed an open coding process to identify categories and themes. The key findings were that participants rely on professional and emotional support; however, age and path of certification dictated mentoring needs. A positive mentoring relationship inspired novice teachers in the study to become mentors themselves. Study findings were the basis for the creation of a staff development for veteran teachers who are chosen as mentors. This study may bring about positive social change by bringing awareness of what makes a productive mentoring relationship, which in turn may positively affect student achievement through teacher retention.

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Dedication

First, I give honor to God. It is by Him, through Him, and because of Him that this was even possible. When I started this journey, life decided to throw me some tough hits. It was my faith that kept my head above water, and my resolve to finish the race that was set before me. All in all, this doctoral study is dedicated to my deceased parents, Daniel and Carrie Riggs, who themselves only finished the seventh grade, but who raised me to value the opportunity that a good education could give me. I will always remember your words, "don't be like us; go farther." Additionally, I would like to dedicate this study to my two children, Terry Jr. and Joi. Your belief in me, as well as your encouragement, is matchless. I love you all.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Dr. Antoinette Myers for being the motivating factor I needed to finish this process despite all that life was throwing at me. I could not have done this without you. Thank you, Dr. Maryann Leonard, for your feedback and support in this process, as well. To my family and friends, thank you for every encouraging words, prayers, and well wishes. I love you all.

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Section 1: The Problem

The Local Problem

The Center for Educator Recruitment, Retention, and Advancement (CERRA) is

the oldest and most established organization for teacher recruitment in the United States

(CERRA, 2016). According to CERRA's 2016 annual report, 449 teaching positions in a

southeastern state in the United States were still vacant in the month of October 2016. Of

the 5,300 schools in the state that reported unfilled positions, 39% of the positions were

from teachers who left within the first 1-5 years of service, and 14% were from teachers

who resigned from the profession following the first year of service (CERRA, 2016). As

teachers leave the profession, districts within the state are increasingly finding it difficult

to fill these vacancies (L. Silvernail, personal communication, July 28, 2016). This

problem is also a national one; as Gallant and Riley (2014) noted, the number of U.S.

teachers who leave the profession continues to climb. Lack of qualified, properly trained

teachers in classrooms may pose problems with student achievement and discipline,

according to Gallant and Riley (2014). High attrition may impact new teachers gaining

efficacy and competence in classroom management and mastery of content.

New teachers require a substantial induction process to remain in the profession.

A case study conducted by Kidd, Brown, and Fitzallen (2015) of two new teachers

substantiates the critical need for effective mentoring: The new teacher paired with a

trained mentor remained in the profession 7 years later; however, the teacher without a

mentor left within 6 months citing the reason as being overwhelmed. Simply having a

mentoring program in place may not support novice teachers, however. There is a need

to examine the effectiveness of such a program. Novice teachers' perceptions of the mentoring experience may provide feedback to the administration at the local level. An assistant principal in the local school system is concerned that district mandates are affecting site-based decision-making in the area of teacher mentoring and that there is little to no accountability for how efficient the local school's mentoring process is for teachers who are new to the profession.

In this school district in the Southeastern United States, a problem existed because only National Board-Certified Teachers (NBCTs) were allowed to serve as teacher mentors for the 2016-2017 school year, and this mandate added a challenge to the successful pairing of a mentee to a mentor (L. Silvernail., personal communication, July 28, 2016). Many beginning teachers leave the profession within the first 5 years due to lack of mentor support (Paris, 2013). NBCTs are not required to serve as mentors; however, the requirement impacted efforts by administrators to pair novice teachers with experienced teachers who have demonstrated effective classroom management and instructional best practices (L. Silvernail, personal communication, July 28, 2016).

Novice teachers' perceptions of successful mentoring relationships can be an important facet of the induction process because the unique perspective of the mentees' experiences can be constructive. More insight was needed on how the effectiveness of the mentoring relationship plays a role in the critical first 5 years spent teaching. To address this gap in research, I examined new teachers' perceptions of their mentoring experiences. Such knowledge could be used to identify critical components of an

effective mentoring program. Equipped with this knowledge, administrators may be better able to support and retain new teachers.

Evidence of the Problem at the Local Level

The learning environment, Viking High School (pseudonym), is a suburban high school in a school district located in a Southeastern state. The local setting is one of the five Grades 9-12 high schools in the region and has a diverse population of approximately 2,200 students. According to the school's website, of the 497 graduates of the Class of 2015, 42% enrolled in a 4-year college program, while another 22% enrolled in a 2-year program. According to the assistant principal, in 2016 a total of 22 teachers left their classrooms at Viking High School, and during the 2017-2018 school year, a total of seven novice teachers were hired from both in and out of state to fill these positions. (L. Silvernail, personal communication, August 7, 2017).

The retention of competent and trained teachers can have an impact on student learning, as demonstrated by Hammack (2017). Teacher turnovers from military relocations, retirees, and career changes continue to challenge the administration's efforts to keep teachers' positions filled at Viking High School. According to CERRA's "Report on the Fall Supply and Demand Survey," the 2015-2016 academic year began with a 33% increase in vacancies in the state from the previous year (CERRA, 2016). In CERRA's 2017-2018 report, 7,311 vacancies in the state were reported as being filled by new hires while 549 vacancies still existed at the beginning of the school year for the entire state (CERRA, 2017). Knowledge about the plight of teacher attrition and targeted solutions to reduce the numbers of teachers leaving the profession can benefit the school being

studied. Curry, Webb, and Lathan (2016) stated that new teachers experience a phase

called *disillusionment* when preparation meets reality. The stress of the first year could

lead new teachers to have a lower commitment to their career and, consequently, to not

remain in the classroom beyond the first few years of service.

Effective mentoring may promote new teacher retention. Clark and Byrnes

(2012) noted that novice teachers indicated the most beneficial mentoring relationships

included experienced teachers who were friendly and approachable and who shared

effective instructional practices of collaboration and reflection. Experienced and caring

mentors are critical in sharing their expertise in essential class management and

instructional planning. A district liaison agreed that mentoring would be one of the key

factors in assisting new teachers during the first year success of novice teachers (A. Shell,

personal communication, October 12, 2017). The teacher retention crisis has prompted

CERRA to place a strong emphasis on mentor training to mitigate the attrition rates of

newly hired teachers in order to increase teacher retention (see CERRA, 2016). There is

a strong need for mentoring programs because of the decline in the number of young

people going into teaching (M. Wood, personal communication, September 20, 2016).

Evidence of the Problem at the Professional Level

According to Martin and Mulvihill (2016), there is a nationwide teacher shortage

in the United States, not because of the lack of certified teachers, but because of the lack

of certified teachers who are no longer in the classroom. Additionally, the numbers of

teacher program graduates are declining. Martin and Mulvihill also asserted that there

are several factors that have contributed to the shortage of certified teachers in U.S.

classrooms, which include lack of pay, lack of administrative support, pressures to perform on standardized tests, and poor classroom conditions. Martin and Mulvihill also stated that the teachers have been blamed for the lack of funding resources as well as demonized by the public. Reeves and Lowenhaupt (2016) stated that teacher retention is a prominent problem globally and concerns policymakers as well as practitioners. Teacher retention also disrupts the effectiveness of educational systems, and the constant exit of experienced teachers is negatively impacting teacher effectiveness (Reeves & Lowenhaupt, 2016). Gallant and Riley (2014) identified issues that have impacted education that include teacher burnout, lack of support for new teachers, and lack of administrative support.

Rationale

According to Creswell (2012), researchers conducting phenomenological studies are able to understand the personal or social experiences of individuals in an educational setting. Based on my interviews with school personnel, there was a need to examine the mentoring relationships in this local context for the development of an informed and firm school-wide policy regarding the mentoring of new teachers. Studying the lived experiences of novice teachers involved in the mentoring relationships with experienced teachers provides a unique perspective, which can be used by school leaders to strengthen the school's processes of new teacher initiation. Effective mentoring relationships during the first year may impact the success and, subsequently, the retention of novice teachers. The principal of Viking High School found that it was important to know what novice teachers in the building were thinking to support their needs (J. Temoney, personal

communication, February 13, 2017). Therefore, the purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to examine novice teachers' perceptions about the impact of participating in a mentoring program.

Definition of Terms

The definitions in this subsection assist in describing the collaboration between novice and experienced teachers and what effect that collaboration has on the success of the novice teacher. The terms in the literature and subsequently incorporated them into this qualitative phenomenological study. The following defined terms are essential to understanding the issues of first-year teachers and those practices that make a successful mentoring relationship during the first year.

Induction: A year-long period of time designated for a new teacher that includes a mentor and professional development (Kidd et al., 2015).

Mentoring: The act of serving as a mentor to a novice teacher and helping with another teacher's growth and development (Salgur, 2014).

Novice teacher: Someone who is new to the teaching profession, with usually 1 to 5 years of experience (Farrell, 2012).

Self-efficacy: The belief in oneself to achieve a certain action or skill for a particular task (Sharp, Brandt, Taft, & Jay, 2016).

Teacher attrition: The exodus of teachers within a 5-year time frame from their first year of teaching (Heineke, Mazza, & Tichnor-Wagner, 2013).

Significance of the Study

This study provides insight from the perspective of new teachers at the local setting. I will use the findings to guide the administration in the careful selecting of mentors and monitoring of mentor/mentee relationships and interactions. Pogodzinksi (2014) emphasized the importance of administrative planning to the success of any mentoring program by stating that a school's administrative team has a direct influence on mentoring programs through choices of mentors and how the programs are evaluated for effectiveness. It is important, therefore, that administration has a direct role in the training and maintaining of mentors.

Studying novice teachers' perceptions of the mentoring relationship allowed me to provide needed feedback to the local administration for adequate oversight of the school's mentoring program. The retention of quality teachers is essential to student achievement (Hammack, 2017). Curriculum development, classroom management, and confident student and colleague relationships are developed through consistency and support (Colson et al., 2017). The perspectives of the novice teachers who participated in this study provided insight on effective mentoring relationships and best practices, which the administration can use in a targeted and purposeful way to improve the local setting's mentoring program. This study may also be instrumental in enhancing the district's efforts in supporting new teachers, which may be impactful on the state's future efforts to improve induction and retention of new hires.

Research Questions

I designed the research question (RQ) and supporting subquestions (SQs) to examine the novice teachers' mentoring relationships during the critical first year of teaching. Creswell (2012) stated that a qualitative research question is an extensive question that explores a concept. I asked the participants -- six novice teachers who teach Grades 9 and 10 and had been assigned buddy teachers -- open-ended questions to gain insight about their shared experiences. The overarching research question I sought to answer was

RQ1: What are the lived experiences of novice teachers who have been assigned a buddy teacher?

The following subquestions supported the research question:

SQ1. What is the impact of a successful mentoring relationship on the decision of a novice teacher to remain in the teaching profession?

SQ2. How do the attributes of the mentor teacher affect the novice teacher's overall experience?

SQ3. What are the best practices for establishing and maintaining an effective mentoring program for induction teachers?

Review of the Literature

The literature review provides a framework for this qualitative phenomenological study and includes information related to novice teachers, attrition, mentoring, as well as the mentoring relationship. I obtained information for the review from current, peer-reviewed articles, which I found using the following databases and search engines: ERIC,

Sage Premier, ProQuest Central, Education Research Complete, and Google Scholar. Searching ProQuest Central allowed me to locate doctoral dissertations and additional articles that I had not found in my previous searches. The journal articles relating to *novice teachers*, *efficacy*, *induction*, *attrition*, and *mentoring* are synthesized in the literature review.

The review of literature is organized into two sections: The first section includes the conceptual framework for the project study. The second section includes a brief synopsis of Bandura's self-efficacy theory (Bumann & Younkin, 2012). The discussion of the relationship between novice teachers and their mentors is organized into six subsections: (a) Attrition of Novice Teachers, (b) Mentoring Relationships, (c) The Importance of the First Year of Mentoring, (d) Implications of an Effective Mentoring Relationship, (e) Keys to an Effective Mentoring Program, and (f) The Novice Perspective. The final section of the review includes a summary and conclusion.

Conceptual Framework

I used Bandura's (1977) self-efficacy theory as the study's conceptual framework. In 1977, Bandura enlarged the understanding of social cognitive theory by recognizing the importance or self-efficacy. Bandura asserted that individuals with self –efficacy have a belief in their ability to succeed in their goals (Bumann & Younkin, 2012). Bandura also identified sources of influence that can have an impact on the success of learning a new task as part of this theory, of which two aligned with the significance and purpose of this study. The first source of impact is known as the *vicarious experience*, which occurs when observing others; the learner can see, as well as believe, that a task

can be done (Bumann & Younkin, 2012). Another influence is called *social persuasion*, which happens when trusted peers provide feedback and encouragement when one is attempting to learn something new (Bumann & Younkin, 2012). Teacher self-efficacy can be affected by a variety of factors, which include resources and support offered to teachers and opportunities to participate in professional development, mentoring, or other training experiences (see (Bumann & Younkin, 2012). According to Bumann and Younkin (2012), Bandura's theory reinforces the necessity for novice teachers to successfully achieve self-efficacy to gain the confidence and resilience needed to ensure the successes of the first year and remain in the profession. As described in the literature (see Colson, et al., 2017), self-efficacy theory is also a foundation for the desired outcome of a mentoring relationship.

Attrition of New Teachers

One of the United States' growing threats to the teaching profession is the shortage of teachers. According to Zhang and Zeller (2016), teacher attrition is one of the leading causes of teacher shortage, and a growing number of teachers are exiting the career, and these numbers are reaching a high proportion (Gallant & Riley, 2014). Zhang and Zeller (2016) also cited reasons for attrition include burnout, lack of support, and working conditions. Mee and Haverback (2014) cited that the reasons for new teachers leaving the profession include such factors as poor pay, lack of administrative support, and lack of mentoring. In a phenomenological study conducted by Gallant and Riley, narratives revealed that novice teachers were affected by lack of support by administration (Gallant & Riley, 2014). Heineke et al. (2013) also stated that school

placement, environment, resources, and leadership strength had an impact on whether teachers stayed or left. High attrition rates can be problematic for schools that struggle with student achievement. A quantitative analysis by Ronfeldt, Loeb, and Wyckoff (2013) revealed the direct impact of teacher turnover on student achievement, particularly in the areas of English/Language Arts and math of black students. Students who struggle academically need teachers who have efficacy in course content and classroom management. Close to one-third of new teachers who leave the profession work in *high needs schools*: rural and urban schools with large numbers of students who are a minority and of low income (Heineke et al., 2013). Clark (2012) asserted that in low-income schools, teacher turnover is 50% higher than higher income schools. High attrition rates among new teachers are considered a *silent crisis* (Schaefer, Downey & Clandinin, 2014) and have an impact on the consistency and retention of new hires. Unfortunately, novice teachers are leaving the profession within three to five years of service; and it is during this period when novice teachers would be reaching a higher level of effectiveness (Pearman & Lefever-Davis, 2014). As a result of the early exit, teacher turnover negatively impacts teacher quality where and when it is needed most. According to Henning, Gut & Beam (2015), 40% to 50% of teachers would be leaving the classroom within the first five years, with 9.5% leaving before the first year is completed. According to Curry, Webb, and Latham (2016), the cost of attrition is $4000 to $9000 per teacher. Consequently, not only is teacher attrition a financial burden, but also an expensive loss for students' academic well-being (Zhang & Zeller, 2016). Attrition,

therefore, poses a significant problem for teaching as a profession as well as student

achievement, particularly in low-income areas.

The Mentoring Relationship

In the educational setting, the act of mentoring is likely to be associated with the

intentional relationship between a novice and seasoned teacher to guide that new teacher

through the first year of the profession. Salgur (2014) described the act of mentoring as

the process of serving in the capacity of mentor and aiding in another's development.

Mentors are an essential facet in helping to build confidence through observation and

feedback (Kidd, Brown, and Fitzallen, 2015). Henning et al. (2015) conducted

semistructured interviews to 18 participants to improve mentoring programs for new

teachers at different levels of development and stated that mentors are responsible for

introducing new teachers to the art of teaching by providing meaningful and sustained

feedback. Salgur (2014) also suggested that this significant relationship is based on

structured collegial exchanges like peer observations, conversations outside of school

hours, email, and conversations by phone. The exchanges between novices and their

experienced counterparts help novice teachers survive the first year of teaching by

fostering meaningful relationships that are built on communication and reflection

(Ginkle, Verloop & Denessen, 2016). The proper exchange between mentor and mentee,

therefore, is a vital component of an efficient and successful mentoring relationship.

Mentors are active when adequately trained in developing relationships with

others, accurately determining the strengths and weaknesses of new teachers, and being

able to provide meaningful feedback on instruction (Grossman & Davis, 2012). Mentors

also are responsible for modeling the messages and suggestions that are to be taught to the novice teacher (Salgur, 2014). Ginkle et al. (2016) stated that the mentors' roles are more significant than being local guides, but also include the functions of change agents for the good of fostering norms of sharing knowledge and practicing the art of collaboration. Ginkle et al. (2016) also pointed out that mentors, who are mostly volunteers, see their roles as an essential contribution to the profession of education.

The Importance of First Year Mentoring

The teaching profession is one that has very little, or non-existent on-the-job training (Carney, Fala, Crilley, Fala, Strouse, & Tully, 2013). Quality mentoring is vital during the first year of teaching because it can have a positive impact on the retention rate of novice teachers (Henning et al., 2015). Many new teachers are hired in schools with lower achievement rates, and with classrooms that have higher proportions of students from academic or socioeconomic challenges (Henning et al., 2015). Pogodzinski (2014) pointed out that beginning teachers are often burdened with difficult teaching assignments which can also be over-crowded with students at all academic and behavioral levels. Kidd et al. (2015) stated that new teachers come into the teaching field with difficult teaching assignments that can easily set them up for failure. The idea of new teachers being assigned difficult assignments is further supported when Pogodzinski noted that the profession of teaching is categorized as *sink or swim* where job performances and expectations are equal among novice teachers as their more experienced counterparts (Pogodzinski, 2014).

Other literature suggests that the first year of teaching has also been characterized as a type of *reality shock* after the ideas pre-service teachers have formed during teaching training meet the realities of the demands of their classroom lives (Farrell, 2012). Among the requirements are managing of discipline, planning lessons, supporting students with disabilities, as well as organizing the required paperwork for accountability (Bloom, 2014). Bentley, Fink, and Storm (2013) also cited that classroom control, student grading, parental interactions, and organizing classwork are among some of the many concerns for first-year teachers. A list of phrases that a novice teacher experiences during the first year include what is referred to as the disillusionment phase when preparation meets reality. Novice teachers' stress levels increase during the first year of teaching and their efficacy drops when demands of curriculum, parents, and administration become a reality. The stress may negatively affect the novice teacher and may lead to a lowered commitment to the teaching career (Curry et al., 2016). Prilleltensky, Neff, and Bessell (2016) outlined a list of risks for teacher stress and indicated that *mentor matches* and *support networks* were protections against these risks and that effective mentoring was a means to bring cease an unsupported entry into the teaching profession, as well as keep good teachers in the classroom. Moreover, many new teachers are viewed to be ineffective as compared to more experienced teachers, yet job responsibilities and expectations are the same (Pogodzinski, 2014). Subsequently, these new teachers are expected to perform at the same level as the more experienced, veteran teachers (Teague & Swan, 2013). Issues of inadequacy can contribute to feelings of uncertainty and self-doubt for the novice teacher. Unfortunately for the enthusiastic

novice teacher, a negative first year, regardless if he or she was a successful graduate, can

lead to leaving the profession altogether (Paris, 2013). Pearman et al. (2014) further

supported the notion by stating the numbers of teachers who are qualified, yet leaving the

profession are causing adverse impacts on P-12 students because teaching effectiveness

increases after the initial year of teaching. The literature firmly supports that the first

year of teaching presents itself with many challenges, but mentors can be a supportive

component of collaboration for new teachers who must face these challenges (Heineke et

al., 2013). Henning et al. (2015) also asserted that difficulties could be mitigated with the

provision of professional development that focuses on reflection and problem solving;

subsequently, feelings of isolation can diminish, and more positive attitudes concerning

the first year can be engendered. The literature strongly supports the importance of

effective mentoring for novice teachers during the first years in the profession.

Implications of an Effective Mentoring Relationship

The literature strongly supports that teacher retention can be positively impacted

by effective mentoring. Roff (2012) stated that a positive relationship in mentoring had a

positive influence on retention. New teachers need to feel a sense of community within

the learning environment in which they work. A good mentor provides information about

instruction, working with students and adults, as well as the school culture. Cooper and

Stewart (2009) stated that one of the concerns new teachers are faced with is the

intricacies of understanding the school culture and academic community. Qian, Youngs

and Frank (2013) conducted a survey of novice teachers and their mentors in 6 Michigan

and 5 Indiana school districts, and asserted that mentors provide an excellent source of

the local knowledge of a school, which plays a vital role in novice teachers' growth,

which also has a positive impact on student learning. The right mentor is important for

the outcomes of the mentoring relationship. Grossman and Davis (2012) conducted a

study in New York City Schools and found that new teachers considered their mentors

more helpful when they were properly paired by subject or grade level, particularly at the

secondary level. Qian et al. (2013) also stated that interview data from novice teachers in

Massachusetts revealed that teachers relied on their colleagues for proper formation of

student relationships, effective instructional practices, and careful planning of time

management. Pogodzinski further asserted that effective mentoring passes on valuable

knowledge of best practices as they relate to teaching tasks that will allow the novice to

become better over time (Pogodzinski, 2013). Effective mentoring is also inclusive of

the formation of collegial relationships that are direct and informative when it comes to

feedback, and these relationships are also defined by three stages: formal, cordial, and

friendship. Once the three stages have been accomplished, the mentees' will gain

proficiency and confidence in the classroom (Henning et al. 2015). Grossman and Davis

(2012) stated that new teachers, who participate in mentoring, or some other form of

induction, have greater levels of job satisfaction, are committed to the profession, and

have higher levels of retention. The literature, therefore, strongly supports that an

effective mentoring program is an integral constituent of the first-year teacher's overall

experience and subsequent retention in the profession.

Keys to an Effective Mentoring Program

Most states and nations have instituted teacher mentoring programs as part of the induction process, and school administration plays a vital role in the success of any new teacher mentoring program. Pogodzinski (2015) emphasized that school administration has a direct influence on the selection and training of mentors in the learning environment. Pogodzinski also stated that mentors must possess excellent communication skills, be able to provide feedback and be willing to share effective teaching practices. Pogodzinski continued by adding that the proper alignment of the mentor to the novice increases meaningful interactions that promote the novice teacher's retention as well as effectiveness. Additionally, mentoring programs need to be monitored, structured, and well organized, and should be a year-long program that allocates a trained mentor and exposure to effective professional development for the novice teacher (Pogodzinksi, 2015).

Mentors should be carefully selected because this increases the benefits to the beginning teacher (Hudson, 2012). In a qualitative study in Australia, Hudson (2012) investigated the effects of mentoring on new teachers. Data collection methods included a Likert scale survey, written responses, focus group discussions as well as interviews. 80 % of teachers interviewed indicated they received help with instructional practices, while another 70% benefited from problem solving in classroom management. Effective programs should have willing participants who are capable of providing valuable feedback through observation that will help build the confidence of the novice teacher. According to Ibrahim (2012), mentors should be carefully chosen and possess

interpersonal qualities that contribute to a productive relationship. Ibrahim also noted

that not all experienced teachers make good mentors and that proper training is much

needed. Kidd et al. (2015) pointed out that retention factors are strongly affected by the

choice of the right mentor. Bradley-Levine, Lee, and Mosier (2016) asserted that

mentoring programs that had the most significant impact on novice teachers included

having a mentor teacher who teaches a familiar subject, as well as having standard

planning time for collaboration.

The Novice Perspective

Effective mentoring programs need to be well-organized as well as monitored and

should be a year-long program that includes face to face meetings with trained mentors

(Kidd et al., 2015). The mentoring process is an on-going, intentional relationship

between two willing individuals, and is said to be of higher quality if the participants

teach the same grade level or subject (Pogodzinski, 2015). A gap in practice at the local

level includes a lack of structure and oversight of the training of mentors, as well as the

monitoring of the mentor-novice relationship. The quality and types of mentoring

relationships can vary within a learning environment based on the varying conditions of

mentors, novice teachers, and the models of bonds formed between them. The

perspective of the novice teacher, therefore, would provide the administration with robust

feedback for improvement and implementation of consistent vital practices that would

increase the effectiveness of the program. The proper exchanges between novice and

mentor should be ongoing because it is mentors who model engaging lesson plans,

provide valuable feedback, and maintain a trusting relationship with his or her mentee

(Salgur, 2014). In a qualitative phenomenological study, Yirci (2017) examined 22

teachers, from primary to high school, and their experiences during their first year of

teaching with the aid of a mentor. Through data analysis of interviews, Yirci concluded

that the strengths of mentoring included gaining experience and support, as well as lesson

planning and classroom management. Yirci further concluded that both mentor and

mentee needed to feel a sense of enthusiasm to have a productive outcome of the

relationship.

Literature also suggested, however, that novices can learn bad habits or

ineffective methods from their mentors. McCann (2013) stated that not all mentors are

compatible with the novices they have been assigned. Another problem pointed out in

the literature is the possibility of novice teachers experiencing difficulties in the

mentoring relationships because of mentors' lack of experience with specific situations

(Roff, 2012). Successful mentoring relationships are contributory for new teachers to

remain in the profession because the induction period needs to be personally, as well as

professionally fulfilling (Kidd et al., 2015). The novice's perspective, therefore, can be

an effective tool in ensuring the efficacy of the local setting's mentoring program, which

is vital to the success and sustainability of the first year teacher.

Implications

The consequence of this study could be far-reaching, as teacher retention is a

growing problem in the Southeastern state. Site-based decision-making is a district-wide

practice, which means individual schools decide how teacher induction is conducted.

The findings of this project study provided a basis for developing best practices and

policies for choosing mentors, developing a school-wide mentoring program, and implementation of effective tracking and follow up with the local setting's novice teachers. The findings from the collected data informed the development of a 3-day staff development to train mentors at Viking High School. Although the data from the study was specific to the local school and school district, the findings may help to support the literature on the impact of mentoring on novice teachers and student success. The project deliverable findings from the data collection engendered a 3-day professional development for potential mentors at the school of study.

Summary

Teacher attrition is a problem with 40-50 % of teachers leaving the profession within the first 5 years of service, which in turn is posing a threat to many school districts (Henning et al., 2015). At the local level, there is a looming threat of districts that are unable to fill all vacancies created by retirements, career changes, and teachers leaving the profession. There is a need to learn about the dynamics of an effective mentoring relationship, as literature robustly supports the idea of teacher retention being positively impacted by effective, ongoing, and meaningful teacher mentoring between novice and their experienced counterparts. Novice teachers are often given the same responsibilities as more qualified teachers and need support, development, and feedback on areas of curriculum planning, classroom management, and instructional practices through effective mentoring relationships. This qualitative project study sought to gather and analyze data on the perceptions of novice teachers on what encompasses impactful mentoring relationships. This study will, in the future, inform the local learning

environment and district to implement informed practices in teacher induction to reduce attrition. Section 2 will describe the methodology for this study, which includes research design, participants, sampling technique setting, data collection, and data analysis. Section 3 will outline the findings of the research that will address the local needs. Section 4 will include reflections and conclusions of the study the strengths and plans to deliver to the local site as well as other shareholders.

Section 2: The Methodology

Research Design and Approach

In Section 2, I describe the methodology for this study. I will outline and provide a justification for the chosen method, which I used to answer the research question and subquestions. In this section, I will also describe the participants, the sampling method, and sample size. Participants' protections and rights will also be discussed. Additionally, I will elucidate the data collection and analysis processes.

Description of Qualitative Research Design

First-year teachers face difficulties in navigating through first-time teaching assignments while learning new content, workplace culture, and collegial relationships, as well as the complexities of time management. The performance expectations of new teachers equal, and sometimes exceed, those of their more experienced counterparts, and if not carefully managed, can lead to early career burnout and/or desertion of the career altogether (see Prilleltensky, et al., 2016). Mentoring, according to research, can minimize feelings of isolation and failure often felt by the novice teacher (Henning et al., 2015). Creswell (2012) emphasized the choice of qualitative design when the researcher needs to learn more about an experience of the participants.

The research question and subquestions for this study could only be answered by having the participants share their experiences as mentees through interviews and observations during their initial year of teaching. I used a phenomenological design in order to "report the stories and experiences of a single individual or several individuals of their lived experience of a concept or phenomenon" (Creswell, 2013, p. 76). The data

collected served to describe the essence of the experiences for the individuals as it pertains to the phenomenon (Creswell, 2013). The heterogeneous sample group consisted of six participants. I collected data from in-depth interviews with open-ended questions, as well as observations. Analysis of data pointed to emerging common themes that provided insights on effective mentoring relationships between novice and experienced teachers.

Other designs such as a case study would have been less effective, as the data would focus primarily on a whole group instead of an individual's experience of a successful mentoring relationship. According to Creswell (2012), case studies may involve studying activities of a group, and not shared behaviors of the group. The nature of the relationships that novice teachers see as effective varied from individual to individual, based on the perceived experience, but through analysis of the data, common threads emerged to reveal what qualities, specifically, contributed to effective mentoring relationships. This study was a phenomenology because the objective was to examine the lived experiences of novice teachers' mentoring relationships in their voices. The following research question and subquestions were used to guide this study:

RQ1: What are the lived experiences of novice teachers who have been assigned a buddy teacher?

SQ1. What is the impact of a successful mentoring relationship on the decision of a novice teacher remaining in the teaching profession?

SQ2. How does the choice of mentor affect the outcome of the first-year teacher's overall experience?

SQ3. What are some best practices for establishing and maintaining an effective mentoring program for induction teachers?

Justification of Research Design

Creswell (2012) discussed five possible research designs for qualitative research: (a) the narrative, (b) ethnography, (c) grounded theory, (d) case study, and (d) phenomenological. Lodico, Spaulding, and Voegtle (2010) described the qualitative approach to research as giving a voice to the perceptions of the participants in a study. Additionally, the qualitative design provides answers to research problems in which the variables are not known, and more information needs to be explored (Creswell, 2012). The narrative design, according to Creswell (2012), focuses on the study of one or two individuals; narrative researchers gather data by collecting participants' individual experiences and arranging those experiences chronologically to derive some meaning (Creswell, 2013). Data are derived from stories told to the researcher that reveal the experiences, and is gathered through interviews, pictures, documents, and observation. Creswell (2013) also stated that the researcher must actively engage with the participant(s), as well as be careful and reflective of the participants' belief systems. This study needed to examine different experiences from a larger number of participants to find a common theme. Thus, use of a narrative design would not have been adequate to answer the research questions.

Ethnography is a type of qualitative research that describes and analyzes a culturally shared group of ideas, behaviors, and patterns that are developed over time (Creswell, 2012).   Ethnography is instrumental when a group of people provides a

greater understanding of a larger issue, such as race, rules of behavior, and informal

relationships (Creswell, 2012). Data for an ethnographic study are collected during time

spent where the participants live, play, or work (Creswell, 2012). Creswell described this

design as necessitating being in the field by living with or visiting the group frequently

and gradually learning the ways the group behaves or thinks culturally (Creswell, 2012).

Data can be collected through observations, questionnaires, structured interviews, and

casual conversations (Creswell, 2012).

Grounded theory is a qualitative procedure that explains an action related to a

topic (Creswell, 2012). This particular design is necessary when the study needs a

particular explanation of a process, and this theory is extracted from the data (Creswell,

2012). Grounded theory is also instrumental, according to Creswell, in understanding the

actions of people, or interactions among people (Creswell, 2012). The novice teachers in

this study did not necessarily share a culture, but an experience. Additionally, novice

teachers did not have great opportunities to interact; therefore, examining how each of

them perceived the same experience would have not have fully possible.

The case study, according to Creswell, is an in-depth study of a system that is

bound by space, time, or activity (Creswell, 2012). A case can be a group, or individuals,

activity, or program. The case can be either *intrinsic*, or of unusual interest, *instrumental*,

which focuses on a particular issue, or *collective,* which focuses on multiple cases for

study (Creswell, 2012). While a case study can yield data over time, many novice

teachers at the school of study did not remain with their mentors after the first year, as

mentors are assigned to another new teacher the following school year. Finally, the

phenomenology is a description of the commonality of meanings for different people of a particular lived experience. The inquirer gathers the information from those who have experienced the phenomenon and develops an in-depth description of the experience of all of these individuals (Creswell, 2015). Data collection for a phenomenological design consists of multiple and in-depth interviews and observations. Data analysis of the phenomenology's researcher takes important quotes and forms themes as well as writes a description to communicate the core of these experiences, and design policies that better understand the phenomenon (Creswell, 2015). Examining themes that emerged from different mentoring experiences answered the research questions of what novice teachers perceived as beneficial mentoring relationships during the first year of teaching.

Characteristics of Qualitative Research (Tradition)

Lodico, Spaulding, & Vogetle (2010) outlined that in qualitative research, the focal point is to give voice to the perceptions and feelings of participants in a study, and the studies are conducted in the natural setting of the participants who are familiar with the information that is being sought through the study. Creswell (2013) stated that the research questions are worded so that one can learn best from the participants. The data collected from the non-random selection of these participants takes form in the use of in-depth interviews and observations. During the process of data collection, the researcher must play an active role in getting to know the participants of the study. Once the data is collected, the researcher searches for emerging patterns, and lastly, the information is disseminated through reports, or presentations (Lodico et al. 2010).

Participants

Participants, or samples sizes, are subjects that are methodically chosen for a study and are used as *key informants* of a study. Key informants are individuals who have a unique perspective or experience that will bring knowledge to the particular phenomena that are being studied. According to Lodico, Spaulding, and Vogetle (2010), the specific knowledge key informants is part of a rich description that will assist in answering the research questions The participants of this study will be further examined in the following sections.

Criteria for Selecting Participants

The criteria used to select the participants for this qualitative study included selecting newly hired novice teachers at the school of study, who teach at least one 9th or 10th grade core subject. Each participant had a mentor teacher from Viking High School and had expertise in the same subject area assigned to the novice teacher. Bradley-Levine, Lee, and Mosier (2016) emphasized the importance of this specific type of mentor to novice teacher pairing by emphasizing retention is strongly influenced when the novice has a mentor teacher from his or her subject area. The rationale for choosing teachers who teach Grades 9 or 10 is because many disciplinary issues stem from these first two years of high school. Students are making the transition from the middle school; additionally, the most cases of novice teacher attrition in the district of study is strongly engendered by classroom management problems (A. Shell, personal communication, October 12, 2017). Strong classroom management and pedagogical practices are critical for both teacher and student during this phase of the novice teacher's career. Patterson

and Seabrooks-Blackmore (2017) emphasized that teachers have influence on student outcomes, and it is experience that is needed to ensure success for students. These specific grade levels of the high school experience are also regarded as critical for students' successes in completing high school on time.

Justification of Participants

Six new teachers to Viking High School participated in this study. Creswell outlined the importance of limiting the number of participants for a qualitative study for the researcher to gain an in-depth picture of the phenomenon (Creswell, 2013). Larger samples, according to Creswell, will result in perspectives that are superficial. The participants served as *key informants* to the phenomenon of the mentoring relationship and its impact on a successful first year of service.

Access to Participants

After the Walden University Internal Review Board's (IRB) approval to conduct an educational study, I sent emails to obtain permissions from the district personnel and the school principal explaining the study, the role of the participants, the process of collecting data, the time frame of the study, the lengths of protection of the participants, and how the data would be presented to conduct educational research in the school of education (see Appendices B and C). Once IRB approval, and proper district and building permissions were granted, I set up a meeting with the assistant principal of curriculum to obtain a list of new teachers to ensure there would be an adequate number of participants in the school of study. I then assisted the administration's leadership team responsible for the school's induction process of newly hired, novice teachers, so that I

could familiarize myself with the potential participants, and for them to gain trust in me,

the researcher. I helped facilitate one of the quarterly meetings in which I provided

written consent forms, as well as confidentiality agreements to participants who chose to

participate in the study during the first of four meetings (see Appendices D and E). After

all consent forms were signed, I asked participants to set up times for interviews and

observations via school email.

Researcher/Participant Relationship

Creswell (2012) emphasized that the researcher will need to make an effort in

becoming familiar with the participants to gain their perspectives, and somehow

becoming part of the field in which the participants exist. Creswell (2012) also stated

that in phenomenological research, it is essential for researchers to spend time interacting

with the participants to gain an understanding of the different perspectives that the

participants will bring (Creswell, 2012).   I am an educator and have been employed by

the local school district for 13 years. I have also been assigned to the school of study for

the entire 13 years. I served as a mentor teacher to an experienced teacher who was not

be part of this study. My prior relationships with the participants were a casual working

relationship with minimal contact prior to the study. I established the kind of relationship

described by Creswell by providing a safe and trusting environment to collect data. The

participants were not only new to the teaching profession; the participants were also new

to the school culture and climate and needed to feel invited professionally. Through the

quarterly meetings, I was able to establish the relationships required to gain open data on

their experiences as mentees. Although I also knew the mentors as fellow colleagues, the mentors were not part of the data collection.

Creswell (2012) stated that different perspectives surface when research is conducted; therefore, it is critical to maintain a balanced view to avoid bias in the study. To avoid personal bias, Creswell (2012) affirmed the importance of member checking, which required me to send the transcripts of interviews for participants to review. Creswell (2012) also noted that, in addition to member checking, the researcher should keep a continuous check on their perspectives and biases throughout this process. I kept a journal that reflected on my experiences and perspectives during the process of data collection.

Target Population

This study was conducted in a large urban high school of approximately 2,200 students in the southeastern United States. Six novice teachers who began their careers at the school of study made up the participants. The participants were part of the administration's first-year teacher program and were paired with an experienced teacher who taught the same subject/grade level. These specific participants were able to reveal what constituted a productive mentoring relationship, unlike randomly selected participants. I was able to obtain this list of participants from the assistant principal of curriculum who was in charge of the new hires to Viking High School. The assistant principal then decided upon a date for an initial meeting with the novice teachers that I also attended, and was allowed to introduce myself and the study.

Sample Method

Purposeful sampling was used for the selection of participants for this study. According to Creswell (2012), purposeful sampling occurs when researchers select individuals intently to understand and learn a phenomenon. Creswell also emphasized that a purposeful sampling will provide useful and in-depth information for one to understand a phenomenon by giving a voice to people otherwise who are silent (Creswell, 2012). Homogeneous sampling was utilized as the specific type of purposeful sampling because Creswell explained that homogeneous sampling requires participants to share a common characteristic and must be specific (Creswell, 2012). Using participants from other schools would not accurately account for the phenomenon because different schools have different school cultures and climates.

Sample Technique and Setting

Six participants were selected from Viking High School. Of the 22 new hires to the study site school, six were novice teachers and were assigned National Board Certified mentors teaching common subjects. Participants were invited to take part in the study through an administrative team activity involving novice teachers. Creswell (2012) emphasized the importance of minimizing the number of participants in some qualitative studies to both provide a more in-depth picture of the phenomena being studied and avoid superficial perspectives.

The setting for this phenomenological study was in a large suburban high school in the capital of a Southeastern state. The school district serves approximately 8,213 students. Viking High School is a 450,000 square foot state of the art facility with

innovative technology. The district provides one-to-one technology for every student by providing all students with Google Chromebooks and Google applications for education. Viking High School houses 2 magnet programs, a freshmen academy, and serves Grades 9-12 with a total enrollment of 2,028 students. The student population was made up of 52% African American, 28% Caucasian, 6% Asian, and 4% other. Viking High School employed 143 professional staff, and 26 are National Board Certified (SIC Annual Report, 2017).

Ethical Issues and Confidentiality Agreement

Creswell (2012) pointed out the importance of protecting individuals who participate in any educational study by emphasizing that data collection must be ethical and respect individuals and sites. Lodico, Spaulding, and Voegetle (2010) further described that IRB carefully scrutinize proposals for research to identify any risks to the participants. Lodico et al. (2010) also provided three major concerns related to ethical issues in educational research which include: (a) obtaining informed consent from participants, (b) protecting participants from harm, and (c) ensuring the participants' confidentiality.

Lodico et al. (2010) outlined the steps of confidentiality. First, I obtained informed consent involved providing the participants with information on the procedures, as well as informed the participants that taking part in the study was voluntary, and participants could have withdrawn at any time. Next, I protected participants from harm by being careful about the types of questions asked during the interviews. The participants' protections from harm were achieved by constructing questions that

participants could respond to without possibility of having to divulge personal

information, such as financial situations or other outside stressors (Lodico et al., 2010).

Adhering to the protections as outlined, I kept participants from feeling discomfort or

emotional distress during the process. Interviewing new teachers about their mentors

might yield unanticipated outcomes if the mentoring relationship is not a positive one,

therefore, confidentiality was achieved through this study by giving each participant a

pseudonym, for example, Teacher A, Teacher B, etc. Next, one-on-one interviews were

conducted outside of school hours at off-campus sites, such as nearby libraries or coffee

shops. Any use of Google forms for open-ended questions were stored on a device that is

password protected and responses were coded as numbers as opposed to names.

Following the conclusion of the study, all information stored will be purged and deleted

from all devices after a five-year period, and all consent forms were shredded before data

collection began.

Data Collection

Data collection for qualitative research involves the use of interviews,

observations, or analysis of documents (Lodico et al., 2010). For this project study,

specifically, individual semi structured interviews, classroom observations, and an

observation during an administrative support meeting were utilized. Creswell (2012)

described individual interviews as a process of collecting data in which questions are

asked from a researcher to a participant, and the researcher records the responses from

one participant at a time. Open-ended questions were utilized so that participants could

express their individual experiences without restraint. After permissions to be recorded

were granted by participants, responses were taped on a phone installed voice recorder.

Lodico et al., (2010) stated that observations are used as tools to carefully examine a

phenomenon being studied. Observations necessitated the need for me, the observer to

be familiar with the setting, decided the level of participation, and gather information that

is accurate and reflect the reality of the situation (Lodico, et al., 2010).

Justification of Data Collection

In qualitative research, open-ended questions should be asked in interviews with

participants because in using open-ended questions, participants can speak without

hesitation, articulate their experiences, and comfortably share their ideas (Creswell,

2012). The primary objective of this phenomenological study was to gain insight into the

lived experiences of novice teachers in the mentoring relationships of the more

experienced teachers who share common subjects with the novice teachers. In qualitative

research, phenomenologists attempt to make meaning of an experienced lived by the

participant (Lodico et al., 2010). Observations during administrative meetings, as well as

classroom interactions also provided information on the novice teachers' interactions

with their colleagues as well as their students during the induction period. Lodico et al.

(2010) emphasized that for qualitative studies, the researcher should observe behaviors,

as well as communications that will aid in answering questions. Research notes were

generated during semistructured interviews with questions that were designed to gain an

understanding of the novice teachers' experiences with their mentors. Along with

interviews, field notes from observations of administrative meetings with new teachers,

as well as informal classroom observations yielded information on novice teachers'

interactions with their peers as well as their students.

Data Collection Instruments and Source

The first source of data collection was a face-to-face semi structured interview

with open and close-ended questions. The first section of the interview protocol included

demographic questions to include (a) race and gender, (b) college degree obtained, (c)

area of certification, (d) years of experience, and (e) inspirations for becoming a teacher.

Next, the 10 interview questions focused on the participants' experiences with their

chosen mentors. From the interviews, notes were taken, and categories for coding

emerged into themes. A scheduled meeting with administration also provided more

information about the novice teachers' first-year experience at Viking High School. I

observed this meeting and took additional notes that recorded the novice teachers'

concerns, experiences, and interactions with their peers. Both the interviews and the

observation field notes provided a better understanding of how the participants

experienced the mentoring relationships between them and their chosen mentors.

Semistructured Interviews

Individual semistructured interviews were used for data collection for this project

study to gather data regarding the lived experiences of novice teachers involved in

mentoring relationships. A quiet and off-campus environment was available for

participants to be open and honest when discussing their experiences with their chosen

mentors. Both open-ended and closed-ended questions were being used, and the

timeframe of each interview lasted from 45 minutes to an hour (see Appendix F). The

interview questions were designed to align with the six types of questions that Patton (2002) outlined: (a) knowledge questions, which discuss what the respondents know about the phenomenon, (b) feeling questions, which discuss how the participants feel about the phenomenon, (c) behavior questions, which discuss what the participants have done or are doing as it relates to the phenomenon, (d) opinion questions, which relate to what the participants think about the phenomenon, (e) sensory questions, which discuss what the participants have felt, seen, heard, touched, smelled, or tasted in regards to the phenomenon, and (f) background/demographics, which deal with the participants' age, education, socioeconomic status, as well as other demographic information. According to Bogdan and Biklen (2007), permission must first be obtained from the participants to record the interview. Once permission was obtained, a voice recorder through a cell phone was utilized and highly visible during the entire interview. During the initial meeting with new hires and administration, I set a mutually agreed upon time and place to conduct the interview. Once the schedule is developed, I notified each participant of the specifics of his or her interview via email.

Observations

An observation took place during the scheduled, 30-minute administrative meetings that occurred during the quarter. The administration met with all new teachers once a month. These administrative meetings were purposed to check on the novice teachers and give the novice teachers an informal platform to discuss concerns and offer suggestions for improving their experiences. The administrative meetings were scheduled at Viking High School after school in the principal's office. An observation

protocol was used that supplied relevant data for this phenomenological study relating to the novice teachers' lived experiences of the mentoring relationships' impacts on their first few months of teaching (see Appendix G).

Sufficiency of Data Collection

The lived experiences of the novice teachers were at the core of this project study. The data collected through one-on-one interviews as well as observations provided pertinent information on the effectiveness of Viking High School's induction process. The observations also provided valuable information to the administration to monitor, adjust, and make improvements to its efforts to increase teacher retention for future new hires. The information needed can only come from the novice teachers' perspectives. Data saturation must be reached through the interpretation of the participants and the intention of avoiding bias by the researcher (Fusch and Ness, 2015).

Processes of Data Collection

After each interview, the data was transcribed from the voice recorder to a Google document and saved in a folder named *Novice Teachers* and was password protected. Each participant was given a pseudonym, and each document was saved under that name. Observation forms were scanned, emailed, and kept in the Novice Teacher folder, and named under the date of the observation, and was also password protected. A Google calendar was designed to remind me of important dates and times and was linked to my iPhone so that I received alerts for interview times and observation dates. All devices used were password protected.

Data Collection Tracking System

All interview transcripts and field notes were saved to a Google drive folder and password protected. All data was accessible through an I-Phone, Google Chromebook, and desktop computer, which were all password protected. The Google folder stored all data, which were categorized by topics, dates, and pseudonyms. All data was readily available to me at all times, and again, were password protected, and will be stored up to a period of 5 years following the completion of the study.

Role of the Researcher

The researcher should have some close contact and familiarity with the participants and the environment in which the research is being conducted (Lodico et al., 2010). To avoid bias, however, it was my responsibility to ensure that I remained respectful and protected the participants (Creswell, 2012). I adhered to written agreements, respected privacy, and protected the data collected. Because I work in the setting of the study, it was vital that I established trust in the participants through the quarterly meetings. Because I was a colleague to both the mentors as well as the novice teachers, I took extra care in identifying my personal biases by keeping an electronic journal of my interactions with the participants. My personal bias included the idea that I had knowledge of the mentors' classroom management, disciplinary philosophies, as well as pedagogical practices, and it may have affected data collection; therefore, self-reflection was of vital importance. Creswell (2007) emphasized that self-reflection is the center of good qualitative research, and the comments in such reflections should shape the researcher's interpretations of his or her findings.

Data Analysis

The analysis of data in a qualitative study requires the researcher to make sense of information obtained so that the research questions may be answered (Creswell, 2012). Additionally, data analysis encompasses processes such as organizing, coding, forming themes, interpreting the findings, and validating the information provided by the data (Creswell, 2012). Lodico et al. (2010) also emphasized the importance of the dissemination of the findings with other professionals. The data for this project study was shared with the administrators of Viking High School to improve the new teacher induction program currently in place.

Data Analysis Process

The analysis of data began immediately after data for this project study was collected. From the information yielded from the interviews and field notes of an observation, a system of coding was used to break larger ideas into smaller categories and themes. According to Bogdan and Biklen (2007), the coding process takes place in several steps: (a) first, the researcher looks for patterns, (b) then words are chosen to explain those patterns, (c) which become coding categories. For this project study, the specific coding method was what Bogdan and Biklen (2007) referred to as a *relationship and social codes*. Relationship and social codes is descriptive of social structures that occur in mentoring relationships (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). From these codes, the emerging themes were organized by using tables. The final results were reported using a narrative.

Accuracy, Credibility, and Findings

According to Creswell (2012), there must be an assurance that the findings and interpretations of data are accurate, and validating the findings is a necessary step to ensure credibility. Member checking is a means by which the process of validating the findings is achieved. After one week, I asked three of the participants to meet me briefly in my classroom to check the responses I transcribed from their interviews. I asked them clarifying questions to ensure that my recording and interpretations of their responses were accurate.

Discrepant Cases

Discrepant cases occur when the data reveals alternative perspectives. The research has reflected various perspectives from different lived experiences of relationships, which are determined by a plethora of factors. Discrepant cases can reveal different points of view that will not be coded through the data related to the novice teachers' perceptions of mentoring relationships. The data collected reflected the perceptions of novice teachers at Viking High School and took into account the culture of faculty relationships in this particular learning environment. I took note of any discrepant cases and triangulated the data for further analysis.

Data Analysis Results

For this qualitative phenomenological research, data was gathered, recorded, and analyzed using several processes. Before the initial gathering of information needed, permission was granted both in the learning environment as well as the district of study. Participants were sought out through an assistant principal's list of novice teachers to the

school of study to be interviewed and observed. After consent from all six participants

was received, data were gathered first with interviewing. Each interview lasted

approximately 45-60 minutes and was recorded using a voice recorder on a password-

protected cellular device. Next, classroom observations were conducted. Additionally,

an observation of an administrative meeting was conducted before the end of the school

year to observe conversations between novice teachers as it pertained to their first-year

experiences at Viking High School. All notes of observations as well as transcriptions of

interviews were carefully read and aligned with the research questions of this study, and

coded into emerging categories. Through these processes, themes were created,

analyzed, and organized.

Data Analysis Process

After data collection was completed, I began the process of data analysis.

Creswell stated that data analysis consists of taking apart the individual responses,

putting responses together again and summarizing it (Creswell, 2012). Creswell (2012)

also outlined six steps to qualitative analysis which includes: (a) preparing the data, (b)

coding the data, (c) developing descriptions and themes, (d) presenting the themes

through narratives, (e) personal reflection on the findings, (f) and strategizing to validate

the findings. Participants were contacted via email to meet with me to verify their

responses for the purpose of member checking. After each interview, I transcribed the

voice recordings of each participant's responses into notes. I then organized all the

responses by using a chart of the interview questions labeled A-E, so that I could begin

visually narrowing down reoccurring statements and/or ideas. Additionally, I compared

the field notes from the meeting observation and compared it to responses from the interviews. I then categorized behaviors and comments in the meeting into the themes that emerged from the interview questions. After I created themes from the responses, I was then led to compare the themes to the research question and sub-questions that was the basis of this study:

RQ1: What are the lived experiences of novice teachers assigned a buddy teacher?

SQ1. What is the significance of a successful mentoring relationship on the decision of a novice teacher remaining in the teaching profession?

SQ2. How does the choice of mentor affect the outcome of the first year teacher's overall experience?

SQ3. What are some of the best practices for establishing and maintaining an effective mentoring program for induction teachers?

As a result, a foundation was laid for the need and creation of a project that would possibly improve the school of study's efforts to having a relevant mentoring program for new teachers.

Research Findings (Problem and Research)

The problem of this research centered on the growing attrition rates of new teachers in the state of the school of study. The purpose of this phenomenological study, therefore, was to examine the lived experiences of novice teachers and their relationships with their chosen mentor *or buddy teachers*. The essence of this study was to examine the participants' perceptions of their mentoring relationships for the improvement in choosing and training potential mentors for the school of study. After data analysis, four

themes emerged from the responses provided that supported the research questions: *relationship, assistance, goals, and growth*. The following interview questions yielded responses that led to the conclusion presented in this study.

Interview

Question 1: How would you describe your mentoring experience thus far?
All participants' responses to this question were similar with the exception of two participants. Four of the six participants answered positively in terms of their mentoring experiences were beneficial, and two of the participants described their experiences as "fortunate" to have been assigned the person they had as a mentor. Teacher A was confident in saying that the relationship that had formed with the mentor could easily reach beyond the school, and was "grateful" for the chosen mentor. Teacher D stated that the chosen mentor was "amazing" and was "diligent and dedicated to my success". Another positive response from Teacher D, who is in the second year of teaching, explained how the mentor was also the coaching teacher when Teacher D was a student teacher. Subsequently, the mentoring of the first year was an extension of the relationship they had formed during the practicum experience. Teacher C was more of a "people person", and did not limit the relationship for mentoring to the assigned mentor, but reached out to several people in the department for specific needs. Teacher B, however, did not start out with a mentor until the middle of the school year and relied on teachers close by to "take under their wings" and navigate Teacher B to the end of the year. The responses for Question 1 exhibited the effects of the relationship between novice teacher and his or her mentor. Most responses pointed out positive aspects of the

mentors and expressed gratefulness for the roles the mentors have played during the first year.

Interview Question 2: What have been the most beneficial aspects of your mentoring relationship?

Five of the six participants' responses were similar for this question in describing how the mentors helped them navigate through the day-to-day functions and operations of the school. One participant described it as "crucial in having someone who could point me to the right person for any given situation". Another reoccurring answer reflected the benefits of having someone experienced in their subject areas to assist them with teaching materials, as well as the organization of such materials. Two participants further added the emotional support as being beneficial in the relationship. Teacher C stated, "some days I just need someone to tell me to 'get my head in the game' as a tough love sort of thing when I was feeling bad or sorry about myself". Teacher E added, "it's been beneficial having someone with experience and a wealth of knowledge to lean on when I have questions on days when I feel low, confused, or upset." Through this question, participants expressed various positive aspects of having a mentor. Question 2 revealed the aspect of personal and professional growth as a result of the mentoring relationship. The responses also reflected how mentoring assists in novice teachers in achieving self-efficacy.

Interview Question 3: What areas of the mentoring process have been the most challenging?

Three participants' responses reflected the need for additional time and better proximity with their mentors. Teacher A stated, "Although it was a good year, finding time to talk to my mentor about specific needs would have helped a whole lot more." Teacher F added by saying:

I wish I had been able to be in a room next to my mentor, or at least on the same floor. It would have made collaboration a lot easier. It was also difficult not having the same planning period as my mentor. We missed out on a majority of our in-school relationship because of this scheduling mismatch.

Teacher E added that the district's separate mentoring program for new teachers didn't feel as "organic" as the in school mentoring, because it "felt like one more thing I had to do on top of other induction responsibilities." Teacher C expressed a need for more feedback teaching performance, while Teacher D felt like the mentor often got off track by discussing subjects unrelated to instruction, but because they had so much in common, it strengthened their friendship. Teacher B's responses were quite unique, however, as compared to the other participants' responses. Teacher B's responses reflected that there were many philosophical differences that challenged their relationship, both professionally as well as personally. Teacher B revealed that she and her mentor had polarized views on education because her mentor only wanted to teach higher level

students. She felt that her mentor had negative views of diversity. "I am here to teach every student regardless of race, gender or level they're at", she stated.

This response revealed the need for the proper pairing of mentor to novice teacher. The right match strengthened a successful mentoring relationship personally, professionally, and philosophically. Question 3 also revealed the need for close proximity and access so that novice teachers can receive adequate feedback.

Interview Question 4: What have specific characteristics of your mentor benefited or challenged this relationship?

The responses to this question were overall positive, citing characteristics such as being organized, and resourceful in always keeping the participants upbeat and positive. Teacher C stated that the mentor "gave me room to grow by giving me opportunities to fix what I got wrong without damaging my appearance to my students." Teacher D said the mentor was "no nonsense" and "straight to the point", which was a good quality because this was a good personality match. Teacher B's response reflected the challenges of the relationship: "My mentor's negativity has really challenged our relationship...I need positivity! I am a new teacher! I need people to lift me up because I need a shoulder to cry on, you know?" Teacher B also added, "I have never felt comfortable around my mentor because several times she has shown me that she is racist and that she will do whatever it takes to get what she wants." Question 4 highlighted the importance of mentors possessing the interpersonal qualities as pointed out by Ibrahim (2012), that mentors should have- strong interpersonal and communicative skills.

Interview Question 5: How would you describe your first year without the aid of your mentor?

The participants' responses reflected what the literature supports as it pertains to novice teachers' needs for having mentors. Teacher A said, "It would have been very, very hard to handle that one class that gave me issues if I didn't have someone to go to, and I internalize a lot, so it was good to have someone to vent to, so I wouldn't feel so isolated." Teacher B stated, "Striving because my relationship with me real mentor was kinda sour, but I had the other mentors that stepped in and took me as their own". Teacher C described it as "initially scary" and explains how the first year was a series of trial and error lessons, but "by the end of the first semester, I felt a great deal more confident in what I was doing." Teacher D said, "If I didn't have extra support, I would have quit. It would have been very difficult." Teacher E replied, "I would have made it...it would have been difficult, and nowhere near as fun (laughs) without her." Teacher F described it, "Without my mentor, it would have been more stressful. I know I would have felt more rushed at times, and just scrambled to get all the things worked out. There were times, both because of personal and professional events, that I needed my mentor as a shoulder to cry on, and a smiling face...I couldn't have enjoyed this year as much as I did." Question 5 responses showed the importance of a mentor during the first year for the novice teacher. The words "isolated" and "stressful" summarized how novice teachers described how the experience would have been without the presence of a mentor.

Interview Question 6: What would you say are the most essential qualities of a good mentor? Why?

The responses to this question were varied among the participants. Teacher F said the good qualities of a mentor included being "eager, innovative, and a strong, effective communicator. Teacher E said that mentors must be "observant" adding that "new teachers don't always ask for help, so if a mentor checks on the new teacher often, or notes when the mentee is having a good or bad day, the mentor can lessen the stress by offering help early on." Another participant stated that a good mentor should be able to "assess what a new teacher needs, and listen." Teacher A reiterates that a good mentor should have "patience and understanding" when it pertains to what a new teacher is going through. Teacher B stated, "A good mentor is a person who is truly concerned and cares about your passion for educational growth." Teacher B went on to say that a good mentor checks on their mentor daily, and "provides an environment that is safe to share personal concerns and spend time outside of school." Teacher D stated that a good mentor should be "intelligent and available". The responses for Question 6 reflected the qualities of a good mentor from the perspective of the novice teacher. According to the novice teachers, mentors should be compassionate, empowering, and relationship-oriented.

Interview Question 7: Are there some specific experiences that made you want to leave the teaching profession?

The participants' responses also reflected the literature pertaining to feelings of being overwhelmed was a factor of novice teachers' stress and subsequent departures

from the profession. Teacher B said, "The amount of professional development on top of other first year teaching things, such as Safe-T (an evaluation tool for first-year teachers) made me question if I wanted to even stay in this profession." Teacher D stated that "the paperwork and expectations outside of teaching, uh, student behavior, enforced curriculum, difficult parents...let's see, I think I've covered it." Teacher C discussed how overbearing parents led her to make some decisions career-wise. Teacher C stated that "parents would constantly email me giving excuses about their child and telling me I was doing something wrong. It got to the point where it was practically harassment, and there was nothing I could do about it." Teacher C's plans are to leave the classroom for personal reasons. She stated:

> The only reason I can think of for leaving this profession is that I have a Master's +30, so I am fortunate to get a raise that comes along with that. As a single person that has a mortgage, I even find it very difficult to cover all of my bills. I make sure to tutor extra during the week and administer the SAT on weekends. I have already picked up summer work just to make sure those bills are staying covered.

Teacher E's age may have a factor in her response. "No. I've had rough days, and even the occasional rough week, but I'm 32, so I've had enough jobs to know the difference between a bad day and a bad choice in career, and I love my job." Question 7 illustrated that novice teachers are burdened with administrate, district, and state-mandated tasks and other duties that can compound the stress already felt by novice teachers.

Interview Question 8: The participants' responses were quite reflective and similar in their themes of relationships and student relationships. Table 1 describes interview responses among the participants for Question 8.

Table 1

Participants' Responses to Interview Question 8

Interview Question 8: Are there some specific examples that encouraged you to want to stay in the teaching profession? Explain.			
Teacher B	Teacher C	Teacher D	Teacher F
"The amount of support I've received from other teachers has encouraged me to stay in the profession. They allowed me to vent, cry, and chat outside of school. The strong relationships I've formed with my co-workers outside of school helped me decide to stick with it."	"My relationship with my kids has gotten so much deeper and meaningful. I am seeing kids again for classes and I am seeing kids return after they graduate and tell me to thank you and just to see how I am doing. I get little notes from time to time reminding me I do make a difference and I somehow made an impact on their life for the better."	"I enjoy this job. When kids have that 'aha' moment, it is very fun to watch."	"The day flies by when I can watch my students ask each other questions, and engage in argument and work with their hands to figure out scientific problems and get those 'aha' moments. Those are the days that keep me smiling and in the thick of it with my little scientists and make the decision to keep teaching not a decision at all."

The table for Question 8 illustrates a common response among the novice teachers, which is that students are the reason why they wish to remain in the teaching profession.

Interview Question 9: Do you think Viking High School should continue to provide new teachers with mentors? Why or why not?

The participants, overall, were in agreement on this question concerning Viking High School's mentoring effort. One participant stated that mentoring is needed because we've based a lot of burnout on the fact that the school is so large, and having an appointed mentor helps and goes a long way to be able to just pop your head in, and ask

a specific question." Teacher B added, "Only if they are going to be effective for the teacher they are mentoring. Honestly, I think that the teacher should have some say so on who they want their mentor to be. From my experience, if I had some say, I would have a more positive outlook on mentor teachers." Question 9 varied responses illustrated the need to properly pair the right mentor to the novice teacher. The effective relationship rendered success in the critical needs of the first year.

Interview Question 10: Would you consider being a mentor after your 5th year of teaching? Why or why not?

All participants indicated they would love to become a mentor themselves once they made it to the fifth year. Teacher F stated, "I really thrive and enjoy challenges and leadership roles, and maybe I can apply what I've learned to help someone else." Question10 showed that successful mentoring relationships engender a cooperative spirit among staff members, and has potential to expand and improve.

Administrative Meeting Observation

This meeting was held briefly during what is called Professional Early Planning, or (PEP), a staff development held every Wednesday morning. Students are on a Late Start Schedule and arrive an hour later, and school operates on an abbreviated schedule for the rest of the day. All participants and the assistant principal of curriculum were in attendance. All participants were familiar with each other through various collegial interactions. The meeting began, and the colleagues consistently joked with each other throughout the meeting and during most of the discussion but were respectful of each other's experiences and opinions. When one participant expressed her disappointment

with her choice of mentor, the other participants immediately gave her encouraging

statements and expressed their concerns that her experience was not as great as their own.

There was considerable discussion on how cumbersome the district's new teacher

induction program was for them. Four of the six participants were required to take part in

the district's program for novice teachers. A question was raised if the program would

continue as is, or would be streamlined for an easier transition. A teacher jokingly added

that he wished the district could have a night like "the dating game" to meet their new

mentors to get to know them. The assistant principal said she thought it would be a good

idea. The meeting ended on an upbeat, positive tone, with discussions of it being close to

summer vacation. Table 2 describes the responses to questions asked of the participants

during the meeting.

Table 2

Administrative Meeting Observation Notes

Questions	Responses
4. Were novice teachers asked about their experiences? Did everyone provide feedback?	The meeting was opened up by the assistant principal in thanking them for the wonderful job they were doing so far. She encouraged them that the school year would not have been possible without them. She then opened up the floor for teachers to share the highlights of the school year with their buddy teachers. 4 of the 6 participants responded positively. Two participants did not provide feedback.
6. Were specific concerns raised to the administration about their novice teacher experiences?	Yes. One participant cited the concerns of not being paired with an effective mentor. There was then discussion as to what the participant felt was the main issue that the administration could address. No one raised concerns.
7. Were novice teachers allowed to express concerns to each other during the meeting?	No. There was no opportunity for individual conversations during the -meeting.
9. Were suggestions or decisions made about improving the mentoring experiences during the meeting?	Yes. One participant asked if the district would adopt a "pairing up" for mentors and mentees based on personalities.

Pattern-Themes in Findings

The data collected from participants through 10 question interviews and 30-minute observation of a new teacher meeting for this study was then organized to extract recurring patterns and then coded into themes. The process of coding the data sought to answer the research question and sub-questions. From close examination of data, the following patterns emerged: (a) participants overall felt fortunate to have positive

relationships with mentors, (b) mentees viewed mentors as resourceful, knowledgeable,

and supportive, (c) mentors should have innate qualities to be effective, (d) the first year

is burdened with paperwork and curriculum demands, (e) novice teachers are encouraged

to stay in teaching, and (f) mentees desire to become mentors themselves. Table 3 shows

the relationship between the research question and subquestions to the themes and

patterns.

Table 3

Research Questions, Patterns, and Themes

Research question	Patterns	Themes
RQ 1: What are the lived experiences of novice teachers assigned to a 'buddy', or mentor teacher?	Overall, participants felt "fortunate" and "beneficial" to have an assigned mentor. All but one participant felt comfortable with their mentor. Mentors were essential to day to day functions of learning the school and culture and responsibilities.	Relationship and Assistance
SQ1: What is the significance of a successful mentoring relationship on the decision of a novice teacher remaining in the teaching profession?	All participants noted that with the help of their mentors, or sought out mentors, their decision to stay in the profession was aided. Participants saw mentors as assistants in helping them sort out problems, a source of emotional and professional support.	Assistance, Goals, and Growth

Table continues

Research question	Patterns	Themes
SQ 2: How do the attributes of the mentor teacher affect the novice teachers overall experience	Most participants noted that mentors should be organized, resourceful, and knowledgeable; observant and a good listener; have empathy and patience, sense of humor, positivity; upbeat and positive.	Relationship
SQ 3: What are the best practices for establishing and maintaining an effective mentoring program for induction teachers?	Ensuring personalities match; sharing similar subject areas, pedagogical beliefs; more opportunities for collaboration, common planning; close proximity with mentors	Relationship, Assistance, Goals, and Growth

Salient Data and Discrepant Cases

There was no salient data that matched the themes and patterns of this study; however, if discrepant data occurred, I would have singularly coded the data for further findings. There were no discrepant cases extracted from the member checking process of this study.

Accuracy of Data Analysis Procedures

After the collection and organization, I triangulated the data. Creswell (2012) stated the importance of data triangulation, which allows the researcher to ensure the accuracy of the findings as data from different sources are closely, examined to form and strongly support a theme. I compared the interview responses to the discussions presented by the participants in the administrative meeting to ensure that responses were aligned with the sentiments shared during the interviews. I also used member checking

by sending each participant a copy of the findings, as well as allowing participants to discuss the findings with me. Creswell (2012) asserted that member checking allowed for researchers to check the accuracy, and the participants have the ability to ensure that their responses are realistic and fair as well as truly representative of their intentions. All six participants verified the information given was their initial intent and message.

Summary of Outcomes

The problem being addressed in this study centered on the need to examine the mentoring process of novice teachers in order to address the growing teacher shortage, retention, and attrition in the school of study's state and district. Through this study's data collection and analysis, themes emerged that addressed the research question and sub-questions. Through the novice teachers' perceptions of successful mentoring relationships, common themes emerged: relationships, assistance, attributes, and growth.

Woolfolk and Hoy's (2005) study based on Bandera's Self-Efficacy theory, noted that there was a strong correlation between self-efficacy of novice teachers and the support given to them by their mentors. The core of the relationships, based on the data, stemmed from positive interactions, emotional support, the characteristics of the chosen mentors, and the positive impact for subsequent growth, and staying power as a result of the relationships between the novice and his or her mentor.

Project Deliverable and Findings

The results of the study yielded important factors for implementing an improved and purposeful mentoring program at the school of study. Through the interview responses and meeting observation, several findings emerged. The key findings of this

study showed that new teachers rely on emotional support; however, age and path of certification dictated mentoring needs. Additionally, not only did all participants desire to remain in the profession, but all participants also desired to be mentors themselves as a result of their positive mentoring relationships.

Section 3: The Project

Introduction

The research conducted in this qualitative phenomenological study provides a means of considering and evaluating best practices for effective mentoring at Viking High School. Although Viking High School uses a "buddy teacher" system, there is little to no feedback or follow-up on the effectiveness of the mentoring relationship. The project resulting from this study is an implementation of a more focused and intentional staff development for veteran teachers who are chosen as mentors. With the impending teacher shortage in the state due to forced retirement and fears that more teachers are exiting the profession, administrators will need to place more focus on the first year novice teachers spend in the learning environment.

Selection of Basic Genre Project

There is an increasing teacher shortage in the Southeastern state of the school of study, and more attention needs to be given to the intake of novice teachers to make an impact on the attrition rates. Mentoring is one step in which new teachers can gain valuable support during the initial years of teaching. Proper mentor training is necessary to focus attention on how effective the local school's mentoring processes impact the retention of novice teachers; therefore, the perception of novice teachers can provide valuable insight on areas that need more attention and oversight. In analyzing data, I study found that mentoring relationships do indeed have a major impact on the success of the novice's initial years in the classroom, which draws attention to the proper pairing of mentors to mentees, as well as the need for consistent and meaningful relationships that

are formed. Staff development for mentors would be beneficial for a successful

mentoring partnership between the novice and experienced teacher, which may impact

classroom management, student learning, and attitudes toward the profession.

Project Goals

The goals of this project will be to assist chosen mentors in enacting and

recording the mentoring process as recommended by the state department of education.

Teachers who have 5 years or more experience in the classroom and who have been

chosen as mentors by the school administration, will be the target audience for this

training. Goals of the training will include mentors being able to (a) understand their

purposes as mentors, (b) understand the various needs of novice teachers, (c) understand

the steps in the mentoring cycle, (d) understand and apply the various components of

coaching dialogue, (e) understand the various methods of observation and feedback, (f)

understand the incorporation of teacher learning opportunities, and (g) understand how to

assist mentees with district- and state-required evaluation tools.

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Rationale

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As stated in Section 1, there is a need to focus on the retention of teachers in the

state of study because CERRA has reported a shortage, with high numbers of classroom

teaching positions still vacant after the school year began (CERRA, 2016). The reported

shortage is causing the state to shift toward focusing on novice teachers, as research has

strongly supported that half of new teachers in the United States leave the profession

within the first 5 years of service, and attrition has an impact on local costs as well as

student achievement(see Henning, et al., 2015). Mentoring, according to studies, has

been found to positively affect the attrition rates of novice teachers (Pogodzinski, 2013).

Therefore, I conducted a qualitative, phenomenological study to explore the lived

experiences of novice teachers who were engaged in the mentoring process and to

examine their perspectives on what makes a successful mentoring relationship.

I decided to develop professional development training as the study's project

based on the data and received from the novice teachers in this study. The participants'

interview responses echoed common themes of attributes of good mentors as well as

resourcefulness. Another need of the novice teachers included the need for feedback.

Teachers chosen as mentors have an important role, and professional development

training I developed for the project will place an emphasis on the varied needs of novice

teachers. Additionally, staff development will equip mentors with an overview of the

mentoring cycle as recommended by the state department of education of the study site,

as well as information on the state's upcoming evaluation tools.

Review of the Literature

This study focused on the mentoring relationships formed between novice

teachers and their mentors (buddy teachers). I examined the dynamics in the relationship

through the perspective of the novice teacher in order to ascertain what builds a

successful mentoring relationship and how the novice years (1-3 years in service) are

affected by the success of this relationship. The literature strongly supports that many

factors that a novice teacher experiences can be positively affected by meaningful and

continuous mentoring from a more experienced teacher (see Ambrosetti, 2014). There

are four areas highlighted in the literature as it pertains to why mentoring is beneficial for

novice teachers: (a) novice teachers and discipline/classroom management, (b) novice teachers and stress, (c) teacher self-efficacy, and (d) professional development's role in mentoring.

Novice Teachers and Discipline/Classroom Management

Sezer (2017) defined novice teachers as those who are generally in the first 3 years of the profession, with the first year being the most difficult year. Sezer also asserted that novice teachers enter the profession with expectations, and that classroom management was the most difficult task. According to Sezer's study, disruptive behaviors stem from inadequate teacher qualifications that included dull teaching methods, disorganized classrooms, and improper handling of the disruptive behaviors arranged learning environments, overreacting to disruptive behaviors with stereotypical attitude (Sezer, 2107). Sezer found that disruptive behaviors contributed to stress, anxiety, and negatively impacted the morale of novice teachers. The findings also revealed that novice teachers have trouble with disruptive behaviors, and are severely affected by these behaviors (Sezer, 2017). Lack of disciplinary control and overall classroom management has an impact on teacher attrition.

Classroom management is defined by the actions a teacher takes to ensure an environment that promotes academic as well as social learning (Wolf, Jarodzka, Vander Bogert, and Boshuizen , 2016). Teachers are tasked and often pressured into planning learning activities as well as handling behavior so that the learning process is not hindered (Larson, 2015). More experienced teachers have the ability to observe classroom scenes, make sense of them, and seek information as part of a consistent

monitoring of activities that will either promote or hinder the learning process (Larson, 2015). Additionally, experienced teachers have a quicker response time than novice teachers, and research has shown that novice teachers often fail to notice events that disrupt learning (Wolf et al., 2016). Wolff et al. investigated differences in how experienced and novice teachers processed learning environments by observing video recordings showing teachers' eye movements during instruction. Eye tracking data were analyzed with software. The authors concluded that novice teachers lacked the "specific knowledge to focus their attention to specific kinds of behavior while trying to focus on other information (Wolf, et al., 2016). According to Wolf, et al. (2016) expert teachers have greater conceptual knowledge and are more perceptive of classroom scenarios that disrupt learning, while novice teachers focus on surface-level knowledge.

Wolff et al.'s (2016) study further revealed that novice teachers tended to focus on actions of one student at a time, and become easily overwhelmed, while their more experienced counterparts distributed attention easily over a group of students. This action causes novice teachers to be unaware of behaviors that cause lack of attention and other disruptions. The researchers also asserted that the amount of teaching experience does influence noticing and handling classroom events (Wolf, et al., 2016). A survey of 336 pre-service teachers conducted by Rueport and Woodcock revealed that novice teachers tend to use short-term fixes such as proximity and yelling to manage misbehavior rather than long-term solutions such as establishing routines as cited in Kwok, 2017). Kwok's mixed-methods study explored first-year teachers in an urban setting of 89 secondary and elementary teachers to show how relationship beliefs shaped

actions in the classroom. Kwok concluded that poor classroom management could have a

an increased impact on teachers in urban school settings due to larger, diverse classes as

well as limited resources (Kwok, 2017). Sezer (2017) asserted that peer coaching can

improve the novice teacher's ability to manage the classroom, which can reduce the

problems novice teachers experience dealing with disruptive behaviors. A case study by

MacSuga and Simonsen (2011) explored classroom management models of two teachers

in a New England middle school who were mentored by administrators and trained in

effective management strategies. The study reported that student on-task behavior was

greatly improved by mentorship (Larson, 2015). The literature, in summation, supports

that novice teachers benefit from the expertise of experienced teachers through mentoring

as it relates to classroom management.

Novice Teachers and Stress

Dias-Lacy and Guirguis (2017) stated that the first year of a teacher can determine

his or her longevity in the profession. New teachers come into the profession with

unrealistic expectations, and when the expectations meet reality, the result is often a

major factor in stress. Wolgart and Fischer (2017) outlined that the teaching profession is

tied to high levels of stress due to heavy workloads, time constraints, and extra-curricular

obligations. According to Collie, Shapka, Perry, and Martin (2015) teaching is a

rewarding career; however, nearly one-third of teachers are stressed with these following

top three factors: (a) workload, (b) school (organizational), and (c) student-related

(behavioral) issues. Special education is especially hard hit. According to Wong, Ruble,

Yu, and McGrew (2017) teacher attrition rates in special education are roughly 13%,

double the amount of regular education teachers. Wong, et al. (2017) stated that abundant research supports the fact that high attrition rates in special education are directly related to work-associated stress. Wong, et al. (2017) purported that discipline problems, poor student-teacher relationships, and the differentiation of student needs have been connected to increased teacher attrition.

Teacher stress not only has an impact on the health of the teachers, but is a leading cause of teacher attrition (Prilleltensky, et al., 2016). The researchers also asserted that isolation is a large risk factor for stress in novice teachers. Feelings of isolation can lead to anxiety, loneliness, and inadequacy, and the lack of opportunities for novice teachers to share these feelings with co-workers can lead to helplessness. A survey of novice teachers highlighted specific needs which included, logistical help, discussing ideas with colleagues, and emotional guidance (Prilleltensky, et al., 2016). A way to lessen the problem of attrition is through the implementation of mentoring programs because mentoring programs allow new teachers to engender a meaningful and personal relationship with a teacher of more experience (Dias-Lacy & Guirguis, 2017). According to Dias-Lacy, and Guirguis (2017), mentoring can offer the benefits of higher retention, better professional development, improved abilities for problem-solving, learned strategies, higher self-confidence and self-esteem, and improved attitudes toward the profession. Wolgart and Fischer (2017) assert that collegial support offers a buffer to teacher stress. The lack of support, thereof, can lead to stress. Teachers who do not interact with their colleagues on a regular basis may experience higher levels of stress according to Wolgart and Fischer (2017). Dias-Lacy and Guiguis (2017) further support

the idea of the effects unsupported novice teachers when they stated that the use of

mentoring programs may have not only been a solution to high attrition, but also assisted

new teachers with the tremendous workload, stress, and lack of administrative support.

The Importance of Self-Efficacy

According to Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory, self-efficacy covers the extent at

which one believes he or she can perform a certain task or reach goals (Hasselquist,

Herndon, & Kitchel, 2017) and for classroom teachers, this belief is directly related to job

satisfaction. Hammack and Ivey (2017) clarified that the greater a teacher's self-efficacy

is the greater the job performance. According to Hasselquist, Herndon, and Kitchell

(2017), verbal persuasion, one of the facets of Bandura's theory, occurs when other

colleagues offer encouragement or strategies through positive feedback. Through

consistent and purposeful discourse, a novice can achieve high levels of efficacy,

according to Bandura's theory. Colson, Sparks, Berridge, Frimming, and Willis (2017)

stated that positive first-year experiences are connected to positive, quality menotoring

experiences. In a study by Woolfolk and Hoy (2005) a positive relationship was found

between new teachers' self-efficacy and the quality of help and support they received

from their mentors. The literature strongly supports the idea that mentoring has a

positive effect on teacher self-efficacy.

Teacher efficacy also has a direct impact on student achievement. Hammack

(2017) stated that teacher self-efficacy is a teacher's belief that he or she can impact

student learning. In 1984, Gibson and Dembo based their studies on Bandura's theory

and coined it *personal teaching efficacy* or *PTE* (Hammack, 2017). According to

Hammack (2017) PTE must be present in order to have student learning. In a mixed-methods study, a survey was used on elementary teachers, K-5, and the results related that a lack of efficacy could indicate that teachers need *mastery experiences* to improve their effectiveness in the classroom (Hammack, 2017). According to Colson, et al. (2017), more emphasis on student achievement places more challenges on teachers in education programs to meet the demands of what it takes to be deemed an effective teacher. It is, therefore, important that new teachers maintain a high level of efficacy in order to remain in the teaching profession, especially in high poverty schools. Colson, et al., (2017) also asserted that when pre-service teachers feel a sense of empowerment, retention rates are improved in learning environments. The profession of teaching is stressful and often results in burnout. In an explorative study of 144 undergrad teacher candidates, the participants were placed in a year-long student-teaching assignment and were asked to complete the Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale or TSES designed by Ohio State University. Results of the study suggested that teachers who felt stronger senses of efficacy tended to engage students and manage behaviors more adequately, and also tended to stay in the classroom longer (Colson et al., 2017). Patterson and Seabrooks-Blackmore (2017) stated that teachers have a strong impact on student outcomes and teach in ways that can reach students; teachers with self-efficacy has strong connections with success in the classroom. A sense of self-efficacy may positively affect feelings of inadequacy and helplessness in more difficult teaching scenarios.

Professional Learning Communities (PLC), also promote collaboration among teachers. A collaborative culture is created when teachers help other teachers to become

more effective in their practice and work with students (Battersky & Verdi, 2014). PLC's thrive on the idea that teachers "need to participate in the authentic interaction that includes sharing both failures and mistakes" (Battersky & Verdi, 2014, p. 23). This collaboration also includes the ability to analyze and criticize procedures in an effort to engender self-reflection (Battersky & Verdi, 2014). In Battery and Verdi's study, a number of first-year music teachers were examined. Art teachers generally work in isolation, and for the participants, the main concern was with difficulty in networking with colleagues. The results of the study also revealed that teachers need access to local expertise and wisdom that is generated by working together. A qualitative study by Althauser (2015) proved that job-embedded professional development had a positive impact on student achievement in mathematics. Althauser also affirmed that a pedagogy course can teach subject matter, but it is the using the knowledge requires practice. , Collegial support is a help to teachers in transforming instructional practices with pedagogy, and improvement in practices is a direct result of planning, support, and reflecting on practices (Althauser, 2015).

Mentoring as Professional Development

According to Henning, Gut, and Beam (2015), a mentor teacher is described as someone who serves as a mentor beginning teachers or teacher candidates during their first year of teaching. A mentor's responsibilities include introducing the novice to the work of teaching (Henning, Gut, & Beam, 2015). Ambrosetti (2014) asserted that mentoring is a relationship that is an interpersonal one and is developed through social interactions that are purposeful. The mentor and mentee are to experience the journey of

forming a relationship; therefore, the action of mentoring is reciprocal. Henning et al.

(2015) stated that the mentor's choice of how he or she mentors determine the nature of

the relationship: personal or collegial. Relationships move through three important

stages: formal, cordial, and friendship. The level of the mentoring relationships can

improve the retention rate of first-year teachers (Henning, et al, 2015).

Mentoring is not only beneficial for the novice, but can also serve as a form of

professional development for those who mentor. Smith and Nadelson (2016) stated that

mentoring allows collaboration opportunities to reflect on the mentors' practices.

According to Smith and Nadelson, a study performed by Grisham and colleagues (2004)

reported three case studies in which teachers gained useful curricular ideas from their

student teachers' lessons. Smith and Nadelson (2016) asserted that being the 'expert' in

the relationship does not allow the mentor to take notice of his or her own practices.

Because mentoring requires one to critique, guide, and reflect, it allows one to improve

one's practices in the classroom, thereby becoming an effective method of professional

development. The opportunity for structured mentoring may increase the impact of

mentoring on professional development.

There are considerations to be made, however, as it pertains to teacher mentors.

Ambrosetti pointed out "despite the important role that mentor teachers play in the

development of the future generation of teachers, research has demonstrated that few

teachers receive training or preparation for mentoring" (Ambrosetti, 2014, p. 30).

Ambrosetti also stated that mentoring doesn't come naturally for everyone; therefore, an

effective teacher may not make an effective mentor. There is an assumption is that

experienced teachers make better mentors, while many are not equipped to successfully mentor novice teachers when difficult problems arise; many experienced teachers revert to their own experiences, duplicating what was taught to them by their own supervising teachers (Ambrosetti, 2014). This assertion supports the idea that while mentoring can be beneficial for all parties involved, attention and time should be devoted to ensuring that mentors are compassionate, willing, and open for growth.

Project Description

The project resulting from this study will inform an intentional and focused mentor training for mentors chosen at the school of study. Although the district of study offers voluntary mentoring training, Viking High School does not have in place a specific training for mentors. There is a need to examine the needs of novice teachers, as the state is beginning to hire new teachers through various hiring paths. Not all novice teachers will enter the profession straight from college but may be coming from the workforce using teaching as a second career. Chosen mentors also need to understand and practice the cycles of the mentoring relationship, and the need to practice intentional classroom observations with appropriate and meaningful feedback. The project is a 3-day professional development that will explore: (a) the reasons why we mentor, (b) the qualities of a mentor, (c) the various needs of new teachers, (d) the mentoring relationship cycle, and (e) the steps of providing coaching and feedback. Additionally, the three day professional development will highlight how mentors can assist novice teachers with district and state requirements for educators.

Needed Resources

The proposed project will be implemented during the 2019-2020 academic year and will utilize a mentoring training manual provided by the state department of education for the school of study. The mentoring manual will provide valuable information on the teacher shortage, the stages of the mentoring cycle, establishing trust, conducting classroom observations, and providing valuable feedback. Another potential resource would be that administration supply incentives for mentors such as compensatory time for training, or exemption from a particular duty, or the ability to use mentoring time as a part of required staff development that each teacher is assigned to complete every school year.

Existing Supports

The district in which the school of study has an induction process and program for novice teachers, all novice teachers come into Viking High School with a sense of mentoring and mentorship. Viking High School has a buddy teacher system in place that is arranged by the assistant principal of curriculum. The assistant principal of curriculum designs a grid to pair a new teacher with a seasoned teacher for the first year prior the beginning of the school year, mainly pairing novices and mentors who are members of the same department. The school district also provides training through the state department so that potential mentors are certified, which is required by the state department of education for the school/district of study.

Potential Barriers

Experienced teachers taking on another task, such as mentoring a new teacher with documentation and intentionality may be a hindrance to mentors. There is an increase in administrative duties, and the state is adopting a new teacher evaluation tool which will require all teachers to put in more time in lesson plans with more emphasis on state standards integrations, engaging lessons, and use of technology. While I work at the school of study, the responsibilities outside of classroom management and instruction has increased over the past 2-3 years. Many teachers spend their planning periods taking free technology sessions and are expected to document each session for administration. This use of time can interfere with the mentor's ability to spend adequate time providing feedback or providing instructional support. Another barrier may be the availability to match a certified mentor and a novice who teach the same subject and/or have the same planning period to have a set time to meet, and therefore will be forced to use a day after or before school. Teachers may not be willing to buy into becoming a mentor if they see it as a hindrance to their time, which many believe is already stretched. The proposed project is designed to bring more intentionality to the existing mentoring program by a unified system of tracking and reflecting on the mentoring relationship between mentor and novice. Each novice teacher will write a reflection relating to his or her interactions and relationships with his or her mentor after each quarter. These journals will be electronically recorded in Google Drive and submitted to the assistant principal of curriculum and will serve as a one professional development requirement of five that is required of all teachers. The reflections generated from the journals will be utilized in

continued refinement of the induction efforts by the school of study with the intent of improving the retention rates as fewer young teachers are entering the profession.

Proposal Implementation and Timetable

The implementation of this proposed project will begin during the 2019-2020 school year. The school year is divided into two semesters and the preparation and staff development would take place during the summer, and the training will take place before the beginning of the first semester, the day that teachers return to school, and before mentors meet their mentees. Implementation will take place during the first semester and continue through the second semester because some teachers' schedules of courses taught may change during the second semester.

June-July (2019)

- Planning and organizing mentor training

August-September (2019)

- Initial meeting and mentor training
- Mentors meet mentees
- Mentors set up first observation of mentees

October 2019

- First classroom observation completed
- Overview of observations, data analysis
- Post-observation conferences completed
- PLC meeting with mentors

December 2019

- Reflective Journals for Semester 1

- PLC meeting with mentees

January-February (2020)

- Second-semester classroom observation completed

- Overview of observations and data analysis

- Needs assessment: additional supports offered

March-May (2020)

- Professional Journals completed

- Reflections of experiences

- 2 PLC meetings with mentors and mentees.

Roles and Responsibilities of Student and Others

As the researcher, it is my responsibility to present the proposed professional development to the administration. After the data of this study has been presented, the plan will be established how and when the training will take place, as well as who will be chosen as mentors/participants. All communications will be established through the assistant principal of curriculum and me. After the initial meeting, the administration will emphasize the importance of documentation, and all materials for observations and reflections will be available for teachers in a shared Google folder that can be accessed at any time by the mentors. Teachers will be given freedom to choose when and which type of observation tool they choose to use, as well as establish their own times for individual conferencing with their chosen mentors.

Project Implications

   This project will be impactful in various ways. With the growing teacher shortage, it is vital that school districts and schools within those districts provide intentional and meaningful support for new teachers that enter the profession. Providing research and analyzed data will provide the local school to increase efforts to support novice teachers in and out of the classroom so that attrition of those new teachers may be positively impacted. New teachers enter the profession with different needs, and experienced teachers can provide the needed help to navigate those first few years.

   With professional development on the mentoring process, teachers who mentor can gain valuable insight into their own professional and pedagogical practices as they pass on advice and support for novice teachers. As the focus is placed on mentoring relationships, the professional community within the school may be improved. It is vital for novice teachers to feel a sense of belonging, and the mentoring relationship will provide a means to fulfilling this need.

Local Community

   As the teaching profession continues to be challenged with shortages, it is vital to retain teachers beyond the first year of teachers, so those teachers can gain mastery of content, class management, and overall efficacy. High attrition rates may impact student learning and may be costly to local school districts. Providing support to new teachers can impact the numbers of teachers who choose to remain in the classroom so that learning will not be impacted. The greater community benefits through higher student

achievement, and lower costs from the local school district that is needed to continually recruit, hire, and retain new teachers.

Larger Context

This project will continue to highlight the need for careful, purposeful work in the efforts to retain teachers in a career that is facing shortages throughout the nation, as well as the district/school of study. When novice teachers receive adequate support, positive collegial interactions, and efficacy in their classrooms, research has proven that those teachers will remain in the profession. This project will assist the school of study in setting forth a model for other schools in the district, as well as the state to follow. If there is a consistent effort to focus on effective mentoring, there may be a greater chance that attrition rates will be positively affected, and teacher turnover will be improved. With improved teacher turnover, student achievement may also be improved.

Possible Social Change Implications

The southeastern state's teacher shortages are continuing to grow. The state is also not producing enough new teachers from its colleges' education programs to fulfill the projected shortages over the next few years. As teachers are reaching retirement age, the state's budget no longer supports extra income opportunities for retirees to work beyond their retirement years (Self, 2018). This project has far-reaching implications, as the importance of retaining classroom teachers not only benefits professionals, but students, whose academic success depends on knowledgeable, confident, and competent teachers. Mentoring has the capacity to bring about greater job satisfaction and meaning,

which could serve both mentors and mentees as the teaching profession grows under more scrutiny.

Importance of Project to Local Stakeholders

The literature supports the idea that mentoring benefits both the mentor as well as the mentee. According to Smith and Nadelson (2016), the act of reflecting, critiquing, and guiding during the mentoring process requires one to look at one's own practices with the possibility of improvement. For teachers who serve as mentors, a sense of renewed energy in the profession is often a by-product of fostering positive mentoring relationships with novice teachers. The literature also supports the idea that the exchange of learning can be reciprocal (Ambrosetti, 2014) as many younger teachers come into the classroom with innovative ideas, particularly in technology integration and student engagement. The project is important for developing effective mentoring techniques and identifying attributes that contribute to a successful relationship. The self-reflection will allow teachers in the school of study to improve their mentoring efforts. Intentional observations and feedback to novice teachers will be instrumental in the novice teachers gaining self-efficacy and confidence in their new roles. Most importantly, a successful, collegial relationship will be beneficial in fostering a positive working environment, which could possibly reduce feelings of stress and isolation often cited in the literature as causes of novice teacher stress, which often leads to high attrition during the first few years.

Section 4: Reflections and Conclusions

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to examine novice teachers' perceptions about the impact of participating in a mentoring program. I gathered data from interviews with six novice teachers at Viking High School and an observation of a meeting between administration and novice teachers. The interviews provided a narrative forof analysis in this study. From a literature review and conceptual framework, an understanding of the phenomenon was gained, which engendered the primary dominant research question: What are the lived experiences of novice teachers who have been assigned a buddy teacher? The subquestions of this study were

SQ1. What is the significance of a successful mentoring relationship on the decision of a novice teacher to remain in the teaching profession?

SQ2. How does the choice of mentor affect the outcome of the first-year teacher's overall experience?

SQ3. What are some best practices for establishing and maintaining an effective mentoring program for induction teachers?

The findings of this study provided information, which I used to develop a staff development as detailed in Section 3. Professional development on mentoring in the school of study is supported by participants' interview responses as well as my observations of the administrative meeting. Based on my analysis of data, a focused staff development should include the following concepts: (a) why mentoring is vital; (b) attributes of a mentor that makes him or her effective; (c) understanding the different needs of novice teachers; (d) establishing time and consistency with mentees through

focused observations and prompt and meaningful feedback; (e) understanding the mentoring cycle/relationships; and (f) assisting novice teachers with resources, pedagogy, management practices and administrative mandates.   In Section 4, I will discuss the project's strengths and limitations, recommend alternatives, and consider the implications of this completed work. The section also includes a reflection of my personal journey in professional knowledge and scholarship as a result of this project study.

Project Strengths and Limitations

The goal of this project was to gain an understanding of the effectiveness of Viking High School's mentoring program from the perspective of the novice teachers. The project encompasses a 3-day professional development that is intentional and focuses on adequately preparing mentors to maintain meaningful and supportive relationships with their mentors. The main strength of this project is that is centered on the needs of novice teachers, who face many difficulties during the first year of service. Research supports the idea that novice teachers gain confidence and are more likely to remain in the teaching profession provided they have additional emotional and professional support through a mentor (see Colson, et al., 2017). This project is teacher-centered in that it focuses on the specific needs of both the mentor and the novice teacher. Professional growth and leadership can further be developed in the teachers who participate in mentoring because this action will make room for self-reflection through the mentoring cycle, as cited by Smith and Nadelson (2016). Teachers can look at their own practices and grow from providing feedback to novice teachers. The project may also promote collegial relationships among staff members, which is beneficial for the school climate+

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Another strength of the project is that all novice teachers in Viking High School will experience similar practices from their mentors to assess their needs as new teachers and will have access to their chosen mentors through scheduled observations and meetings that will provide them with valuable feedback. Mentors will be trained on how to observe and give valuable feedback that will assist the novice teacher in gaining experience and confidence in classroom operations, instructional practices, and content knowledge. Additionally, new teachers who have experienced positive mentoring relationships may want to become trained mentors themselves.

Last, this project will be cost-effective. Because mentors are trained in-house, the district would not incur the cost of the state department's or district's training for mentors. Training manuals could be designed and printed in-house with administrative funds, which will save money for the school of study. The additional support in the school of study may encourage the district to return to induction of new teachers a site-based effort, which would eliminate the issue of novice teachers missing 3-5 school days a year for new teacher training. This use of time, in turn, will help alleviate extra responsibilities on novice teachers as they adjust to the work of managing students' grades, assessments, and other required duties of educators.

Recommendations for Alternative Approaches

The goal of this project was to examine the lived experiences of novice teachers with their mentors, and the data provided through this study formed the basis for the professional development identified as needed in the school of study. However, one

limitation pertinent to the data collection was in the timing of the first and second interviews. The initial interview should have taken place earlier in the school year and the second interview at the end of this initial year. Conducting additional interviews during the year would have allowed me to take a comparative approach to the growth of the mentoring relationship as the school year progressed.

Another limitation of the study was the omission of a personality assessment of the participants in the interview protocol. In their interviews two participants emphasized that what helped and hindered the relationships with their mentors were the personalities of the mentors. Responses from the data suggest that, on more than one occasion, novice teachers felt a need to have more control over which teacher they were paired with for mentorship. Including a personality assessment in the interview protocol could add to the thick description of how the choice of mentor impacts the overall experience of the mentoring relationship.

Addressing the Problem from the Work of the Study

Teacher attrition is a growing problem in the United States with one-third of the teaching force turning over each year (Heineke, et al., 2016) and districts are pressed to keep teachers in the classrooms. The state of study is facing a shortage due to the abolishment of retiree incentives and National Board stipends. I addressed this problem by focusing on the mentor's efforts to provide the support needed by novice teachers as voiced in the data collection. Study findings highlight what is working, but also call upon educators to take a closer look at their own efforts and supports through the use of accountability and reflection. This project also addresses the need for a genuine

connection between novice and mentor, which, if properly maintained, can engender a

personal relationship between colleagues (see Ambrosetti, 2014). Researchers have

described the first year as a "sink or swim" experience for novice teachers (see

Pogodzinski, 2014). This study provides evidence that paired with the right mentor,

novice teachers are empowered and gain the confidence that is needed to survive and

thrive during those critical years. Through consistency, meaningful feedback, and

relationships, novice teachers can gain the efficacy noted in Bandura's (1977) theory of

self-efficacy to become successful at a task.

Scholarship, Project Development and Evaluation, and Leadership and Change

The creation of this doctoral project was very daunting at first. I was not clear on

what I wanted to research, as I wanted to stay away from anything related to testing

scores, discipline, or achievement gaps. I had to search deep within to find what I wanted

to learn more about as a scholar. I then remembered how passionate I had been about

mentoring student teachers. The task of taking on student teachers was always

fascinating and effortless for me. After seeing story after story about teacher shortages in

the state, I became intrigued with the idea of how mentoring new teachers played a role

in their remaining in the profession. At first, I thought about researching the mentors

themselves. I then thought that the perceptions of the novice teachers would give a

clearer and more realistic snapshot of how Viking High School's mentoring efforts were

working, if they were at all. The literature on the subjects of novice teachers stress, the

attrition rates of teachers, the qualities of a mentor, as well as Bandura's Self Efficacy

theory all came together and made perfect sense to me as I begin to piece together the

ideas leading to the development of the project. I was able to gain a wealth of knowledge prior to creating the data collection instruments, and subsequent data collection. Exposure to the peer-reviewed articles gave me viable examples of scholarly research and writing as well as analysis of educational problems.

After data collection and analysis, the development of the project came at a much greater ease. I was confident in my knowledge gained as a scholar, and even more confident in developing a project to address the problem based on the data I collected. The statistics of the state of the study reveal a strong need for every school to have mentors in place, and the mentors chosen must have a heart and compassion to be effective. The project addresses those needs, as well as offers strategies and techniques to provide not only effective logistical supports, observations, and feedback, but practical information about the relationship cycles of mentors and mentees. Additionally, this project will be efficacious in equipping mentors to provide more successful relationships and improve mentors as professionals through self-reflection.

As a result of this study, I feel more confident as a leader. The extensive research was the catalyst of change for me, as it equipped me to address the problem not from an emotional standpoint, but from the standpoint of a practitioner. Conducting the research allowed me to step out, introduce myself, and gain the trust of my participants. In this process, I realized the importance of work relationships and approachability. I was fortunate that six of the seven people I recruited willingly and enthusiastically agreed to participate in the study. In my conversations during and after most of the interviews, I was able to provide anecdotal representations of my classroom experiences with the

novice teachers. I wanted to further exemplify to them that their problems were not remote. Additionally, I independently became mentor certified by the state department and will serve as a trained mentor for the upcoming school year.

Change is needed in the world of education. As the school of study takes a closer look at mentoring, the efforts in place will be improved which in turn may be an overall benefit for the school and district. As novice teachers successfully navigate through their first years of teaching, they become more confident, effective, and will have a greater chance of remaining in the profession, according to research. From the data analysis, a common response among all participants echoed the idea that they desired to become mentors themselves once they passed their novice periods. The information from this study, as well as the project, will create a pool of willing and compassionate mentors who will continue to improve the effectiveness of overall mentoring efforts. Teachers who demonstrate self-efficacy through confidence and staying power will ultimately benefit students who need teachers who are good at what they do.

<div align="center">**Reflection on Importance of the Work**</div>

Recruiting and retaining enthusiastic, highly qualified teachers into today's classrooms is increasingly becoming more challenging for states nationwide. Therefore, schools should to enhance their efforts in the mentoring processes for novice teachers in order to add the support during the crucial first few years of the profession. Examining the success of a mentoring relationship through the eyes of novice teachers is a substantial piece of effective and purposeful mentoring.

The findings of this study not only revealed the aspects of a good mentor but also yielded a positive outlook for the novice teachers' willingness to remain in the profession and become mentors themselves based on the positive interactions with their mentors. The continual and purposeful act of mentorship for schools is a positive step in the right direction to possibly lowering attrition in a profession threatened by shortages. The literature strongly suggests that novice teachers who achieve efficacy through remaining in the profession longer than year one are positively reflected in student achievement.

Reflecting on the importance of this work, I have realized the critical need for support for new teachers. There are many moving pieces to becoming acclimated to a new place, a new profession, and gaining the confidence, not only in pedagogy, but in collegial relations, logistical challenges, and student/parent relationships. This study has reaffirmed my beliefs that a strong mentoring relationship between a novice teacher and a seasoned teacher has a positive impact on the novice teacher's success during the first

Implications, Applications, and Directions for Future Research

Any effort that fosters collaboration and collegiality among educators can be an exciting and essential endeavor for the teaching profession. The mentoring of novice teachers, as illustrated through this study, is not only a positive step toward building community in a school setting, it is a strong component of building confidence, efficacy, and resilience of a professional new to the field. A positive experience during the induction year can be the basis on which a long lasting career in education can be built. There are many possibilities for expansion for future research in the area of mentoring and novice teachers as the need to focus on teacher retention becomes greater.

Potential Impact for Positive Social Change

The act of mentoring has a reciprocal effect, impacting both mentor and mentee. Experienced teachers can feel a sense of rejuvenation in the profession by being a mentor, and can learn new best practices from younger teachers, particularly with technology. Mentoring also engenders a deeper resolve for new teachers to utilize their mentoring experiences to become mentors themselves. Within the school of study, an intentional effort to not only train mentors but effectively pair the right mentor to each novice teacher on its staff can positively impact the learning environment. New teachers will be given additional support to navigate the emotional/social, logistical, and academic/instructional environments in which they will find themselves. New teachers have many questions, and if those questions go unanswered, they may experience feelings of isolation. Strong mentoring communities within the school of study can be an important and resourceful way to minimize new teacher isolation and subsequent burnout.

Methodological, Theoretical, and Empirical Implications

This study has important methodological and theoretical implications because the local problem of high teacher attrition in the school/district of study prompted the study to examine how mentoring impacts the novice teacher during the first critical few years of teaching. The school of study's need to focus its efforts on training potential mentors, pairing the right mentor to the novice, and tracking mentoring relationships was confirmed through the collected data of this study. The qualitative approach to this study provided an opportunity for novice teachers to share first-hand accounts of their

mentoring experiences. Creswell (2013) stated that the collection of qualitative data occurs in the natural setting of the participants of the site in which they experience a particular issue. Data collection includes directly speaking to the people involved with a phenomenon. The unique perspective of the novice teacher's point of view enabled me as the researcher to gain a better understanding of what makes a good mentor as well as well as the elements that make a successful mentoring relationship.

The theoretical framework upon which this study was built was Bandura's self-efficacy theory. This study reflected the ideas represented by Colson, et al. (2017) when they emphasized that the positive experiences of novice teachers were correlated with quality mentoring experiences. The participants' responses during the one-on-one interviews were consistent in the regard that they were able to face difficult tasks, gain knowledge of instructional value and pedagogy, and acquire confidence in the profession as a result, in part, of the positive mentoring relationships with their chosen mentors. Additionally, the participants' responses that they all felt confident in returning and/or remaining in the teaching profession are indicative that the efficacy model as demonstrated through Bandura's theory was evident as the basis of this study.

Recommendation for Practice and Future Research

Future research on this particular study has the potential for enhancement by exploring more options for measuring the effectiveness of mentoring relationships that involve novice teachers. One possible enhancement would be to expand the research to all five high schools of the district of study. To have a comparative analysis of how individual schools within the district manage their mentoring programs would render a

closer examination of how effective mentor training and mentor programs correlate with the success of mentoring relationships. This information would be instrumental in how the district could institute district-wide, common directives on choosing and training mentors, utilizing professional development, and collecting data on retention rates. Another possible area would entail gathering statistical data outside of the district of study and comparing them to districts that lack mentor preparation efforts and/or strong mentoring programs; for example, a study could be done of rural districts that struggle with teacher recruitment/retention. This data could serve as a catalyst for change for all districts in the state of study.

Conclusion

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore novice teachers in mentoring relationships with experienced teachers at the secondary level. After an in-depth study of novice teachers, teacher attrition, and mentoring through literature reviews, I was able to gather and analyze data through an informed and critical lens. After coding the data, and determining themes, I was pleased and validated that my initial research question, as well as sub-questions, were addressed.

Through the qualitative nature of this study, I was able to assemble a description of the mentoring experiences through the perceptions of the novice teachers. This unique perspective allowed me, as the researcher, to glimpse into how the novice teacher experienced, perceived, and benefitted from the mentoring relationship. This vantage point provided a clear picture of the aspects of what distinguishes good mentors from great and effective ones. These perceptions also allowed me to fully understand how the

mentor has the capacity to be a very important and influential factor in the novice teacher's first year of service.

Furthermore, after the analysis of data and the emergence of patterns from this data, I was equipped to take this knowledge to the next step by designing a project for the purpose of staff development. This project's main goal was to provide a focused staff development for training purposes for mentors to understand the necessary personal qualities needed to be an effective mentor. The project also focuses its efforts on teaching the mentor how to help a novice teacher navigate through the first year through providing needed information on pedagogy, class management, and other logistics through proper observations and feedback. This project design has allowed me to grow professionally; additionally, gaining the respect and collegial support from my peers at the school of study. As a result, I have been chosen to lead a professional learning community or PLC for my staff in the arena of new teacher induction. Professionally, I have gained valuable efficacy in my capabilities to lead this group in assisting our school in staff development.

All in all, through the literary reviews, data collection and analysis, and writing of findings, I can approach this new responsibility with the authority needed as a practitioner of social change in the field of education. It is my deepest desire that no classroom starts a school year without a qualified teacher to educate the youth of our state. It is also my desire that no new teacher in our school of study, district of study, and state of study goes through the first challenging year without the needed support and purposeful mentoring efforts that have a positive effect for success.

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Appendix A: The Project

Novice Teachers' Lived Experiences of Success in a Mentoring Relationship at the

Secondary Level

Professional Development: New Teacher Mentor Training

The project for this study entails a 3-day Professional Development Project. The PD was created based on the research study findings. The purpose, therefore, of this professional development is to provide information and activities so that participants can gain knowledge about the needs of beginning teachers, the four steps to the mentoring cycle, coaching dialogue protocols, classroom observations, data collection, post-observation conferences, and Teachable Learning Opportunities (TLO).

Objectives:
- (a) Have participants introduce themselves and explain why they mentor
- (b) To identify the attributes of a good teacher mentor
- (c) To identify the various needs of new teachers
- (d) Recognize the various stages of teacher development
- (e) Understand the expectations of mentors
- (f) Understand the various needs of teachers: social, physical, or instructional
- (g) Understand the "Mentoring Cycle"
- (h) Understand "Coaching Dialogue"
- (i) To learn and apply observation protocols
- (j) Understand the importance of data
- (k) Understand and apply "Teacher Learning Opportunities"
- (l) Assisting new teachers with district and state administrative requirements

Target Audience:
Experienced teachers (5 years or more) who serve as mentors for novice teachers

Materials:
    (a) Coffee, juice, and Donuts (3 days)

    (b) Candy bowls for each table

    (c) Bottled water

    (d) Smart Board/ Laptop

    (e) Various handouts (see trainer notes)

    (f) Markers, pens, pencils, highlighters

    (g) Sticky notes

    (h) Large Sticky Presentation Pad

    (i) Index cards

    (j) Game Prize: a Gift card from a local business supporter

    (k) Guest speakers

Agenda –Day 1 Mentor Training Session

1 day before:
Make copies of:

(a) Day 1 Worksheet #1

(b) "The Good Mentor" http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-

leadership/may99/vol56/num08/The-Good-Mentor.aspx

(c) Day 1 Worksheet #2

(d) Day 2 Worksheet #1

(e) Day 2 Worksheet #2

(f) Day 3 Worksheet #1

The day of:

8:00-8:30- Continental Breakfast. Participant sign in (Google form) Objectives, and

Professional Norms **(Slides 1-3)**

Opening activity: *Kahoot* game (https://play.kahoot.it/#/k/f3e8cc78-be84-46ca-a74d-

043649788b31) code: 3372969 that will introduce state statistics of teacher shortages.

The top winner wins a gift card. **(Slide 4)**

8:30-9:15- Icebreaker Activity: "Who I AM" activity, and sharing out **(Slide 5)**

9:15-10:00- Shared reading "The Good Mentor" and group discussion **(Slide 6)**

10:00-10:15- Mentor Self-Assessment **(Slide 7)**

10:15-10:30- Break **(Slide 8)**

10:30-11:30- Discussion of "teacher development; introducing the three types of teacher

needs: Social, Physical, and Instructional. Group Activity: Creating a lesson that teaches

the three types of needs **(Slides 9-11)**

11:30-12:00- Presentation of "Lessons" **(Slide 12)**

12:00-1:30-Lunch on your own **(Slide 13)**

1:30-2:45- Departmental/Subject level planning—preparing new teachers for the state's

SLO (Student Learning Objectives) **(Slide 14)**
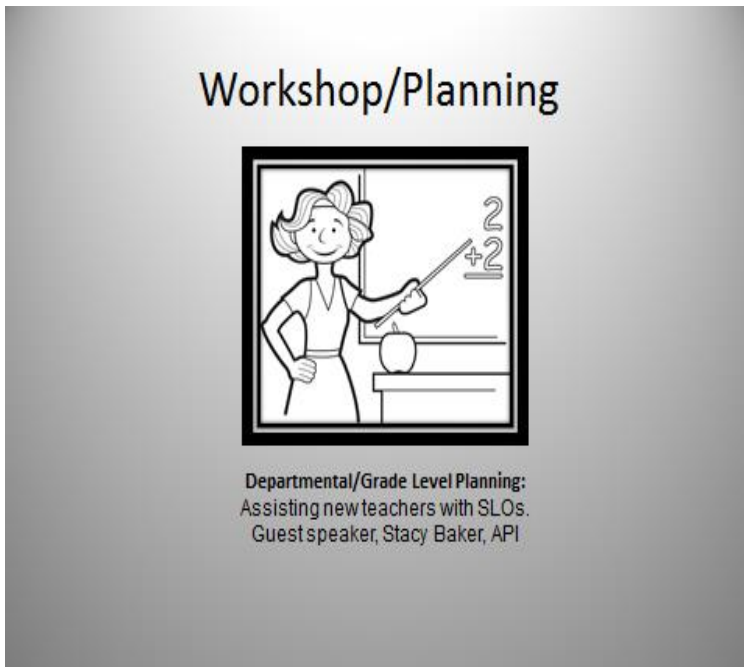
2:45-3:00- Reflective Journal - Review your "self-assessment and discuss how you plan to apply/improve your findings in your mentoring relationships. Submit to Google Classroom **(Slide 15)**

3:00-Dismissal **(Slide 16)**

Day One Trainer Notes

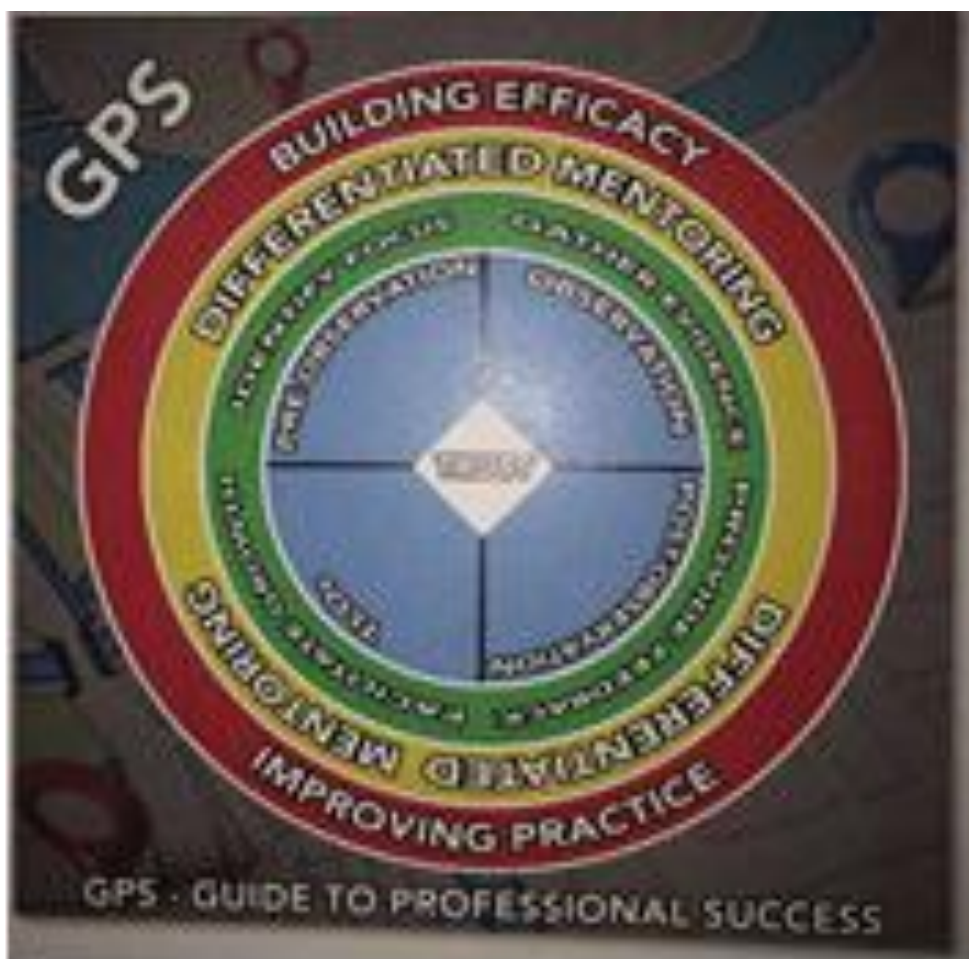**Location**: Media Center

Setup: 6 tables, 4 seats each/Smartboard up front

- ❖ Have continental breakfast prepared and greet participants.
- ❖ Have the Google sign in the form displayed on the Smartboard as participants enter and get breakfast.
- ❖ After 30 minutes, display and read slides 1-3. Display slide 4 and play the Kahoot game pin (slide 4).
- ❖ After the game, award winner with a gift card.
- ❖ Distribute "I Am" (Day One Worksheet #1, display slide 5) and allow participants to complete and share with a partner.
- ❖ Distribute the article, "The Good Mentor" (slide 6) and instruct participants to silently read, highlighting and annotating the article, then discuss key points with the table. Short discussion to follow.
- ❖ Distribute "Mentor Attribute Self –Assessment", (Day One Worksheet # 2 & slide 7) and allow time for participants to fill out.
- ❖ During the break, stick 3 large sticky notes in prominent areas of the room. Label one S, one P and one I and display slide 9.
- ❖ Instruct participants to brainstorm ways in which they could help new teachers with the three different needs in our school setting.
- ❖ Display slide 10 and have participants stick ideas under appropriate labels (on large papers) and do a "gallery walk" to read the different responses.
- ❖ Next, have participants count off 1-4, and group by number for "Teacher Needs" activity/application (slide 11). After 20 minutes, display slides 12 and have groups present lessons.
- ❖ After the last presentation, break for lunch (slide 13).
- ❖ After lunch, display slide 14, and the guest speaker will discuss SLO (student learning objectives) and how teachers can assist new teachers in designing their SLO's by content area.

❖ Last, each participant is to reflect on today's learning and submit to Google classroom that has been set up for this training (slide 15). Each participant will be provided with a class code to submit this document, and this will be used as data for administration.

❖ Slide 16—remind participants of tomorrow's start time and to be on time.

Day 1 Worksheet # 1: "Who I Am" Icebreaker

Answer the following questions. Find a partner to share your responses with.

1. My name is:

    _____

2. My most important role in life is a:

    _____

3. At work I:

    _____

4. My favorite way to spend free time is:

    _____

5. One thing about me that is important for people to know is:

    _____

6. Some of the strengths that I will bring to a mentoring relationship are:

    _____

7. One of my worries about mentoring is:

    _____

8. One thing I hope to gain from being a mentor is:

    _____

9. The most important thing I hope my mentor will gain is

    _____

Day 1 Worksheet #2: Mentor Self-Assessment Checklist

Source: *CERRA* Mentor Training Manual

This assessment is designed to help you identify the attributes you believe a mentor should possess. It also helps you to self-assess your own strengths and areas that need growth. First, put a check mark under all the attributes that have "proved to be important in past mentoring relationships" then identify those traits as being a "personal strength" or an area of "personal growth".

Mentor Attributes	Proved to be Important In past Mentoring Relationships	Personal Strength	Area of Personal Growth
Active Listener			
Approachable			
Caring			
Consistent			
Empathetic			
Empowering			
Flexible			

Goal-Oriented			
Innovative			
Maintains Confidentiality			
Reflective			
Resourceful			
Supportive			
Tolerant			
Trustworthy			

Agenda –Day 2 Mentor Training Session

8:00-8:30- Continental Breakfast. Participant sign in, Google Form, Objectives and Professional Norms (Slides 17-19).

8:30-8:45- Recap of yesterday's training through sharing out.

8:45-9:15- Introducing "The Mentoring Cycle" (Slide 20).

9:15-10:00- *Critical Times for Mentee*s: Developing an "action plan" to help mentees. Creating a "Team Drive" in Google for protocols (Slide 21).

10:00-10:15- Break (Slide 22).

10:15-11:15- Introducing "coaching dialogue" and "pre-observation protocols Applying "coaching dialogue" with partners. View Video: "New Teacher Survivor Guide: Mentoring"

Discussion Questions (Slides 23-27).

11:15-12:00- Voices from the field—a panel of 3 first-year teachers from the previous school year share their experiences; Q & A Session (Slide 28).

12:00-1:30- Lunch (Slide 29).

1:30-2:45- Workshop— "Assisting the Novice with SC Evaluation 4.0 (Slide 30).

2:45-3:00- Reflective Journal: What is the most significant aspect of feedback for my mentee? How do I plan to implement what I've learned today to improve my own practice? (Slide 31)

3:00- Dismissal (Slide 32).

Day Two Trainer Notes

Location: Media Center

Setup: 6 tables, 4 seats each/Smart Board up front

❖ Have continental breakfast prepared and greet participants. Have the Google sign-in the form displayed on the Smartboard as participants enter and get breakfast. (slide 1)

❖ Go over Objectives and Professional Norms (slides 2-3)

❖ Distribute copies of "The Mentoring Cycle" (Day 2, Worksheet #1) for participants to write on. Display slide 4. Allow participants to look at each section and notate as you discuss.

❖ Distribute list "New Teacher Critical Times for Assistance" (Day 2, Worksheet # 2) and display slide 5. Participants should now write on the list ways they can assist; share *Google Team folder* entitled "Mentor Assistance" with participants and have them type up lists and save into Team Folder.

❖ Break for 15 minutes after action plans have been submitted by table/department (slide 6).

❖ After the break, display slides 7, and discuss 'coaching dialogue".

❖ Next display slides 8 and ensures everyone understands by opening up for questions.

❖ Next, display slide 9, and have participants take a notecard and take notes as they role-play being the novice and the experienced teacher. The "novice" will conference about the lesson that the mentor will be observing. Practice protocol by using the stems. Allow the role-play about 5 minutes before switching roles. Allow time for questions and discussion of experiences being the "mentor" or the "novice".

❖ Then, display slides 10 and show the movie.

❖ Display the questions for post-viewing and discuss (slide 11).

❖ Now, have 3 of last school year's "new teachers" serve as a panel. Each novice is to speak for a delegated amount of time about their experiences (good or bad)

from the last school year. Open up for a brief Q and A session between mentor trainees and novices (slide 12).

❖ Next, show slide 13 and break for lunch.

❖ At approximately 1:30, display slide 14, and introduce the state department representative to discuss the components of South Carolina's teacher evaluation system. Participants will take notes and prepare for the reflection, (slide 15).

❖ Before dismissal, thank the participants and give an overview of tomorrow's objectives.

Day Two: Worksheet # 1: "The Mentoring Cycle"
Source: CERRA Mentor Training

Day Two: Worksheet #2: "New Teacher Critical Times for Assistance"
Source: CERRA Mentor Training

Critical Times	How I can help	How my department can help
The beginning of the school year		
Parent Nights	\	
Interim Reports		
Parent Conferences		
IEP Meetings		
Field Trips		
Meetings with the principal		

End of the School Year:

Agenda –Day 3 Mentor Training Session

8:00-8:30- Continental Breakfast. Participant sign in, Google form, Objectives, and Professional Norms (Slides 33-35).

8:30-8:45- Recap of yesterday's training through sharing out.

8:45-9:45- Introducing and discussing "Observation Behaviors" and "Charting Observations". Viewing real teaching videos for hands-on practice of proper observation protocols and charting (Slides 36-38).

9:45-10:00- Break (Slide 39).

10:00-11:00- Introducing the importance of Feedback, and "Coaching Dialogue" and TLO's (Teacher Learning Opportunities). Working in "Mentor Training Team Drive". Discussion/Reflection (Slides 40-41).

11:00-11:45- Plan into action—A roundtable discussion from participants on how the learning from the training will be implemented by the department. Contribute ideas to the Team Drives for administration—Mentor to Novice pairing, ideas for introductions, the first days, etc. (Slide 42).

11:45-12:00- Final Reflections, certificate awards for participants (Slide 43)

12:00-Lunch: Provided by Administration (Slide 44).

1:00-3:00: Evaluation of training (Google Form). Teachers will work in their rooms to personal plan of action, PLC planning, observation calendars, and/or personal gifts to the novice (Slide 45).

Day Three Trainer Notes

Location: Media Center

Setup: 6 tables, 4 seats each/Smartboard up front

- ❖ Display slide 1, greet participants and have them sign in to the Google form on their personal devices.

- ❖ Ask participants to share their takeaways from yesterday's session as a refresher.

- ❖ Go over Professional Norms (slide 2) and today's objectives (slide 3).

- ❖ Display slide 4, then ask participants why they feel observations are important for novice teachers.

- ❖ Discuss "Observation Behaviors" (slide 5).

- ❖ Distribute "Charting Techniques" (day 3, worksheet 1).

- ❖ Play YouTube video of actual teaching scenario and have participants chart the activities using the technique of their choice. After the video, have participants group themselves by technique and share their data with each other.

- ❖ At the appropriate time, call for the break (slide 6).

- ❖ After the break, discuss "Feedback and Coaching Dialogue, and TLO". Display slide 8 and go over the components of proper feedback. Have participants brainstorm statements of what each looks like and have them write on a notecard. Each table is to share aloud the best practices of each for the table.

- ❖ Display slide 9 for reflection.

- ❖ Display slide 10 and go over examples of "Teacher Learning Opportunities". Next have participants add more ideas to the Team Drive for Mentor Training to the document labeled, "TLO"

- ❖ Next, display slides 11 and encourage all participants to share how we as a faculty can implement all the components to this mentor training, and plan for future PLC's through the school year to meet as a team. Also, encourage all participants to continue to add ideas to the team drive for future discussions/activities/plans for novice teachers and mentors.

❖ Have participants do "Final Reflection" Google form. This will be valuable feedback for the administrative team for future training.

❖ Next display slides 12, and ask the principal award certificates to all participants, and provide final words and thanks.

❖ At the appropriate time, serve lunch (provided by the administration from a local business partner--subs, chips, cookies, and tea/water).

❖ After lunch, participants may use the rest of the afternoon to plan how they will meet/welcome and invite their new teachers to the faculty family (gift bags, activities on and/or off campus).

Day 3 Worksheet #1: "Charting Techniques"

Source: CERRA Mentor Training

Scripting

Teacher:
Date:
Time:

S=Student
Ss=Students
T=Teacher

Write down as much as you can what the Teacher says, and what the Student(s) says:

Notes for Feedback:

Counting
Teacher:
Date:
Time:
Focus:

Notes for Feedback:

Diagramming

Teacher:
Date:
Time:

Focus: Movement of a teacher through classroom

Using an arrow, follow the movement of the teacher.

Front of the classroom

Back of the classroom

Notes for Feedback:

Mentor Training Presentation

Slide 1

Slide2

Slide 3

Slide 4

Slide 5

Slide 6

Slide 7

Slide 8

Slide 9

Slide 10

Slide 11

Slide 12

Slide 13

Slide 14

Slide 15

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Slide 40

Slide 41

Slide 42

Slide 43

Slide 44

Slide 45

Appendix B: Permission to Conduct Research (District)

Date:

Dear:

My name is Felicia Roberson, and I am a doctoral student at Walden University. As part of my requirements for graduation, I am conducting educational research. This study will examine the perceptions of mentoring relationships of novice teachers with their assigned mentors. This phenomenological qualitative study will focus on how newly hired teachers perceive the dynamics of the mentoring relationship during their first year of service. I would like to interview four to six novice teachers at Spring Valley High School who have been assigned an experienced mentor who shares the same subject area. Additionally, I would like to observe those same participants during one of the monthly staff development meetings, specifically between newly hired teachers and administration. I am respectfully asking for permission to collect this critical data for the benefit of bringing insight, feedback, and improvement to our current efforts in teacher induction at SVHS.

As a protection to participants, SVHS, and data collected, several precautionary measures have been provided. Walden University's University Review Board's careful considerations of confidentiality have been met. All participants will be coded with pseudonyms to protect their identities. Additionally, all collected data will be stored n password-protected devices and will be securely stored for five years, as required by Walden University. All information will be shredded after that period is up.

It is my sincere desire to conduct this study and to provide valuable information to our administration's efforts to provide novice teachers with positive experiences, which can contribute to social change by impacting teacher attrition as well as student achievement.

All the best,

Felicia R. Roberson

Doctoral Candidate,

Walden University

_____My permission is granted for teacher interviews and observations at SVHS

_____My permission is not granted for teacher interviews and observations at SVHS

_____

(District Personnel Signature)

Appendix C: Permission to Conduct Research (Principal)

Date:

Dear:

My name is Felicia Roberson, and I am a doctoral student at Walden University. As part of my requirements for graduation, I am conducting educational research. This study will examine the perceptions of mentoring relationships of novice teachers with their assigned mentors. This phenomenological qualitative study will focus on how newly hired teachers perceive the dynamics of the mentoring relationship during their first year of service. I would like to interview four to six novice teachers at Spring Valley High School who have been assigned an experienced mentor who shares the same subject area. Additionally, I would like to observe those same participants during one of the monthly staff development meetings, specifically between newly hired teachers and administration. I am respectfully asking for permission to collect this critical data for the benefit of bringing insight, feedback, and improvement to our current efforts in teacher induction at SVHS.

As a protection to participants, SVHS, and data collected, several precautionary measures have been provided. Walden University's University Review Board's careful considerations of confidentiality have been met. All participants will be coded with pseudonyms to protect their identities. Additionally, all collected data will be stored on password-protected devices and will be securely stored for five years, as required by Walden University. All information will be shredded after that period is up.

It is my sincere desire to conduct this study and to provide valuable information to our administration's efforts to provide novice teachers with positive experiences, which can contribute to social change by impacting teacher attrition as well as student achievement.

All the best,

Felicia R. Roberson

Doctoral Candidate,

Walden University

_____My permission is granted for teacher interviews and observations at SVHS

_____My permission is not granted for teacher interviews and observations at SVHS

_____

(Principal Signature)

Appendix D: Confidentiality Agreement

Confidentiality Agreement

Name of Researcher: _____

During activity in collecting data for this research: "Novice Teachers' Lived Experiences of Success in a Mentoring Relationship," I will have access to the information, which is confidential and should not be disclosed. I acknowledge that the information must remain confidential, and that improper disclosure of confidential information can be damaging to the participant.

 By signing the Confidentiality Agreement, I acknowledge and agree that:
I will not disclose or discuss any confidential information with others, including friends or family.
I will not, in any way, divulge, copy, release, sell, loan, or alter or destroy any confidential information except as properly authorized.
I will not discuss confidential information where others can overhear the conversation. I understand that it is not acceptable to discuss confidential information even if the participant's name is not used.
I will not make any unauthorized transmissions, inquiries, modification or purging of confidential information.
I agree that my obligations under this agreement will continue after the termination of the job that I will perform.
I understand that violation of this agreement will have legal implications.
I will only access or use systems or devices I'm officially authorized to access, and I will not demonstrate the operation or function of systems or devices to unauthorized individuals.

Signing this document, I acknowledge that I have read the agreement, and I agree to comply with all the terms stated above.

Signature:_____

Date:_____

Appendix E: Interview Protocol

Interviewee Pseudonym:

Date of Interview:

Time of Interview:

Location of Interview:

Demographic Questions
Participant's Race and Gender:
What college degree(s) and major(s) do you hold?
What area(s) of certification(s) do you hold in South Carolina?
Will this be your first full year of teaching? If not, what other experience do you have?
What inspired you to go into the teaching field?

Research Questions to be Addressed:

What role does the relationship between a novice and experienced teacher play in the success of the first year?

What is the significance of a successful mentoring relationship on the decision of a novice teacher remaining in the teaching profession?

How does the choice of mentor affect the outcome of the first-year teacher's overall experience?

Interview Questions:

How would you describe your mentoring experience thus far?

What have been the most beneficial aspects of your mentoring relationship?

What areas of the mentoring process have been the most challenging?

What have specific characteristics of your mentor benefited or challenged this relationship?

How would you describe your first year without the aid of your mentor?

What would you say are the most essential qualities of a good mentor? Why?

Are there some specific experiences that made you want to leave the teaching profession? Explain.

Are there some specific experiences that encouraged you to want to stay in the teaching profession? Explain.

Do you think Viking High School should continue to provide new teachers with mentors? Why or why not?

Would you consider being a mentor after your 5th year of teaching? Why or why no

Appendix F: Observation Protocol

Date: _____

Location: _____

Attendees and Titles:

1. What was the purpose of the meeting?

2. Was an agenda provided?

3. Who facilitated the meeting?

4. How were the engagement and interaction provided?

5. Were novice teachers asked about their experiences in their classrooms?

6. Were novice teachers asked about their experiences with their mentors?

7. Were specific concerns raised to the administration about novice teachers' experiences?

8. Were novice teachers allowed to express concerns with each other during the meeting?

9. Were suggestions or decisions made about improving the mentoring experiences during the meeting?

10. Did the novice teachers feel comfortable raising these suggestions/concerns/questions?

Appendix G: Classroom Observation Form

**The criteria presented in this observation are based on administrative/peer
observations of classroom instructional practices.**

Participant's Pseudonym	Date/Time:
Researcher:	Location:

Management/Organization	Observed	Not Observed	Comments
Classroom Climate	Observed	Not Observed	Comments
Use of technology for effective instructional use	Observed	Not Observed	Comments
Student Engagement	Observed	Not Observed	Comments