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TEACHER GROWTH: ESSENTIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF EXPERIENCES IN DEVELOPMENT FROM A NOVICE TO VETERAN TEACHER

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TEACHER GROWTH: ESSENTIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF EXPERIENCES IN DEVELOPMENT FROM A NOVICE TO VETERAN TEACHER

A Dissertation
Presented to
the Graduate School of Clemson University

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree Doctor of Philosophy Educational Leadership

by Jean Rollins May 2008

Accepted by:
Dr. William Fisk, Committee Chair
Dr. David Fleming
Dr. Robert Green
Dr. William Havice
ABSTRACT

Every day teachers enter and leave the field of education. The number of teachers leaving the field in the first five years of teaching has doubled in the last ten years. It is important to examine the constructs that allow some teachers to remain in the field, while others leave to pursue different careers. A review of the literature showed that there was understanding of the positive and negative constructs in education, but there was limited research on the application of these constructs to the teachers’ careers. To understand why some teachers remain in the field and others leave, this phenomenology has a) examined the process that a teacher goes through from starting as a beginning teacher to becoming a veteran one, b) noted the similarities in the process that each teacher experienced, c) related the findings to the literature, and d) looked at how the teachers’ experiences helped them to grow and learn. The major characteristic that a teacher must possess to go from a novice teacher to a veteran one is adaptation. Adaptation skills are needed to allow the teacher to remain in the school environment. A teacher must possess adaptation skills to consider himself or herself a successful part of the teaching environment and to emerge from a novice to a veteran teacher.
DEDICATION

To all my family and friends who loved me, supported me, and believed in me enough to help me finish the drill, I dedicate this to you.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

There is no way one can travel a journey like I have experienced and now completed without having many people to support me along the way. To anyone who has been part of this, thank you for being a part of my life and loving me enough to endure the journey and make sure that I finished the drill.

To God—for always being there and never leaving me.

To Tim, Becky, Megan, Katie Rollins, and Cole—Thank you to my family for loving me and supporting me through this endeavor.

To my Chase Street Family—Thank you for all your support, belief in me, and living with me on a daily basis while I completed this journey.

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TITLE PAGE</td>
<td>i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABSTRACT</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEDICATION</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACKNOWLEDGMENTS</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF TABLES</td>
<td>viii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF FIGURES</td>
<td>ix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement of Topic</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Self-Efficacy and Teacher Motivation</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Burnout and Stress</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. METHODOLOGY</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conceptual Model</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phenomenology</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application of Method</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodology</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. RESULTS</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Epoché</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher’s Processes</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table of Contents (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>V. CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Discussion Relevant to the Literature Reviewed</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Findings</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Limitations</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Future Research</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Conclusions and Implications</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDICES</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- A: Question Protocol</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- B: Consent Form</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- C: Selected Significant Statements</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REFERENCES</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Participant Data</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Themes and Evidence</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Further Evidence in Relating to Self</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Specific Areas within Relating to Self</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Further Evidence in Relating to Control</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Specific Areas within Relating to Control</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# LIST OF FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Bandura’s (1986) Triadic Reciprocal Causation</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Multidimensional Model of Teacher Efficacy</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

Statement of Topic

Each year hundreds of young men and women graduate from their universities, all bright-eyed and eager to begin newfound teaching careers. They bring with them excitement, enthusiasm, and a desire to change the world. Beginning teachers are ready to embark on careers full of innovative ideas and confidence.

For some beginning teachers, somewhere during the first year of teaching, the excitement wears off, reality sets in, and teaching may become a struggle to meet the needs of their students in their classrooms. It is perhaps at this time teaching becomes a job. It is a job that may cause stress and burnout. Beginning teachers are working in an environment where in lieu of constant success and accomplishment, they are becoming overwhelmed and frustrated with the realities of the classroom (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2005). This culture shock may be accompanied by what teachers perceive as lack of support. The great expectations have vanished and many struggle to keep from drowning in the multitude of meetings, mountains of paperwork, and daily discipline problems (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2005).

A growing body of research has documented the stressors that beginning teachers encounter (Ben-Ari, Krole, & Har-Even, 2003; Bolton, 2001; DeAngelis & Pressley, 2007). Many teachers leave the profession within the first five years of teaching (DeAngelis & Pressley, 2007; Fleener, 2001; Haselkorn, 1994; National Education Association, 2003; Voke, 2002). This retention issue is particularly problematic in the
southeastern United States (National Center for Education Statistics, 2004; The Southeast Center for Teaching Quality, 2002). Indeed, when a novice teacher completes his or her first year in the classroom there is a period of self-evaluation (Woolfolk Hoy & Burke Spero, 2005). Novice teachers weigh the positives and the negatives of their experiences and make critical decisions about returning to the classroom. Some teachers decide to change careers. Others ask to change to a different grade level, and still others weather the experience, recognize their success, and choose to persevere another year (Shaughnessy, 2004; Woolfolk Hoy, 2006). Educators acknowledge that it is important for teachers to experience success during their first years in the teaching profession (Noll, 2004; Shaughnessy, 2004; Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2002; Woolfolk Hoy, 2004). A number of research studies have highlighted the importance of induction programs as a mechanism for retaining teachers in the profession (Griffin, Wohlstetter, & Bharadwaja, 2001; Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2002; Woolfolk Hoy & Burke Spero, 2000). Those who remain in the field have now started a career in which there is embedded a process that guides them on how to survive and develop a sense of success in both their students and themselves. While there are still teachers who leave the profession even after a successful transition to teaching (Murphy, 1993; Spears, Gould & Lee, 2001), some will continue this growth process and remain in the classroom. It seems like the immense internal struggle to become self-actualized in the teaching environment is a battle that continues year after year.

This growth process is a series of experiences from which teachers learn. There are positive and negative experiences that continue over time to create a journey that each
teacher experiences. Each one of these journeys is different because each teacher’s career is unique. However, if more closely examined, there are more commonalities and similarities in these teachers’ careers than differences. While teachers experience the peaks and valleys at different times throughout their careers, there may be significant similarities in their growth processes. This growth takes place across a number of different domains that are rooted in basic psychological processes (Chen & Chang, 2006).

For example, it is suggested through cognitive theory that people are capable of a process called triadic reciprocal causation (Bandura, 1977). Reciprocal causation is a multi-directional model that is based on three interrelated forces: environmental influences, behavior, and internal personal factors. These interpersonal factors include cognitive and affective processes (Bandura, 1977, 1997). Teachers who possess the traits of self-efficacy and motivation may be more likely to remain in the teaching field longer than those teachers who do not possess these traits (Coladarci, 1992; Mills, 1991; Parkay, Olejnik, & Proller, 1988; Sederberg & Clark, 1990; Woolfolk-Hoy & Burke-Spero, 2005). The intersection of these two traits affects the teachers’ growth processes that allow them to transform from novice teachers to veteran ones. It is through this framework that we can further understand the experiences and development of teachers.

Using this developmental perspective as a framework, the purpose of this study was to explore the self-reflection and the human experience that elementary teachers’ have had during their teaching careers. Teachers acquire knowledge from their experiences. From this knowledge and the use of self-reflection teachers formulate their thoughts and opinions on their profession. The research in this study was guided by individual teacher
experiences. By investigating the experiences of ten elementary teachers through a developmental framework, the study’s aim was to search for similarities and differences among teachers in their growth in teaching. Ultimately, this framework was used to explore the following research question. What are the essential characteristics of experience that indicate growth from being a novice teacher to becoming a veteran teacher? To further understand human behavior, several constructs served as the foundation for examining growth in teachers. The constructs included teacher self-efficacy, motivation, teacher burnout, and teacher stress. Each of these constructs is an integral part of the growth process for a teacher and is thoroughly discussed in the literature review section of this document.

The methodology employed in this study is that of transcendental phenomenology (vanManen, 2002). This method was chosen as it allows for the constructs under review to be adequately studied because the focus was on individuals, not the group of teachers as a whole. In addition this focus allowed the researcher to establish an understanding of how the phenomena of growth might exist across the setting and context of the conceptual model. Further, a phenomenological process was applied with horizontalization of the data. This process allowed the meaning statements to be removed from the data and then reduced to meaning clusters. Sorting data into clusters allowed for the discovery of common themes. From these themes the phenomena that teachers have experienced were compiled and synthesized.

In this study textual and structural descriptions were used. Textual descriptions are what the teachers have experienced extrinsically, the outside events that have happened
and they have in common. Structural descriptions are what teachers have experienced intrinsically, an interpretation of the inward events that they have in common. Synthesization was used to pull all the findings together into meaningful data and conclusions.

There is limited research and information about what are the essential characteristics that indicate a teacher’s growth from a novice to a veteran teacher. Although teachers can take steps individually to preserve their professional satisfaction and morale, they must also be nurtured, supported, and valued by the broader school community. As long as teachers are given what they need to remain enthusiastic and motivated in the classroom, students, as well as teachers, are the benefactors (Lumsden, 1998; Woolfolk Hoy, 2004a). Learning about how teachers evolve from novice to veteran can help promote the retention of teachers who are motivated and eager to be a part of the teaching profession.

A listing of definitions is presented for the understanding of key terms used in this study. As appropriate, further discussion of terms is provided in the review of literature.

**Bracketing** is defined as when the researcher acknowledges and writes down biases and knowledge of the subject being studied (Bednall, 2006).

**Characteristics of Experience** are the unique and distinct occurrences that teachers go through throughout their careers.

**Construct** is a concept, model, or schematic idea (thefreedictionary.com).

**Epocha** is defined as when the researcher is conscious of his/her opinion similar to bracketing (Class Notes from EFD 879, 2/20/05).

**Essence** is defined as the overall meaning of the experiences shared by the participants (Moerer-Urdall & Creswell, 2004).
**External Locus of Control** is defined as when a person attributes success to fate or luck. This person is less likely to make an effort to learn. Oftentimes this person will experience anxiety as his/her life is viewed as being controlled from the outside (teachermotivation/locusofcontrol.htm).

**Growth from Novice to Veteran Teacher** is defined as the process of combining the positive and the negative experiences that a teacher encounters throughout the first five to seven years in the field of education to develop a maturity in teaching. This maturity allows the teacher to go from a novice to a veteran teacher.

**Growth in Teachers** is defined as the process of becoming more mature through natural development. This development allows teachers to go from novice to veteran teachers.

**Growth in Teaching** is defined as when teachers demonstrate a process that reflects a maturity in their teaching performances. This maturity allows the teachers’ performances to go from novice to veteran.

**Horizontalization** is defined as the meaningful statements the researcher has selected from the given data. Each statement is perceived as equally important. Statements may be paraphrased (Moerer-Urdall & Creswell, 2004).

**Intentionality** is the way one focuses on content. When a person thinks about or reflects upon a topic, a mental picture is created (Smith, 2003).

**Internalization** is defined as the internal process of joining intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (Joussemet, Koestner, Lekes, & Haulfort, 2004).

**Internal Locus of Control** is defined as when a person attributes success to his/her own efforts and abilities. This person is one who expects to succeed, will be more motivated, and is likely to learn. Oftentimes this person will seek out information, is likely to have good study habits, and has a positive attitude (teachermotivation/locusofcontrol.htm).

**Locus of Control** is defined as an individual’s belief system regarding the causes of his/her experiences. Oftentimes the person assigns success or failure to these factors (teachermotivation/locusofcontrol.htm).

**Phenomenology** is defined as an exploration of the structures of consciousness and human experiences. This research method helps the researcher to understand the essence of shared human experiences (Laverty, 2003).

**Quantitative Research** is defined as the systematic scientific investigation of properties, phenomena, and their relationships (encyclopedia.thefreedictionary.com).
**Question Protocol** is the set of questions used in this phenomenology that enables teachers’ to tell their own stories and question their experiences in their own terms.

**Relatedness** is a person’s need and acknowledgement to belong (Joussemet, Koestner, Lekes & Haulfort, 2004).

**Structural Descriptions** explain how the participants experienced the event in a phenomenological study (Moerer-Urdall & Creswell, 2004).

**Teacher Burnout** is defined as feelings of failure and exhaustion from excessive demands on teachers’ energy with insufficient reward for their effort (Freudenberger, 1974).

**Teacher Motivation** is defined as an internal drive that helps the teacher complete the task in order to achieve a specific goal (Gower, 2005).

**Teacher Self-Efficacy** is teachers’ self-assurance in their own abilities that students can be reached and student learning is positively influenced (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2007).

**Teacher Stress** is defined as a condition that one’s body experiences when a message is received from the brain that tells it to prepare to run or fight (Johnson, 2006).

**Textual Descriptions** are explanations of what was experienced by the participants in a phenomenological study (Moerer-Urdall & Creswell, 2004).

**Transcendental Phenomenology** is defined as where the researcher focuses on each of the individual participant’s experiences (Class Notes from EFD 879, 2/20/05).

**Triangulation** is defined as a method of validation in qualitative research that uses the accuracy of information provided by three or more types of autonomous points on view on specific data sources (Bureau of Justice Assistance, 2008).
CHAPTER TWO
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

Throughout the years, researchers have examined strategies to retain teachers by documenting what keeps them in the field and what causes them to leave. The research about why some teachers remain in education and why others leave addresses such constructs as teacher self-efficacy, teacher motivation, teacher burnout, and teacher stress. However, limited research has been done on the application of these four constructs to the experiences that teachers have encountered (Schwarzer & Schmitz, 2004). Studies based on one or more of these constructs suggest that each of these components play an integral part in the teachers’ growth (Schwarzer & Schmitz, 2004; Fives, Hamman, & Oliverez, 2007; & Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2007).

Teacher Self-Efficacy

Over the last quarter of a century the major influences on teacher self-efficacy have been defined through Albert Bandura’s research (Bandura, 1977, 1997; Saffold, 2005; Woolfolk Hoy & Burke-Spero, 2005). In the 1960’s Bandura created social learning theory. He included in his theory the principles of observational learning and vicarious reinforcement (Pajares, 2002). Through continued studies, Bandura realized that there was an important piece missing from his previous theory. In 1977, Bandura published “Self-efficacy: Toward a unifying theory of behavioral change.” In this article Bandura (1977) addressed the missing piece: self-belief. Then in 1986, Bandura published Social Foundations of Thought and Action: A Social Cognitive Theory. Here he
advanced his views on social learning theory (Bandura, 1986; Pajares, 2002). Bandura believed that people exercise control over their lives (Bandura, 1986; Goddard & Goddard, 2001; Pajares, 2002). They view themselves as self-organizers, proactive, self-reflecting, and self-regulating. They are not shaped by the environment or motivated by their inner desires (Bandura, 1986; Pajares, 2002). People are constantly thinking about and reflecting on their actions and behavior (Goddard & Goddard, 2001; Pajares, 2002; Woolfolk Hoy, Hoy, & Kurz, 2007). When people believe in their abilities there is a commanding motivation to accomplish the goal even if it means putting forth great effort to do so (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2002; Woolfolk Hoy, 2004). People also possess the necessary skills to cope with unforeseen setbacks and problems (Bandura, 1977).

Researchers (Shaughnessy, 2004; Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2002; Woolfolk Hoy, 2004a) have applied Bandura’s original idea of self-efficacy to teachers and their work in a school environment. Teachers’ self-efficacy is based upon their perceptions regarding their own abilities to promote student learning (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2007). High teacher self-efficacy correlates with positive teacher and student outcomes (Shaughnessy, 2004). A teacher who is able to realize these talents and strengths can magnify the level of self-efficacy possessed (Abassai, 2006; Muijs & Reynolds, 2001).

Research also suggests that it is more profitable when teachers overestimate their teaching skills and motivation (Bandura, 1977; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007). The teacher is more willing to expend the effort and be persistent when encountering
difficulties (Bandura, 1977; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007). This helps the teacher to maximize the skills and abilities they possess (Bandura, 1997; Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2007).

When teachers begin their careers in the classroom, some begin with high teacher self-efficacy, while others are not as sure of themselves or even have serious doubts in their abilities (Woolfolk Hoy, 2004a). Over the course of the first few years novice teachers have to, through trial and error, develop their own philosophy of teaching, learn what makes them successful teachers, and learn what works with their students (Woolfolk Hoy & Burke-Spero, 2005). Teachers who are successful in this process often acquire high self-efficacy (Abassai, 2006; Goddard & Hoy, 2005).

When a teacher possesses high self-efficacy it affects the effort that the teacher puts forth in teaching, the goals that are set, and the level of aspiration (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2002; Woolfolk Hoy, 2004). This type of teacher also demonstrates greater confidence and enthusiasm (Noll, 2004; Woolfolk Hoy, 2004; Woolfolk Hoy & Davis, 2005), strong organizational skills, and superior planning (Allinder, 1994; Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2002; Woolfolk Hoy & Davis, 2005). A teacher with high self efficacy will seek out new ways to work with the students to better meet their needs (Mulholland & Wallace, 2001; Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2002), be less critical of student mistakes (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2002), and be willing to help struggling students longer than a teacher with less self-efficacy (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2002). High self-efficacy results in a teacher who is determined to work out the issues when instruction does not go as planned.
A teacher with high self-efficacy is open to new ideas (Saffold, 2005; Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001). The teacher with high self-efficacy helps to better meet the needs of the students. This teacher also grows as a professional and as a person (Woolfolk Hoy, 2004). When there are positive experiences to relate to, the teacher develops a stronger devotion to teaching (Cousins & Walker, 2000; Woolfolk-Hoy & Burke-Spero, 2005).

The three major influences in the interaction of human functioning are behavior, person, and environment according to the research of Bandura (1986), Pajares (2002), and Woolfolk Hoy, Hoy, & Kurz (2007). How people perceive their own actions and the results from their actions and behavior can change and affect their environment. The people internally process this and, after thought and reflection, can alter their behavior. Bandura (1986) referred to this as reciprocal determinism or triadic reciprocal causation. When researchers apply Bandura’s Triadic Reciprocal Causation Model (see Figure 1) they begin to understand the multi-dimensional makeup of each individual teacher’s positive self-efficacy beliefs.

![Figure 1. Bandura’s (1986) Triadic Reciprocal Causation.](image)

Teachers’ self-efficacy beliefs are influenced and formulated from four sources (Bandura, 1993; Pajares, 2002; Woolfolk Hoy & Burke-Spero, 2000). The four major
influences are: (a) Mastery Experience; (b) Vicarious Experience; (c) Social Persuasion; and (d) Emotional States. Of the four, Mastery Experiences have the most powerful influence according to Bandura’s work (Bandura, 1977; Milner & Woolfolk Hoy, 2003; Woolfolk-Hoy & Burke-Spero, 2005; Woolfolk Hoy, Hoy & Kurz, 2007). Mastery Experiences include the teachers’ perceptions that they can accomplish the task of teaching successfully. When teachers think that their teaching has been successful, their levels of efficacy are raised. When teachers encounter difficulty with a lesson or in an area of teaching, the feeling of failure causes their efficacy levels to decrease (Milner & Hoy, 2002; Pajares, 2002; Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk-Hoy & Hoy, 1998). Elevated levels of self-efficacy usually occur in teachers when they consider themselves to possess the needed abilities and see themselves as in control of the situation (Milner & Woolfolk Hoy, 2002; Woolfolk Hoy & Burke-Spero, 2000).

Teachers need to acknowledge internally that they are successful. This is also an important aspect in the teaching scenario. When teachers perceive their success resulting from internal or controllable reasons, such as teacher capability and effort, then self-efficacy is higher. If teachers’ success is credited to luck or help from others, self-efficacy is lower. When setbacks occur, especially in the early years, teachers need to continue trying with determination, if they want to be successful teachers (Bandura, 1993; Pintrich & Schunk, 2001; Saffold, 2005; Woolfolk Hoy & Burke-Spero, 2005).

Woolfolk Hoy’s and Burke-Spero’s (2000, 2005) research suggests that when teachers are working on developing a skill, that is when their self-efficacy judgments are most impressionable. Their self-efficacy beliefs will become more established with
experience provided that the task and the teaching content remain constant. Early teaching experiences that are positive result in high self-efficacy. Early teaching experiences that are negative result in low self-efficacy.

Woolfolk Hoy (2004) continues, the more the teachers perceive themselves as successful, the more likely they are to demonstrate this confidence in the classroom. Confidence in the classroom helps a teacher to grow as an educator (Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk-Hoy & Hoy, 1998). To help teachers improve their confidence and help create mastery experiences, teachers must want to acquire more knowledge about their personal teaching philosophies and they must set professional goals. Creating and writing specific learning objectives that direct their teaching and develop an understanding of all their students’ needs also help improve their mastery experiences (Woolfolk Hoy, 2004).

Mastery experiences are a cyclical process. When teachers possess greater self-efficacy it leads to putting forth a greater effort and persistence. This in turn leads to a better performance or new mastery experiences, which can lead to greater efficacy. This cyclical process is a powerful influence on teacher self-efficacy (Woolfolk Hoy, 2004).

Vicarious Experiences is Bandura’s (1993) second influence on teacher self-efficacy. Novice teachers do not have to rely only on themselves and their experiences to develop their feelings on teacher self-efficacy (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2007; Woolfolk Hoy & Burke-Spero, 2005). Pajares (2002) explains that observing other teachers in the school or throughout the district is another way for novice teachers to develop a high sense of self-efficacy. A kindergarten teacher observing several different kindergarten teachers throughout the district would be a meaningful experience.
Teachers identify with the models. To identify with a model the teacher must find a teacher who has qualities that are admired and respected. Modeling helps the novice teacher set developmental and achievable goals. Using models, teachers are able to enhance the influence of vicarious experiences in developing a high self-efficacy (Milner & Woolfolk Hoy, 2003; Pajares, 2002; Woolfolk Hoy & Burke-Spero, 2005). Helping the teacher find an appropriate model can help inspire the teacher. Using a model that is meaningful and worthwhile increases the teacher’s self-efficacy. The model is able to introduce positive self-efficacy skills that can influence the teacher throughout the career (Pajares, 2002).

When a teacher experiences high levels of joy or pleasure from teaching a successful lesson, high self-efficacy is present. When high levels of stress or fear of losing control enter into a lesson, low self-efficacy is experienced. These feelings of psychological and emotional stimulation augment feelings of high and low self-efficacy (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2007).

Bandura’s (1977) third source of influence is Social Persuasion. According to Woolfolk Hoy and Burke-Spero (2005) social persuasion is not as great of an influence as the first two sources (Bandura, 1986). Examples of this influence would include an administrator providing feedback after a classroom observation or a mentor teacher providing words of encouragement after the beginning teacher taught a lesson that was not as successful as it should have been. Social Persuasion is only as credible as the person trying to provide the feedback. If the teacher receiving the feedback trusts the credibility of the one providing the feedback then this can be an effective influence.
When the teacher receiving the feedback does not value the person and what is being said, the influence on teacher efficacy is very limited. It is easier for a teacher to have his/her self efficacy skills weakened when social persuasion is not used correctly than strengthened when used correctly (Bandura, 1986; Pajares, 2002).

Social persuasion can include effective cooperation or collective efficacy among the faculty (Goddard & Goddard, 2001) and positive rapport building with the students (Mulholland & Wallace, 2001). These social support systems help the teacher to reduce stress in the teaching environment (Bandura, 1997). Teachers need a supportive environment that includes verbal feedback, praise, and encouragement to foster high efficacy beliefs (Milner & Woolfolk Hoy, 2002).

Social Persuasion alone is not a strong enough influence to create lasting high self-efficacy. It can be used to help a teacher teach a successful lesson to the point where the teacher has a positive boost in self-efficacy. From there the teacher will want to seek out new strategies to teach the lesson and want to continue to try and be successful (Bandura, 1982; Woolfolk Hoy & Burke-Spero, 2000).

Emotional States is the fourth influence presented by Bandura (1977). This is the weakest of the four influences (Saffold, 2005). Saffold (2005) and Pajares (2002) state that when a teacher has a positive outlook and displays optimistic behaviors then self-efficacy is increased. If the teacher displays negativity, is stressed, or harbors anxiety, then self-efficacy is lowered. Negative thoughts decrease self-efficacy. A teacher should reduce the negative emotional states that are being experienced. Teachers need to
remember that they have power over themselves, their lives, and the environment that they choose to live in.

While there is much more to learn about the sources of teacher self-efficacy beliefs (Labone, 2004), it has been demonstrated that these four influences can affect them (Pintrich & Schunk, 2001; Woolfolk-Hoy & Burke-Spero, 2005). When on the journey from a novice to a veteran teacher, if teachers are able to incorporate the four influences of self-efficacy early-on in their careers, then teachers can help sustain their careers. Understanding and knowing about teacher self-efficacy in the early years could be critical to the development of veteran teachers (Woolfolk-Hoy & Burke-Spero, 2005).

As teachers begin their careers, they need to understand that the journey is not going to be a direct path up the mountain to becoming a successful teacher. There will be diversions and struggles along the way. Combinations of the working environment, the teacher’s behavior, and individual experiences will mark each teacher’s journey and growth (Bandura, 1986; Pajares, 2002; Woolfolk, Hoy, Hoy & Kurz, 2007).

Tschannen-Moran et al. (1998) proposed a multi-dimensional model of teacher efficacy (see Figure 2). The major sources of information in the model are the four sources of efficacy: mastery experiences, verbal persuasion, social or vicarious persuasion, and emotional states (physiological arousal) (Bandura, 1977, 1986; Goddard, Hoy, Woolfolk Hoy, 2000). Because it is associated with the efficacy sources it is consistent with Bandura’s social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1977, 1986). This model helps teachers understand the self-efficacy process experienced when a lesson is taught. The model was designed to be used as a cyclical process that emerges from two

Figure 2. Multidimensional Model of Teacher Efficacy.

This model examines Bandura’s (1997) influences of self-efficacy as they relate to teachers. It suggests that teachers make efficacy judgments to a degree by the strengths and the weaknesses that teachers possess and limitations that teachers encounter when teaching in specific areas (Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy, 2002 & Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998). Teachers have one or more of the influences to draw upon or relate to through their cognitive thought processes. Once the teachers have processed the experience, it is analyzed in two categories. They will analyze the actual teaching task and then their personal teaching competence.

Teachers begin by analyzing what they believe is successful teaching. They consider the obstacles they must overcome. They also think about what useable resources are available. It is important to be aware of the factors that hinder teachers from doing their best job. It is necessary to have the resources available to aid in student learning (Goddard, Hoy & Woolfolk Hoy, 2000). Bandura’s (1997) triadic reciprocal causation,
which combines the environment, teacher behavior, and individual factors, relates to the “Analysis of Teaching Task Section” of the model. During this time of analysis is where teachers, through their perception, evaluate the environment, their behavior, and the individual factors relating to the specific situation and the lesson (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998).

Teachers must also analyze and assess their personal teaching competence, including their strengths and their weaknesses. They have to weigh their perception of skills, knowledge, teaching strategies, and personality traits against their weaknesses in the specific teaching context that they are considering (Goddard, Hoy, & Woolfolk Hoy, 2000).

Using these two analyses teachers relate the self-perceived ideas of the positives of teacher self-efficacy and the consequences or the negatives of teacher self-efficacy to arrive at an overall performance evaluation of the lesson (Goddard, Hoy & Woolfolk Hoy, 2000). Here the teachers are making self-efficacy judgments by assessing both the teaching task and the personal teaching competence. As the cycle within the model continues, teachers compile the evaluation of many different lessons. As teachers evaluate these two analyses, they must assess their ability levels across a varied range of activities and weigh both the positives and the negatives to determine a valid measure (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001). Teacher self-efficacy and growth can occur when the teacher perceives the lessons in a positive manner. When the teacher views the lessons with a negative perception the teacher self-efficacy will be low and limited growth will occur (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998).
It is important for beginning teachers to develop a high self-efficacy if they want to grow and successfully develop in the teaching field (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2002). When they are in the beginning stages of their careers they start formulating their view of their self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997; Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2007; 2004; Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998; Woolfolk Hoy & Burke-Spero, 2005; Woolfolk Hoy & Hoy). Once these opinions are created they are difficult to change.

Beginning teachers need to understand their abilities and the content that they are presenting (Shaughnessy, 2004; Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2002). They need to work on developing their own personal worth in the classroom and comprehend their influence on the students and their outcomes (Darling-Hammond, Chung, & Frelow, 2002). Possibly the most powerful forecaster of teacher efficacy is beginning teacher experience.

Bandura’s findings (1977; 1997) show that teacher self-efficacy is related to the teachers’ perceptions of their abilities. Coladarci’s (1992) early research offered support for these findings as did later research (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2002). Coladarci’s (1992) study showed that teachers with higher self-efficacy had students who had higher expectations of themselves. These teachers displayed behaviors that led students from lower socio-economic homes to become higher achievers than originally expected because of the instruction received in the classroom. Teachers with high self-efficacy were able to provide the necessary guidance and instruction that allowed these students to succeed (Muijs & Reynolds, 2001). Teachers with lower self-efficacy were unable to produce such outcomes (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2007; Watkins,
2003). Their students were lower achievers who did not excel like the students who had teachers with high self-efficacy (Coladarci, 1992; Parkay et al., 1988). Teachers who teach students who succeed and do well in the classroom, continue their journey in the field of education and are more committed to the field of teaching (Woolfolk Hoy, 2004). When their students achieve, the teachers achieve and develop from a novice teacher to a veteran one.

Other self-efficacy expectations include: (a) commitment to the teaching profession (Woolfolk Hoy, 2004); (b) continuation of graduate work for employed teachers (Kardos, 2004); (c) working in schools where parental involvement is active (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2002); (d) working in an elementary setting versus a high school setting (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2002); and (e) the abundant availability of resources (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2002, 2007; Woolfolk Hoy & Burke-Spero, 2005). Teachers who set goals for themselves, such as working and growing in a job that they define as their profession (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2002), continue their education (Kardos, 2004).

Efficacy beliefs influence the effort teachers put into teaching (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2002) and that makes a difference in the effectiveness of a classroom (Woolfolk, Davis & Pape, 2007; Woolfolk Hoy & Weinstein, 2006). Student achievement and teacher efficacy are related to each other (Muijs & Reynolds, 2001) with teachers’ efficacy beliefs playing a major role in promoting positive student achievement (Weinstein, 2002; Weinstein, Gregory & Stambler, 2004).
Schools need to encourage cooperation between administrators and teachers to help promote high teacher efficacy (Woolfolk Hoy & Hoy, 2003). Schools that support teacher efficacy show that teachers recognize that their colleagues: (a) set goals with high standards that are attainable; (b) cultivate and maintain a well-behaved and meaningful learning environment; and (c) demonstrate a respect for learning and academic excellence (Goddard & Goddard, 2001; Hoy & Woolfolk, 1993). Administrators who demonstrate a positive rapport and have a working relationship with their superiors help to develop high teacher efficacy (Goddard & Goddard, 2001). When there is cooperation between teachers and administrators teacher efficacy will be higher (Woolfolk Hoy & Hoy, 2003). Administrators’ encouragement supports teacher efficacy and helps teachers succeed in producing positive student achievement (Shaughnessy, 2004).

The current philosophy of professional development for teachers correlates with building high teacher efficacy (Choy, Chen & Bugarin, 2006). Professional development needs to meet high quality standards (Hawley & Valli, 2001), change teacher learning, and be implemented in the classroom (Porter, Garet, Desimone, Yoon, & Birman, 2000). Such changes result in improved student achievement (Cohen & Hill, 2000; Wenglinsky, 2002). The professional development activities that are planned under this philosophy should provide a long-term plan for school improvement. Evaluation of these plans on teaching procedures, their effectiveness, and student outcomes should follow (Choy et al., 2006).

Professional development should provide activities that reflect student needs. It should be an element of positive change in the school and curriculum. Professional
development should involve collaboration among the teachers. To develop a collaborative school environment, teachers need to join with their peers and administrators to work on common goals. There should also be a plan in place that unites the school with its collaborative model. Professional development activities should provide opportunities for teachers to develop classroom practices that can result in improved student achievement and raise teacher self-efficacy (Resnick, 2005).

Cohen and Hill’s research (2002) states that it is essential that professional development allow teachers to apply in the classroom what they have learned through professional development. When professional development correlates to the curriculum, standards, and assessment instruments, the result is better instruction and improved student learning. Teachers who attended this type of professional development used what they learned in their classrooms. Teachers who seek out new ideas and are more open to innovative ideas through professional development demonstrate a higher self-efficacy (Turner et al., 2004).

Novice teachers are provided professional development to help develop higher teacher efficacy (Johnson & Burkeland, 2003; Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2002; Woolfolk Hoy & Burke-Spero, 2000). Formal mentoring and/or induction programs help new teachers learn about the school climate, policies, programs, and available resources (Choy et al., 2006; Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2002). Through the induction program, novice teachers also learn about teacher expectations and responsibilities (Choy et al., 2006).
Administrators are viewed as highly supportive when they provide relative professional development (Choy et al., 2006). They help teachers develop and nurture their self-efficacy when they demonstrate support. Teachers are more likely to want to participate when the principal actively engages the staff in the provided activities. However, veteran teachers are more apt to view professional development activities and courses as a form of support than novice teachers. Veteran teachers want to collaborate with their peers, visit other schools, and conduct specific research projects as their professional development activities, whereas novice teachers want to pursue another degree or attend behavior management classes for their professional development.

Teacher Motivation

Teacher motivation is a dynamic construct that goes along with teacher self-efficacy. Brown (1994) looked at motivation as a way to identify the failure or success in completing any assignment. According to Ryan and Deci (2000a) motivation is the concept of being moved to complete something. Dörnyei (2001) stated that motivation was what made people accountable for completing a task. Harmer (2001) and Gower (2005) defined motivation as an internal drive that helps one complete the task in order to achieve a specific goal. Artega (2006) stated that motivation is the instinct or drive that allows for psychological processes to be examined in a logical way.

Motivation relates to the aspects of establishing meaning and purpose. It involves energy, direction, and determination (Ryan & Deci, 2000a). It helps determine what the person is going to do, how long the person will work to achieve the task, and how
difficult the task will be to complete (Dörnyei, 2001). In other words, motivation produces (Ryan & Deci, 2000a).

Motivation comes from a variety of factors. If there is value in the endeavor, an unshakable interest, or a desire to achieve and do extremely well, motivation is present (Ryan & Deci, 2000a). People who possess self-authored or real motivation reveal themselves as dedicated and creative, and they display a heightened sense of vitality (Deci & Vansteenkiste, 2004; Ryan & Deci, 2000a). These characteristics, along with a self-driven interest or desire to explore and master the task, indicate that motivation is present. Teachers who are highly motivated and possess the right attitude want to display positive teaching. They strive for excellence in their teaching (Abdullah, Abidin, Luan, Majid, & Atan, 2006).

There are two types of motivation needed for psychological growth when examining teacher motivation: intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation (Dörnyei, 2001). Gagné and Deci (2005) define intrinsic motivation as what a person will do without some external force encouraging or assisting them. Teachers who are intrinsically motivated find that they usually enjoy the opportunities presented to them and look forward to accomplishing the task (Abdullah et al., 2006; Sinquefield, 2007). They are psychologically challenged and completing the tasks is rewarding to them (Dörnyei, 2001). Their professional development opportunities should include activities that allow for growth, achievement, and recognition (Gagné & Deci, 2005).

Intrinsic motivation is a phenomenon that helps manifest the potential in human nature. However, intrinsic motivation must be nurtured and supported. It may be
disrupted if the teacher encounters nonsupport or receives demeaning evaluations from others. For intrinsic motivation to thrive, it must be presented with profitable challenges and productive feedback (Ryan & Deci, 2000b; Vansteenkiste & Deci, 2003).

When intrinsic motivation is enhanced there are greater feelings of autonomy (Ryan & Deci, 2000b). Autonomy, in regards to intrinsic motivation, refers to people possessing a desire or willingness to make a choice when presented with opportunities to act. These actions may be independently initiated or requested by someone else (Chirkov, Ryan, Kim, & Kaplan, 2003).

Malone and Lepper (1987) and Sinquefield (2007) have compiled a list of factors based on motivational theory that promote intrinsic motivation. These factors may be applied to teacher success and teacher growth. Challenge—a teacher is motivated when presented a challenge. The teacher is working toward obtainable goals that require intermediate difficulty. Curiosity—a teacher relates to something in the physical environment or in their knowledge base that he/she would like to know more about. The teacher knows that there is more to learn about this object or thought and engages in activities to do so. Control—teachers like to think that they are in control of a situation and what is happening to them. Fantasy—teachers use their imagination and create mental images that are not in the physical environment to stimulate thought and a specific behavior. Competition—teachers like to compare their performance favorable to others in the same situation. Cooperation—teachers will often times help other teachers achieve their goals in the school environment. This is sometimes referred to as mentoring or peer
coaching. Recognition—teachers want to be respected and appreciated for their achievements and accomplishments by their peers and supervisors.

There must be feelings of high teacher efficacy and ability for teachers to display intrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000b). Intrinsic motivation is present when the activities required possess intrinsic interest and are challenging and appealing (Deci & Vansteenkiste, 2004; Gagné & Deci, 2005; Ryan & Deci, 2000b). For intrinsic motivation to be cultivated there needs to be choices allowed, others must be willing to acknowledge the teachers’ feelings, and there needs to be opportunities for self-direction (Kowal & Forteri, 2001; Reeve, Nix, & Hamm, 2003; Ryan & Deci, 2000b). This relates back to teacher motivation where the research showed that teachers had higher self-efficacy when they continued their graduate studies while they continue teaching (Coladarci, 1992; Czubaj, 1996).

Tangible evidence of intrinsic motivation is seen when teachers enjoy the company of their students and display an excitement for teaching, demonstrating this through the content that they teach. Therefore, teachers should be provided the opportunity to develop new skills and increase their influence in their work environment (Abbasi, 2006). When intrinsic motivation is cultivated properly it becomes a part of the teacher’s personality (Sinquefield, 2007).

Extrinsic motivation is the other type of motivation needed for psychological growth (Dörnyei, 2001). It is defined as participation in certain activities for the purpose of gaining positive outcomes. These outcomes are separate from the specific activity and produce a positive reward for the person (Abdullah et al., 2006). This type of motivation
produces action toward an end rather than the person performing the task for personal satisfaction (Bandura, 1977; Cameron & Pierce, 1994; Gagné & Deci, 2005).

It is important to understand that extrinsic motivation factors can change at any time. Factors such as a job or money are dependent on outside forces and are to some degree out of the individual’s control (Sinquefield, 2007). Extrinsic motivation factors can produce short-range activities while reducing long-range interests (Gagné & Deci, 2005).

Ryan and Deci (2000b) state that extrinsic motivation factors are present where the work is performed. They may be viewed as successfully performing an assignment to produce specific outcomes. Oftentimes, extrinsic motivation is the result of personal choice or compliance to an outside source. Often extrinsic motivation tasks are not particularly interesting. The person performs the task because it is expected, modeled, or valued by someone else.

Deci and Ryan (1985), Gagné and Deci (2005), and Deci and Vansteenkiste (2004) proposed the organismic integration theory that explains the different types of extrinsic motivation. Externally regulated—there is an outside demand that will be rewarded when successfully completed. Introjected regulation—the person is motivated to perform the task successfully in order to avoid feelings of failure. Regulation through identification—this form of extrinsic motivation is more autonomous. The person values the goal that is expected to be completed and can identify with it. Integrated regulation—the person relates to the expectation and has assimilated the task with personal values.
The actions required to complete the task may contain some intrinsic motivation qualities, but is still considered an extrinsically motivated task.

Teachers think of extrinsic motivation in the context or the setting where teaching occurs (Silver, 1982; Suslu, 2006). There are several external motivating factors to consider. For teachers, organizational policy (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2007; Watkins, 2003), administration (Dörnyei, 2001a; Martin & Wilson, 2002; Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2007; Woolfolk Hoy & Burke-Spero, 2005), technical supervision (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2007), salary (Abbasi, 2006), working conditions such as school climate, resources, and facilities (Dörnyei, 2001a; Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2007), reduced feelings of isolation (Martin & Wilson, 2002), and job security (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2007; Watkins, 2003) are considered extrinsic motivators. These are factors that occur in the school environment where teachers have little control over most of them (Bandura, 1997; Sinquefield, 2007).

Research suggests that there are ways to help teachers participate in the work environment and acquire some control over the extrinsic factors that they encounter (Dörnyei, 2004; Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2002; Woolfolk Hoy & Hoy, 2003). The ways that teachers may learn to participate are: (a) by helping develop the curriculum and working with administrators and peers in a positive way; (b) by developing and implementing new discipline plans for the school; (c) by being responsible for developing new courses and programs for students and faculty; (d) by determining the needed resources and facilities; and (e) by implementing and teaching teacher-training workshops.
When considering extrinsic motivational factors, it is important for the school as a whole, as well as individual teachers, to work towards creating a positive school environment (Bandura, 1997; Goddard, Hoy, & Woolfolk Hoy, 2000). This includes cultivating collegial relationships with administrators, peers, and subordinates (Davis, Darling-Hammond, LaPointe, & Meyerson, 2005). Teacher growth and job satisfaction is associated with a positive school climate (Taylor & Tashakkori, 1995; Wentworth, 2004). Characteristics of this type of school would include trust and respect of and for others. There would be a spoken, as well as unspoken, knowledge of and concern for others’ well-being (Bryk & Schneider, 2002) and school strong interpersonal relationships would be present (Bandura, 1997; Goddard & Goddard, 2001). The school would possess an enriching environment that allowed for both personal and professional growth for the teachers and all others involved (Davis et al., 2005 & Manning & Saddlemire, 1996).

Included in building collegial relationships with administrators and supervisors, strong leadership should go beyond rhetoric and be considered as a necessary component in creating a positive school culture (Wentworth, 2004). Strong leadership is something that teachers need to help nurture extrinsic motivation (Davis et al., 2005). Research suggests that successful leaders need to be skilled at team building (Wentworth, 2004), seek input from others, show sensitivity to others’ interests and needs (Davis et al., 2005), and possess a willingness to share rewards and recognitions (Abbasi, 2006).

Heider’s (2005) research suggests that reducing the feeling of isolation among teachers is another extrinsic motivator. There are several ways that teachers and administrators may address this issue. Mentoring, teaming, and peer coaching are often
considered to help dissolve these feelings (Drago-Severson & Pinto, 2006). It is also recommended to create novice teacher learning communities where new teachers attend regular group meetings, so they can discuss mutual concerns, express emotion, and receive encouragement. These meetings are meant to encourage collaborative communication and reduce feelings of isolation (Heider, 2005). Time out is advised during the day to allow opportunities for staff to meet and discuss matters in a relaxed way. Time together and reflection are both strategies used in professional growth by educators (Drago-Severson & Pinto & Wentworth, 2004).

Tenure is a way that teachers acquire job security (Suslu, 2006). Tenure protects the teacher from unwarranted dismissal due to things such as failing a student, changes in administration, or school and district politics. Since there is a system in place to dismiss teachers who are convicted of major crimes, child abuse, and teacher incompetence, tenure ensures teachers the job security they need for a job well done. Tenure is provided in almost every state. It is the guarantee and “peace of mind” for public school teachers that they will be provided due process over any legal issue. According to Suslu (2006) & Brekke (2001) when teachers know that they are secure in their jobs and they are not constantly seeking new employment, they are able to focus on the positive aspects of their current jobs.

Joussemet, Koestner, Lekes, and Haulfort’s (2004) research suggests that teachers must possess a strong sense of internal motivation for the external motivators to be processed internally. The process of joining intrinsic and extrinsic motivation is called internalization. For internalization to occur, it is important for the teachers to possess
relatedness—the need to belong and acknowledge that they are needed. The internalization of extrinsic motivators also depends on the teachers’ belief that they are competent and capable. There is a perceived competence when the processes of relative internalization of extrinsic motivators occur. If teachers are not capable of internalization then instead of maturing and exhibiting the necessary behaviors of an effective teacher, there will be a reduction of the necessary growth to remain in the field (Bateman & Crant, 2003; Csikszentmihalyi & Nakamura, 1989).

Teachers need to be self-sufficient for extrinsic motivators to be internalized (Joussemet et al. (2004). Not only does this help with the internalization process, but it also helps assure that the internalization is more integrated. When teachers possess internalization the work environment is more integrated. The teachers demonstrate interdependence among themselves (Gagné & Deci, 2005; vanKnippenberg & vanSchie, 2000). They learn to work as teams and are respectful and concerned about their peers. This results in positive work outcomes and develops the internalization process of extrinsic motivators (Gagné & Deci, 2005; vanKnippenberg & vanSchie, 2000).

When examining intrinsic and extrinsic motivators, there are times when intrinsic motivation is not enough to assure that the necessary tasks are completed as discussed by Gagné and Deci (2005) and Koestner and Losier (2002). Autonomous extrinsic motivators are better predictors of teacher behaviors. Using autonomous extrinsic motivators resulted in better performance by teachers because it required extra discipline or determination.
One of motivation’s major components is locus of control (Czubaj, 1996; Neill, 2006). Teachers’ locus of control is considered to be an important part of their personalities and an important factor when examining intrinsic and extrinsic motivators. Locus of control refers to the people’s perception regarding the causes and the events in their lives. A person has to ask the question, do I control my life or is it run by external forces? Usually a person’s locus of control is visualized as running on a continuum ranging from external to internal. People move up and down the continuum depending on the situation and the circumstances (Neill, 2006).

Locus of control involves two different types of control. Internal locus of control is when people think that they are the ones in control of the situation. External locus of control is when people think that everything is beyond their control and external forces are in charge (Czubaj, 1996; Neill, 2006; Suslu, 2006).

Displaying characteristics of an internal locus of control is at times most desirable (Neill, 2006). People who demonstrate these characteristics are referred to as having self-agency or self-determination. Males tend to express this manifestation of internal locus of control more than females. Older people also tend to share this manifestation more than younger people. If a person is in a position of authority, then they probably express this manifestation more so than their subordinates (Mamlin, Harris, & Case, 2001). Teachers who demonstrated the characteristics of an internal locus of control have environments in their classrooms that are less stressful, have students who achieve more, score higher on student assessments, and score higher on their own professional assessments (Czubaj, 1996).
There are some drawbacks to demonstrating the apparent characteristics of internal locus of control. Teachers need to have the opportunity to display their competence and self-efficacy. In their environments teachers need to believe that they are the responsible parties, are in control, and are the dominant influences. People demonstrating these characteristics are achievement oriented and often receive the more influential, better paying jobs where they experience personal success. Teachers who do not often demonstrate the characteristics of internal locus of control can be trained to acquire it because it involves learned behaviors (Hans, 2000; Neill 2006).

Teachers with an external locus of control may possess one of two different outlooks on life. Sometimes teachers with an external locus of control respond to failure by quitting. Teachers believe the outside fates are against them, so it does not matter what they do or how much they prepare, they will not be successful (Grantz, 1999). The other point of view is that teachers with an external locus of control are not as worried about life in the classroom. They lead relaxed lives and whatever happens is meant to happen (Neill, 2006).

Teacher Burnout and Stress

Every school day, nearly 1,000 teachers exit the teaching field (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2005). Over the past ten years, statistics tell the story of teacher retention and attrition. In 1996, 25% of all new teachers had left the teaching field within the first five years of beginning their careers. It could climb to 50% of teachers working in high poverty areas (National Center for Education Statistics [NCES], 1996). According to Benner (2000) within the first four years of teaching 25% of beginning teachers had
left the education field for a new profession. In 2001, 40% of all beginning teachers had quit within the first five years, 12% returning within the next five years (Speckman, 2003), for a net of 28% no longer teaching. In 2002, 50% of beginning urban teachers lasted five years or less (Rowan, Corent, & Richard, 2002) and in 2003, 33% of beginning teachers quit within the first three years; 50% quit within five years. The most current research suggests that 44% of new teachers leave within the first two years (DeAngelis & Presley, 2007) and between 50% (Escandon, 2007) and 67% leave within the first five (DeAngelis & Presley, 2007).

To examine teacher attrition in more specific numbers, during the 2003-2004 school year there were 3,214,900 public school teachers employed in the United States. Eighty-four percent of these teachers remained at their same schools. Eight percent moved to a different school and eight percent left the profession completely (Marvel, Lyter, Peltola, Strizek, & Morton, 2006).

In Marvel’s (2006) Teacher Attrition and Mobility Survey during the 2004-2005 school year surveyed 7,429 current and former teachers. The results showed that there were 2,864 stayers (39%) who were still teaching as in the previous year. There were 1,912 movers (26%) who had moved to a different school. The leavers numbered 2,653 (35%). They had left the field of teaching all together (Marvel et al., 2006).

Other known facts about teacher attrition include that 25% of K-12 public school teachers considered seeking a new profession exceptionally important when considering leaving the teaching field. Thirty-one percent of retiring K-12 public school teachers considered retiring necessary in their decision to leave teaching. There are teachers who
leave the classroom and remain in the field of education. Fifty-five percent of these teachers acknowledge that they had more control over their jobs in their new situations than they did in the classroom. When teachers left the field of education completely, 65% of these former public school teachers thought the expectations of the new job were more manageable. With the new job they were more able to find a balance between their work and home life (Marvel et al., 2006).

Attrition is a very expensive problem for school districts to encounter (Afolabi, Nweke, Eads, & Stephens, 2007). During the fiscal year 2001 in the state of Georgia, it cost approximately $340 million to replace the teachers lost to attrition. Those costs rose in fiscal year 2005 to nearly $400 million. The U.S. Labor estimates that it costs the school districts $7,999 per teacher per turnover (Feng, 2005). There is a conservative national estimate that it costs the teaching profession $2.2 billion to replace teachers who leave the profession. The costs of replacing teachers who transfer to new schools or districts has a national estimate of $4.9 billion a year and this does not include the possible losses experienced in teacher quality and student achievement (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2005).

There are several reasons that teachers leave the field. Two of these include starting a family and relocating to a new city or state (Haberman, 2004). However, in teacher interviews, when asked what is the primary reason for leaving teaching, work conditions is the primary reason teachers site for leaving their teaching jobs (National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future, 2003). Teachers face the day-to-day struggles of trying to serve the students and the school bureaucracies. If the teachers are
continuously experiencing strenuous and negative encounters, then alleviating stress and burnout becomes more important than wanting to succeed (Escandon, 2007).

There are times that teachers’ ideas and plans do not work in such a way that they can perceive them as successful. This is when teacher excitement begins to wane (Dorman, 2003; Maslach & Leiter, 1999). In this process of teacher growth, negativism and cynicism begin to dominate teachers’ attitudes and dispositions. Teachers are overwhelmed with work and expectations (Dorman, 2003; Jarvis, 2002). The workplace becomes a hotbed of negativity, where gossip and dealing with personal and professional inadequacies become more prevalent than having students succeed (Jarvis, 2002; Wood & McCarthy, 2002). What originally started out as a well-planned career became a difficult career to maintain (Marvel et al., 2006). Growth can occur from these difficult times, when they are viewed as mere challenges (Kowalski, 2002; Trent, 1996; Wood & McCarthy, 2002). However, teaching is a highly emotional profession. When teachers experience this emotional pressure for long periods of time, stress can occur. This can result in teachers displaying dysfunctional behaviors that affect the teacher’s health and well-being as well as the students’ achievement (Dorman, 2003; Maslach & Leiter, 1999).

Stress is a condition that one’s body experiences when a message is received from the brain that tells it to prepare to run or fight (Johnson, 2006). When a teacher internally processes a negative situation where one’s self-esteem drops, stress occurs (Manassero et al., 2006). Manassero, et al (2006) continues by stating there are many different causes of stress. The ones that teachers identify as the most important are (a) class size;
(b) excessive paperwork; (c) students who act out and display bad behavior; (d) lack of planning time; and (e) the teaching profession being viewed as in low standing. Other factors include: (a) the education level of the teacher; (b) the teacher’s years of experience; (c) the age of the teacher; (d) lack of parental support; (e) teachers having to teach out of field; (f) marital status; and (g) gender (Kowalski, 2002; Manassero et al., 2006). Looking at these causes, stress can be defined or categorized into three different categories: (a) the external environmental and its characteristics; (b) the teacher’s emotional state; or (b) the interaction between the teacher and the environment (Colangelo, 2002).

Stress has two dimensions (Kowalski, 2002) that relate to the teachers’ experiences: either internal or external. The internal experiences or dimension is known as the experiential aspect (NSW/ACT Independent Education Union, 2002; Schamer & Jackson, 1996; Terry, 1997). Internal stress is usually related to teachers being aggressive, impatient, and a “Type A” personality. They are workaholics with unrealistic expectations that can result in negative attitudes towards students (Kowalski, 2002). When teachers possess this type of personality it can result in health problems such as insomnia, depression, and hypertension (Jarvis, 2002; Johnson, 2006). Stress can become so severe that it results in teachers having nervous breakdowns (Eskridge & Coker, 1985; Kowalski, 2002). These problems also result in more teachers being absent, less willing to put forth the effort to be a successful teacher. They are ready to resign and/or withdraw from the profession (Ehrenberg, Ehrenberg, Ehrenberg, & Rees, 1989; Kowalski, 2002).
Physical aspects or external experiences are the second dimension of stress that affects teachers. These experiences are often referred to as systemic, meaning that they are related to the organization and its climate (Jarvis, 2002; Travers & Cooper, 1997). Systemic factors (Haberman, 2004; Kowalski, 2002) include, but are not limited to, lack of administrative support; disruptive students; unreasonable time demands; lack of necessary resources; and poor staff and peer relations. Some of the problems that can occur with colleagues include: personality conflicts; feelings of isolation; lack of support; and limited academic and social interaction.

When teachers view their performance as inadequate and negative, they experience stress (NSW/ACT Independent Education Union, 2002). Teachers who work in an environment that does not embrace an honest, open relationship often experience both the internal and external dimensions of stress. However, sometimes teacher stress is self-imposed (Kowalski, 2002).

Teachers who experience stress over a long period of time can have it lead to job dissatisfaction and teacher burnout (Colangelo, 2002). Teacher burnout is usually one of the consequences of stress. It is possible, however, to experience burnout without ever experiencing stress (Manassero et al., 2006).

The term burnout was first introduced by Freudenberger in 1974. He defines burnout as feelings of failure and exhaustion from excessive demands on a person’s energy with insufficient reward for their effort. Carter (1994) states that burnout includes a physical, emotional, and attitudinal exhaustion. Burnout begins with a small feeling of uneasiness that grows larger as the positive feelings of teaching fade away. Other
researchers have defined burnout as psychological distancing from work (Cherniss, 1980; Maslach, 1976; Seidman & Zager, 1987). Burnout has also been described as loss of enthusiasm and idealism for work (Matheny, Gfroerer, & Harris, 2000). Dorman (2003) continues by explaining burnout as the failure to effectively achieve in the work environment because of excessive job-related stress.

Burnout is often caused when the teacher finds that there is an imbalance between helping people and the teacher’s perceived self-efficacy. The teacher’s perceptions of the environment and the circumstances involved at work can cause burnout to occur. Burnout can also be manifested by the teacher’s work overload, a negative classroom, and/or a negative school environment (Dorman, 2003; Manassero et al., 2006).

In the 1980s, Maslach created the Maslach Burnout Inventory (Croom, 2003; Maslach & Jackson, 1981; Maslach & Schaufeli, 1993) which addressed the construct of teacher burnout. The original definition of teacher burnout was refined and three subdomains of teacher burnout were identified: depersonalization, negative personal accomplishment, and emotional exhaustion (Byrne, 1991; Dorman, 2003; Maslach, Jackson, & Leiter, 1996).

Depersonalization is when teachers develop a negative attitude towards co-workers and students (Croom, 2003; Manassero et al., 2006). Teachers will distance themselves from the faculty who are now viewed impersonally (Manassero et al., 2006). The work environment is not perceived as a positive place to work. At times, teachers can experience feelings of isolation and disconnectedness. A poor attitude towards the students, where teachers are experiencing role conflict, might also be displayed (Byrne,
1991; Colangelo, 2002; Dorman, 2003; Maslach et al., 1999). Teachers might attach labels to students that are negative and unbecoming (Croom, 2003).

Negative Personal Accomplishment refers to the depressing feelings that teachers experience towards themselves and their self-efficacy (Dorman, 2003). Teachers will often devalue their own self-worth and their work with others. There are feelings of powerlessness that oftentimes can create stress (LeCompte & Dworkin, 1991; Wood & McCarthy, 2002) and prohibit the intellectual advancement of the students (Croom, 2003).

When teachers become highly vulnerable to burnout, Emotional Exhaustion occurs (Colangelo, 2002; Maslach & Leiter, 1999). The pressure from the role of “teacher” and the classroom environment are overwhelming during these times of exhaustion (Dorman, 2003). Teachers are expected to be the “glue” that holds the classroom together under any and all circumstances. Teachers view this attitude of being the “glue” as role ambiguity (Colangelo, 2002). This process is emotionally draining and discouraging to teachers who are unsure of their roles and their expectations (Colangelo, 2002; Croom, 2003; Dorman, 2003; Maslach & Leiter, 1999).

Teachers who experience these three aspects of burnout see their growth process end because of their inability to cope with the day-to-day requirements of the job (Colangelo, 2002). They experience and display many of the symptoms that are associated with the constructs of burnout. How teachers perceive their jobs when being affected by the physical and mental strain of burnout can influence them to leave the teaching field (vanDick & Wagner, 2001).
Examining teacher burnout requires looking at both burnout types, intrinsic and extrinsic. Both types can be present at the same time. Examining both intrinsic and extrinsic burnout is necessary to understand all that is happening within each teacher (Manassero et al., 2006).

There are six predictors of the intrinsic burnout that teachers experience (Adams, 1999). Role preparedness is the first of these predictors (Adams, 1999; Terry, 1997). This is the level of competency and preparation that teachers possess in their given position (Batt & Moyihan, 2002). Teachers experience stress and burnout when they view themselves as unprepared or overloaded with work in their roles as teachers (Dorman, 2003).

Job and life satisfaction are the second and third predictors of intrinsic burnout (Adams, 1999; deGrip, Suben, & Stevens, 2006; Ganzach, 2003; Pettegrew & Wolf, 1982). Here, teachers gauge their well-being in both the work and personal environment. If teachers consider the professional and personal environments in positive terms, then burnout and stress are considerably less than if these environments are viewed in negative terms (Croom, 2003). Depersonalization and lack of personal accomplishments are results of these two predictors when teachers view them as negative (Dorman, 2003).

Withdrawal from the faculty and students, a lethargic attitude, and describing psychosomatic illnesses and symptoms of illnesses are examples of the fourth predictor of intrinsic burnout (Adams, 1999; Colangelo, 2002; Pettegrew & Wolf, 1982). Teachers who often experience headaches, stomachaches, and loss of sleep are under a great deal of stress that can lead to teacher burnout (Adams, 1999; Johnson, 2006). Symptoms
should be watched closely as they can have consequences for the teachers. If these symptoms continue to go untreated and ignored, emotional exhaustion may occur (Dorman, 2003).

Self doubt in themselves and their abilities is the fifth predictor of intrinsic burnout (Adams, 1999; Halpin, Harris, & Halpin, 1985). Teachers perceive that they have a certain amount of control in their lives. They like to think that they have some control over their environment and what is happening to them. When teachers begin to feel out of control, teachers develop stress that can lead to burnout (Colangelo, 2002 & Manassero et al., 2006).

The construct of positive self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977; Noll, 2004; Woolfolk-Hoy & Burke-Spero, 2005), previously discussed in this paper, helps teachers display new levels of enthusiasm for their students and teaching, and helps teachers develop self-confidence. When teachers display confidence in their teaching abilities, they do not tend to burnout as quickly as the teachers who do not have high self-esteem (Jarvis, 2002). If their self-esteem suffers or it never existed, then teachers lack self-esteem or self-efficacy (Adams, 1999; Dorman, 2003; Farber, 1984), their evaluations of their performances are negative, and they do not see themselves as successful teachers (Adams, 1999; Croom, 2003). All these feelings represent the sixth internal predictor of burnout, lack of self-esteem. Burnout occurs when teachers perceive themselves as unsuccessful or unable to contribute to student success (Dorman, 2003).

There are six extrinsic predictors of teacher burnout to consider. The extrinsic predictors are related more to the work environment and the working conditions than
teachers’ experiences (Colangelo, 2002). The first extrinsic predictor of teacher burnout is the classroom environment (Dorman, 2003). A positive classroom environment would be one where the teacher viewed the classroom as a high-quality psychosocial environment (Croom, 2003). Problems arise when there are large class sizes (Manassero et al., 2006), disruptive students (Friedman, 1995; DeAngelis & Presley, 2007; Manassero et al., 2006), and/or a fear of violence in the classroom (Brissie, Hoover-Dempsey, & Bassler, 1988; Miller, 2004). All of these can help cause teacher burnout if not dealt with in the classroom and the school environment.

This leads into the second predictor of extrinsic teacher burnout—a negative school environment. Issues arise when the teacher experiences a low-quality psychosocial environment throughout the school (Dorman, 2003; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). The school environment includes several different components, the most notable one: availability of resources (DeAngelis & Presley, 2007; Miller, 2004). When the resource demands outweigh resource availability, teachers have great feelings of inadequacy in meeting their students’ needs (Miller, 2004). Teachers become stressed which in turn leads to burnout (McCarthy, Lambertum, Beard, & Dematatis, 2002). Other components in the environment that can lead to teacher stress are lack of teacher empowerment (Dorman, 2003), lack of student support (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2005; Dorman, 2003), and teachers and school administrators not working towards the same mission and goals (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2005; DeAngelis & Presley, 2007; Dorman, 2003). Administrators who do not provide visible support add to a negative school environment (Croom, 2003; DeAngelis & Presley, 2007; Trent, 1996). If professional relationships are
not developed and nurtured (DeAngelis & Presley, 2007), teachers do not view their administrators as people who can be trusted and respected (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2005). There is not a strong leadership presence in the environment and teachers are unable to embrace the administrators’ philosophies and cultivate strong professional relationships (DeAngelis & Presley, 2007).

Work pressure is the third predictor of extrinsic teacher burnout (Croom, 2003; Dorman, 2003). Often teachers come to school early and have to stay late to complete all the necessary requirements involved in teaching (Kowalski, 2002). This pattern may become cyclical (Potter, 1998). Teachers think that they are never going to get caught up, working all the time just to stay one-step ahead of the next set of requirements, and it is never ending. Struggling to stay caught up results in teachers being stressed and overworked, and burnout sets in (Dorman, 2003; Kowalski, 2002).

Role Conflict and Role Ambiguity are the fourth and fifth predictors (Colangelo, 2002; deGrip et al., 2006). There are times teachers cannot please anyone including administrators, parents, and students (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2005; DeAngelis & Presley, 2007). Two or more of these outside groups may have conflicting expectations of the teacher (DeAngelis & Presley, 2007). Incompatible expectations cause turmoil and upheaval in the teacher’s expectations of self. These issues can result in a teacher not understanding what needs to be done, especially if it is changing on a regular basis (Colangelo, 2002). When teachers cannot predict what is going to be expected of them, frustration sets in, and that leads to stress and to burnout, prohibiting teacher growth (Dorman, 2003).
There are times when teachers think that the events of the school day are beyond their control (Colangelo, 2002; Czubaj, 1996; Dorman, 2003). This is referred to as the sixth predictor, External Locus of Control (Dorman, 2003). When the teacher is exhausted by the workload and is emotionally drained, then the teacher’s feeling of control moves from internal to external (Kowalski, 2002). The external environment is influencing what is happening to the teacher. This causes the teacher to respond to the events of the day with high anxiety, neurotic behavior, and self-imposed punishment for incompletion of expected requirements (Czubaj, 1996; Dorman, 2003).

Intrinsic and extrinsic factors intermingle to create stress within a teacher. As stress mounts and continues over an extended period of time burnout may occur (Manassero et al., 2006; Troman & Woods, 2001). Teachers are on a journey of growth. When they encounter stress and burnout the journey becomes more difficult (Manassero et al., 2006). If they do not find a remedy for the burnout, then their growth process is stunted, if not completely destroyed (Colangelo, 2002).

Once burnout has occurred, both depersonalization and emotional exhaustion can start developing within the teacher (Dorman, 2003). If it goes unrecognized or untreated the symptoms of burnout may become prevalent in the teacher’s life (Kowalski, 2002). The symptoms of burnout fall into three main categories: (a) behavioral, (b) physical, and (c) psychological (Barnett & Harris, 2004; Freudenberger, 1983; Scott, 2006). As a teacher’s work ethic suffers, there is deterioration in teacher performance and expectation (Kowalski, 2002). Some of the behavioral symptoms teachers may possess are overeating, under eating, angry outbursts, drug abuse, and excessive drinking (Johnson,
2006; Manassero et al., 2006; Mayo Clinic Staff, 2007). When these issues arise, the teacher may display poor time management, the inability to concentrate, job dissatisfaction, irritation and aggression, and an introversion and withdrawal from supportive relationships. The teacher’s attitude becomes less positive and more negative, and if this attitude continues then absenteeism, resignation and withdrawal from the profession can occur (Kowalski, 2002; Manassero et al., 2006).

Emotional exhaustion may show up as physical symptoms. These include insomnia and bad dreams, headaches, exhaustion, and high blood pressure (Kowalski, 2002; Mayo Clinic Staff, 2007; Scott, 2006). Psychosomatic illnesses can also arise (Kowalski, 2002).

Emotional symptoms (Mayo Clinic Staff, 2007) and consequences (Kowalski, 2002) in a teacher experiencing burnout can include anxiety, restlessness, and irritability. The teacher may experience feelings of inadequacy and low self-esteem (Kowalski, 2002). The teacher often experiences disillusionment with the job, which causes a feeling of helplessness and frustration in the lack of power to make any changes (Scott, 2006).

According to Manassero et al., 2006, teacher burnout does not result in one type of symptom more than another. Each of these symptoms is not usually experienced in isolation, but rather they occur in an overlap of two or more. If the symptoms are not addressed, then burnout continues to fester and impede the teacher’s performance (vanderLinde, 2000). This can lead to serious problems for the teacher and it can only be expected that the students will eventually be affected by the teacher’s burnout.
Observant administrators, leaders in the building, and teachers themselves should recognize when teacher burnout is creeping in on the faculty and staff (vanderLinde, 2000). While the symptoms are not always noticeable, effective leadership is aware of circumstances in the building and what teachers are experiencing (Woodward, 2001). Leaders need to address teacher burnout with the faculty before it develops into some out of control issue (Kowalski, 2002). If burnout is addressed before it is out of control it will be easier to manage and address (Albee, 2000; Wood & McCarthy, 2002).

Striving to create the ideal school should be a goal of the administration. Such a school should have an environment where originality and innovation are expected and nurtured. Everyone teaching and working in the building should provide opportunities for the improvement of education and continuous positive student achievement. The administration should offer solid management techniques to prevent stress in both the faculty and the students (vanderLinde, 2000).

Kowalski’s (2002) studies show that administrators can help create this positive working environment for their faculty and staff. They can help teachers understand that they are an investment in the school and that administrators are there to help protect their investment. Administrators can encourage, support, and reward their faculty, provide relevant professional development, and stay current in the field. Teachers should be treated professionally and with respect, and they will in turn act professionally (Brown, 2002).

The element of trust should also be present between administrators and faculty (Woodward, 2001). Administrators can help cultivate this by providing regular feedback.
and a clear understanding of the teachers’ responsibilities and expectations, by acknowledging and rewarding teachers for their efforts, and providing support systems for their teachers (Kowalski, 2002). Support systems help provide the faculty with a network where they can share, establish, and maintain a two-way system of open communication (Kowalski, 2002; Kyriacou, 2001).

If administrators are able to provide these necessary components, then they have addressed the first type of burnout prevention (Albee, 2000) known as primary prevention. At this beginning level, teachers have not yet experienced true burnout and are able to focus on their job and expectations. Teachers still think they have some control over their environment (Wood & McCarthy, 2002). This is the time where the teachers’ stress levels are the highest (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2005).

Communication and clear expectations are addressed at this primary level (Albee, 2000). Teachers embrace the administrative support (Wood & McCarthy, 2002). This helps to reduce the stress from teachers “not knowing” or “feeling unsure” about what is happening around them.

Another primary level preventive measure is the use of professional development activities (Kyriacou, 2001; Wood & McCarty, 2002). Necessary activities may include mentoring and networking that provide rapport building with fellow coworkers and employees, eliminating the feelings of isolation. Such activities also allow the teachers to increase their self-confidence and classroom abilities. Sixty-six percent of teachers who are mentored state that they have improved in their abilities and classroom performance (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2005).
The secondary level of prevention focuses on teachers’ internal feelings and perceptions that result from external problems (Wood & McCarty, 2002). Several different researchers have helped to compile a list of problems that arise when teachers are experiencing symptoms at the second level (Dorman, 2003; Kyriacou, 2001; Manassero et al., 2006; Troman & Woods, 2001; Wood & McCarty, 2002). Some of these symptoms include: (a) isolationism from coworkers; (b) role conflict, ambiguity, and overload; (c) work pressure; and (d) lack of personal accomplishment. The teacher’s body tries to adapt to what is happening in the school environment. If the teacher adjusts to what is happening, then growth and success begin again. If the teacher is unable to make the necessary modifications, burnout continues (Manassero et al., 2006). When administrators and leaders in the building recognize these symptoms in their teachers, they need to help eliminate them as quickly as possible through communication and actions that let the teachers know that they are supported (Kowalski, 2002). If not, these symptoms may result in the most serious level of teacher burnout (Albee, 2000).

Tertiary prevention is necessary when teacher burnout has already occurred (Wood & McCarty, 2002). Teachers’ bodies are overwhelmed and exhaustion occurs. Teachers do not want to be in the classroom and sickness may arise (Kowalski, 2002). Tertiary prevention offers strategies that are designed to help teachers recover from the burnout as well as to assist teachers in returning to work. Whether it is a series of events or one specific event that leads to burnout, teachers must make a “pivotal decision” if remaining in the field is an option (Kowalski, 2002; Troman & Woods, 2001). Teachers at this point of their career are at a significant crossroad. Sometimes teachers’ journeys
and growth may end because of this pivotal decision as they seek out different jobs and careers to pursue. With this decision, prevention is not necessary; teachers have made the decision to leave the teaching field (Marvel et al., 2006). Other times teachers may opt for a different road to take in the education field (Marvel et al., 2006). They may seek new jobs, new school environments, or decide to tough out the problem and seek refuge through outside interests with family and friends (Wood & McCarty, 2002). Burnout is at its maximum level when tertiary prevention is needed. Teachers have a difficult time recovering when burnout reaches this point, but it is possible to continue to grow and learn if the prevention process is successful (Troman & Woods, 2001).

Manassero et al., (2006) and Kowalski, (2002) examine why teachers do not remain in the field of education. Stress and burnout are two constructs that have to be considered. Stress is not the same thing as burnout. Stress can lead to burnout. While some stress is necessary to be a productive teacher, too much stress can result in teacher burnout. As teachers continue their experiences on their journey in education, stress and burnout are factors that can prohibit or stop their growth processes (Marvel et al., 2006). For teachers to be able to remain on the path to success, achieve their goals, and continue on their journey, stress and burnout must be addressed correctly and in a timely manner (Kowalski, 2002).
CHAPTER THREE
METHODOLOGY

Conceptual Model

The purpose of this study was to explore the constructs in relationship to the human experiences that elementary teachers go through as they grow from being a novice teacher to becoming a veteran one. These experiences were compared to each other to see the similarities that teachers have experienced in this growth process. The constructs were applied to the teachers’ experiences in examining the similarities in the growth process. The process led to the Research Question—What are the essential characteristics of experience that indicate growth from being a novice teacher to a veteran teacher?

The specific questions guiding the research flowed directly from the purposes and conceptual argument presented above and was central to this proposed inquiry:

- What is the process that a teacher goes through from starting as a beginning teacher to becoming a veteran teacher?
- Are there similarities in the process that each teacher experiences, and if so, what are they?
- How did these experiences help the teacher grow and learn?

In this study it was important to understand what processes a teacher goes through to become a veteran teacher. How does a teacher move through the stages starting with novice and moving to experienced? There is likely some common ground that teachers share when they go through their individual journeys so the experiences of a group of
teachers were documented. From that documented information the answer was found to the second question.

The second question looked at the commonalities and similarities in each teacher’s experience. This was the core question of the study. What did each teacher experience on the individual journey that is in common with the other teachers interviewed? This component of the study is applicable to beginning teachers and teachers who have not been in the field that long and possibly feel isolated and alone in their journey as a teacher. This knowledge could increase teacher awareness of their experiences and help them understand what they are experiencing.

The third question had to do with the application process. What did the teachers do with this knowledge? Have they applied this knowledge to their everyday lives? How has this knowledge allowed them to remain in the field and not drop out like some of their peers? This knowledge, too, could help beginning teachers and teachers relatively new to the field. They could apply this information to their careers and their journeys through the field of education. Learning that each journey does not isolate one and that others have experienced the same emotions and concerns could help with teacher retention.

To formulate the conceptual model for this study the four areas of Teacher Motivation, Efficacy, Burnout, and Stress were thoroughly examined to increase knowledge and understanding of the positives and the negatives that teachers experience when they remain as classroom teachers. Examining these four constructs provided the background knowledge needed to discuss with teachers their experiences and to
understand their growth processes that have allowed them to remain in the classroom and develop as professionals. This study attempted to identify the essential characteristics of the journey from being a novice teacher to becoming a veteran one.

Phenomenology

History

Phenomenology approaches can be traced back to the German philosophy of Husserl (EpocheWiki, 2005; Smith, 2003; van Manen, 2002). Phenomenology tries to understand the essence of shared human experiences (Laverty, 2003). Transcendental phenomenology seeks meaning and purpose in the essences of human experiences (Moerer-Urdal & Creswell, 2004).

Transcendental Phenomenology also comes from the work of Husserl (1892). The groundbreaking work on phenomenology that Husserl completed has resulted in many different researchers working with phenomenological studies and the development of different types of phenomenology. When Husserl spoke or wrote about transcendental phenomenology, he often used the words transcendental and phenomenology interchangeably. He viewed the terms as a way to describe both the process and the phenomena (EpocheWiki, 2005; Phenomenology Online, 2005).

Alfred Schultz was a banker who wanted to learn more about using phenomenology as it related to the social sciences. He began his studies by examining Edmund Husserl’s work. Husserl’s work was based on Max Weber’s findings. Husserl concentrated on studying society, understanding their behavior as individuals and groups in society (Smith, 2003; Weber, 1968). Schultz began his study knowing that social
research is different from research in the physical sciences. When studying the social sciences, the researcher is working with people as opposed to “objects.” People, themselves, are trying to find meaning in their experiences and the world in which they live, as are the actual researchers. Both everyday people and the researchers are using the same methods to define and explain the world in which they live. The primary difference is that the researcher has to become an unbiased observer. The researcher does not become involved in the day-to-day life of the people being studied. The cognitive issues are the only interest for the researcher (Schultz, 1962; Smith, 2003). The social scientist (researcher) selects a specific set of criteria that is to be the primary focus of the study. This sometimes leads to the researcher examining different aspects of behavior that a typical person would not think about but that are important to the researcher (Smith, 2003).

Method Choice

The methodology that was needed to properly explore this research question was a phenomenology. The purpose of phenomenology, as discussed by Husserl (1892), is to study human occurrences without questioning why these occurrences happened, their intention, or even their outward appearances. The focus in studying how human occurrences are experienced is to want to understand a person’s meaning of the phenomenon or occurrence. It is an exploration of the structures of consciousness and human experiences (Smith, 2003).

Phenomenology is used to understand how individuals formulate meaning from their experiences. One primary way that it does that is through the concept of
intersubjectivity (Smith, 2003). Intersubjectivity explains how we as humans view the world. It requires individuals to explain their experiences through their points-of-view, expressing their biases and opinions in order to explain their experiences. The ideas that humans form have been based on human actions, and social and cultural events that revolve around human activity (Husserl, 1892; Smith, 2003).

**Method Steps**

Teachers were engaged in an interview process that allowed them to express their interpretations about their experiences in the field of education. The research data acquired from this study allowed the researcher to delve into the teachers’ experiences in order to relate them to teacher growth. This study focused on the individual teachers and the individual teachers’ journeys. Transcendental Phenomenology was used because it focuses on the individuality of the interviews.

There is a certain process that needs to be followed in order to complete a transcendental phenomenology correctly. There needs to be a focus on the “wholeness of the experience” (Moustakas, 1994). The researcher must view the experiences and the behavior of the participants as one and search for the essences of the experiences (Moerer-Urdal & Creswell, 2004).

Intentionality is a process described by Franz Clemens Bretano (Smith, 2003). He worked in the philosophy of psychology at the turn of the twentieth century and introduced intentionality to contemporary psychology. Intentionality is the way one focuses on the content. When discussing a specific topic, a person creates a mental picture inside the mind while thinking about or reflecting on this topic. The person
creates an “intentional picture” in one’s mind on the discussed topic (Frege, 1892; Smith, 2003). The participants in a phenomenology are subject to intentionality when asked specific questions about specific experiences (Frege, 1892; Smith, 2003).

Before the researcher can begin examining the collected data, bracketing must occur. Bracketing is where the researcher writes down one’s biases and knowledge of the subject being studied (Bednall, 2006; Gearing, 2004). The processes and terms of epoché and bracketing are often used interchangeably (Bednall, 2006). Epoché is a Greek word that means to refrain from judgment (Moerer-Urdal & Creswell, 2004). The researcher must view the data as for the first time and be open to it completely. That is why it is referred to as a transcendental phenomenology, because the data and findings are viewed as new (van Manen, 2002).

In 1906 Husserl developed the method of epoché or bracketing (Beyer, 2000). This was to ensure that the researcher did not use past experiences and knowledge to influence the findings in the phenomenology. The phenomenology is not interested in what the researcher knows about the given topic, but what the participants know (Bednall, 2006). If the researcher had vast knowledge on the topic, then there would be a great amount of intentionality expressed by the researcher (Smith, 2003). This is not needed in a phenomenology that is interested in the participants and not the researcher. The epoché was designed to allow the researcher to discuss past experiences and the intentionality created by the topic so that the collected data would not be tainted by the researcher (Bednall, 2006; Beyer, 2000; Gearing, 2004).
Next the researcher must identify significant statements through horizontalization (Moerer-Urdal & Creswell, 2004). After interviewing the participants, the data must be transcribed. Using the transcribed data the researcher takes out any meaningful statement. Each statement is perceived as equally important and may be paraphrased.

Grouping the significant statements into cluster statements is the next step in performing a transcendental phenomenology (Moustakas, 1994). The researcher needs to find common meanings within the significant statements and “cluster” them into meaning units. Analysis of the meaning units will allow themes to emerge. In this process, irrelevant statements to the topic and statements that repeat or overlap should be discarded (Moerer-Urdal & Creswell, 2004).

Themes are then divided into two groups. There are textual descriptions and structural descriptions. Textual descriptions explain what was experienced by the participants, i.e., the external influences on the participants. Structural descriptions describe how the participants experienced the event, i.e., the internal influences and the interpretations of the participants (Moerer-Urdall & Creswell, 2004; Moustakas, 1994).

It is then the researcher’s responsibility to assemble a description of the meanings of the experience. The researcher must take it one step further and also express the essences that the participants experienced. The researcher will write up the findings and the conclusions of the study (Moerer-Urdall & Creswell, 2004; Moustakas, 1994).
Application of Method

To understand what teachers experience during their careers one has to give them the opportunity to share and discuss their profession. They need to talk about what goes on with the day-to-day occurrences, as well as the major events that have happened throughout their professional lives. This allows the emphasis to be on the understanding of the teachers’ experiences of the positive and negative events in their careers. Using the Question Protocol, they have an opportunity to share about the people who have influenced them and the journeys that they experienced. The teachers are able to tell their own stories and question their experiences in their own terms. The teachers discussed their commitment to teaching. They explained their interpretations and understanding of their experiences relating them to how they have experienced the phenomenon (Daniels, 2000; Smith, 2003; van Manen, 2002).

When the teachers were interviewed, the questions asked helped them to draw upon their experiences as a teacher over the course of their careers. They probably relied on some intentionality to describe these events. They recalled the experiences in their minds that created mental representations. They described their experiences from these mental pictures using “intentionality” (Smith, 2003; van Manen, 2002). It is this conscious awareness that was recorded as the data needed to determine the process that teachers went through in order to go from novice teachers to veteran ones.

Because the researcher has worked in the field of education for 26 years, 22 of them in the classroom, it was necessary to not let personal opinions and knowledge become a part of the interview process. Bracketing prior knowledge and experiences was
necessary before interpreting the data. This way, the researcher shared any knowledge and awareness of the topic in the paper, but minimized its affect on the interviews used in the paper.

The use of phenomenology explored the experiences of the interviewed teachers. The clustering of the meaning units and themes helped to synthesize the data and draw the conclusions about what were the essential characteristics of experience that indicated growth from being a novice teacher to a veteran teacher. This use of this process could make people more aware of what teachers experience in the field and what teachers need to remain in the field of education.

This interview study of ten elementary school teachers was designed to understand the experiences these professionals had as they transitioned from novice teachers to veteran teachers. While there is a multitude of literature on teacher efficacy, teacher motivation, teacher burnout, and teacher stress, there is limited research on the intersection of these constructs. One of the goals of this study was to examine retrospectively teachers’ experiences as they moved through their careers and see how those experiences determine processes that teachers use to guide them in their professional development.

Three questions were central to this study: What process documents teachers’ transformations from when they begin teaching until they become veteran teachers? Are there similarities in the process that each teacher experiences; if so, what are they? How did these experiences help teachers to grow and learn?
Transcendental phenomenology was chosen as the appropriate methodology for this research because it was necessary to understand the meaning of these teachers’ experiences. The transcendental approach balances both the objective and the subjective approaches to knowledge and detailed data analysis steps. With this chosen method, the intersection among the four main constructs of teacher efficacy, teacher motivation, teacher burnout, and teacher stress were examined.

Methodology

Participants

The ten participants for this interview study represented a diverse group of individuals. The participants represented teachers who had seven to twelve years of teaching experience and included both male and female teachers. The mean length of teaching experience was 9.5 years ($SD = 1.96$). Nine of the participants were white and one was African-American. Information was also collected on whether or not the teachers had taught in the same school for their entire careers. The participant data is presented in Table 1.
Table 1

**Participant Data**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Number of Years of Teaching Experience</th>
<th>Did the Participant Teach in the Same School?</th>
<th>Grade Taught</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Becky</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>3, 4, 5 EIP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bonnie</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>PreK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carly</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ginger</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>PreK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jackie</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kevin</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lauren</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peter</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terry</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whitney</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>PreK</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Having taught numerous years these participants had the knowledge and the expertise in the teaching field to allow the researcher to gather the data that was needed for this study. They referred to their own teaching experiences to discuss the teaching environments in which they currently work or previous environments in which they had worked. Using triangulation, the researcher used several different types of information to confirm and validate the truths these participants shared (Creswell, 2003; & Massey & Walford, 1999).

Triangulation was used to increase the trustworthiness of the paper by establishing the accuracy of the information in the paper (Bureau of Justice Assistance,
The methods used were 1) purposive sampling, using teaching experts and related literature; 2) member checking; and 3) peer debriefing.

Purposive sampling (Decker, 1997) was used to select the participants. The researcher selected the participants in this study based on specific variables. The participants had to currently be employed by a particular school district. They had to be practicing elementary school teachers who had taught no less than seven years and no more than twelve years. The researcher wanted to ensure that there was some variety among the participants. There were ten women and two males that participated in the study. There were nine Caucasian and one African-American teacher. The grade levels they taught ranged from Pre-K through fifth grade, with all grades represented.

Member checking (Creswell, 2003) was another method of validation used in the triangulation process. There were two forms of member checking used: 1) During the interview process, the researcher asked specific questions to the participants to reduce any possible misunderstanding of the information they provided. Also, this allowed the participants the opportunity to clarify any of their answers. 2) When the paper was completed they were provided a copy of the findings. The participants were asked to provide feedback on the findings and to add any other information that they felt had been omitted. This provided additional validation to the paper and its findings.

A person having specific skills in qualitative methodology reviewed the findings as a peer debriefer. Open coding (Creswell, 2003) had been used by the researcher to create categories from the key words and phrases from the transcribed data from the Question Protocol. These categories were then axial coded (Creswell, 2003) and placed
into larger categories relating to the different facets of the field of education. The peer debriefer agreed with the coding as he reviewed and critiqued the researcher’s findings.

From the beginning, the participants were identified. Then consent was secured. Throughout the entire process, their privacy and confidentiality were upheld.

*Interviews*

Interviews were conducted face-to-face in each one of the teachers’ classrooms. Each interview lasted approximately 40 minutes and was audiotaped for later transcription. This strategy was employed to establish rapport with the teachers and to increase the teachers’ level of comfort as they were in their own environments while they responded to the predetermined set of questions. Interview questions (see Appendix A) allowed teachers to share their successes, their failures, and their journeys through teaching. The interviews also permitted the researcher to understand the teachers’ experiences of going from novice to veteran teachers. Prior to data collection, approval of the Institutional Review Board was sought and obtained (see Appendix B). Pseudonyms were used to protect the participants’ identities.

*Data Analysis*

As each of the teachers’ interviews was completed, they were transcribed. Each case was read independently. The individual cases were compared with other cases in a cross-case analysis approach. From that point, the phenomenological process described above was used to examine and analyze the data. As each case was read, statements that each teacher had provided that were the most profound and unique were identified. Using
the process of horizontalization, these significant statements were used to paraphrase and create meaning units from the teachers’ significant statements.

Examining these meaning units provided clarity to what the teachers were saying. The meaning units were used to find common meanings among the statements and to sort them into groups. From these groups of statements patterns and similarities were identified and used to form the themes. When the themes were created, the main elements of the themes were described. The real meanings of the experiences were reflected by the themes.

There were textual and structural descriptions in the data. Textual descriptions explained what the teachers experienced, the events that they experienced. They provided other meaning and perspectives. Structural descriptions described the interpretation of the experience. These descriptions were the teachers’ internal processes of the external experience.

From the analyses and synthesis of the collected data, the essence of the shared, common experiences emerged. The synthesis of the experiences provided a complete description of the phenomenon. The essence of the phenomenon was necessary to explain the meaning of the experiences that the teachers discussed.

Throughout the data analysis process, the researcher had to remain aware of prior knowledge and experiences. It was necessary to “set aside” or bracket any thoughts or opinions that the researcher possessed to clearly examine the teachers’ interviews. Data that the teachers provided had to be analyzed based on their experiences and knowledge and not on those of the researcher.
CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

Epoché

Before the teachers could be interviewed by the researcher, bracketing of both positive and negative teaching experiences was necessary. The researcher reflected on the personal positive and negative career experiences. The majority of the positive experiences related to the relationships developed between the researcher and the students taught. The negative experiences revolved around working for various administrations where trust levels were low, if existent at all. These experiences were written for the researcher to reflect upon throughout the analysis process.

Significant Statements

As described in the methodology chapter each interview was read to identify significant statements. From all of the ten interviews there were 397 individual statements identified that addressed the constructs in the study. From these 397 statements 95 of them were used as significant statements (see Appendix C). These statements represent non-repetitive, non-overlapping significant statements. These statements reflected entire sentences and were a subjective extrapolation from the transcripts. No attempt was made to group these statements or to order them in any way in this phase of the analysis. Reading through their statements provided details about how the teachers experienced and perceived their teaching as they moved from novice to veteran teachers.
**Meaning Units**

When studying and analyzing the 95 significant statements, there were 22 Meaning Units (vanManen, 1990) that emerged. The units were grouped together into the different areas and these are the Meaning Units that emerged.

1. Believing in the school and its mission. Knowing and believing in the same philosophy.
2. Understanding the School Improvement Plan.
3. The teachers being secure in their teaching environment. The teachers want to be accepted and feel like they are a part of a family. They also want to make the classroom their own.
4. Learning the students’ learning styles and applying differentiated instruction.
5. Making a difference by helping children
6. Knowing that there is value in the experiences of teaching and working with children.
7. Finding teaching rewarding. They personally enjoyed teaching. They displayed enthusiasm and exuberance.
8. Teachers like the fact that every day is different.
9. Teachers find that it is refreshing to be in the classroom.
10. Teachers like the engagement with the students and the interactivity.
11. Teachers do not like nonclassroom people dictating how it is to be in the classroom.

They do not like nonclassroom people spouting research to them.
12. The majority of the time, somewhere in teachers’ careers they are involved in graduate school.

13. Teachers do not embrace “No Child Left Behind.”

14. Sometimes teachers come into education after changing their original majors.

15. Teachers do not embrace busy work and paperwork.

16. Teachers like connecting with their students.

17. Teachers need self-assessment and reflection on a regular basis—examining both the positive and the negative aspects of their teaching.

18. Teachers often learn through trial and error.

19. Teachers must learn to adapt to turnover in administration. They must learn to adapt to the different leadership styles and philosophies.

20. Teachers must learn to balance family and school. They cannot ignore one or the other.

21. Teachers must believe in the curriculum.

22. Teachers oftentimes do not trust or rely on the administration for support.

**Themes**

Four themes (Table 2) emerged from the analysis of the 22 meaning units and how the participants transitioned from novice to veteran teachers: relating to students; relating to self; relating to the environment; and relating to control.
Table 2

**Themes and Evidence**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Evidence in Teachers’ Statements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Relating to Students**| “No two children learn exactly alike and I think it is wise to choose a curriculum that meets the needs of the majority of the kids.”  
|                         | “We have a large Hispanic population and it has really, really grown. I am passionate about helping these children and helping these families try and make it in our society.”  
|                         | “Showing the kids I care about them.”  
|                         | “I have to do a lot of differentiation with this class because just because this kid can do this doesn’t mean that the other one can do it. The hardest thing is catching up the lower level kid and accelerating the higher level kid.” |
| **Relating to Self**    | “Personally, being a man in early childhood education has been hard.”  
|                         | “I felt more successful as a Pre-K teacher than I do as a regular classroom teacher.”                                                                                                                                           |
|                         | “The reason I actually took the job at the University when we moved here was because I did not want to do special ed anymore.”                                                                                                          |
|                         | “I chose Early Childhood Education because I didn’t want to teach middle school because I hated middle school as a kid, and I know how middle school kids are.”                                                                     |
| **Relating to the Environment** | “As for issues in the building, we are such a family here, that we don’t do anything at the school without input from others.”                                                                                                               |
|                         | “I was in a trailer that first year. . . and I packed up my trailer at the end of the first year and vowed I wasn’t coming back.”                                                                                                        |
|                         | “On a school level, it is the turn over of administration and having to learn to work with and to accommodate so many different leadership styles.”                                                                                     |
|                         | “Let’s talk about the University Partnership. I think the partnership has done plenty of good things for this school.”                                                                                                                |
| **Relating to Control** | “There is no tactful ways of saying this, but I do not like it when people who are not educators or have education degrees and have never actually taught in the classroom make decisions that effect what I am currently doing with my children.” |
|                         | “No Child Left Behind, for example, is essentialist in its viewpoint—that is, what children have to know, this is what you teach them, and this is the time you have to teach it in.”                                                   |
|                         | “. . . What I am saying is that we allegedly have 180 days to teach and testing kills it. You take all that time away, you are talking about 165 days of instruction. . . 165 days of honest instruction.”                                    |
|                         | “. . . I would have only a small voice in Special Ed. Part of that would probably be because the rules and regulations keeping changing so much it is hard for anybody who has anything to keep up with.” |
Taking the analysis process one step further, two of the themes divided into different areas to be analyzed. The theme of “Relating to Self” divided into three different areas (Table 3). These areas included Internal (Emotional), External (Task), and a combination of Internal and External (Emotional and Task were included in this area). From there, the Internal area divided into three different areas of emotions or feelings that affected the teachers (Table 4). They included Feelings about Students, Feelings about Self, and Feelings about the School and the External Environment.

The theme of “Relating to Control” divided into two different areas (Table 5). Those areas are: External Control and Internal Control. Under External Control, three different areas (Testing/Government, People, and School Demands and Requirements) affected the teachers (Table 6).
Table 3

*Further Evidence in Relating to Self*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Areas</th>
<th>Supporting Evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Internal</strong></td>
<td>• Self-Satisfaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Rewarding, Personally enjoying teaching—enthusiasm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Enjoying the children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Just knew what I was supposed to do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Dependencies on teammates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Self-Assessment and Reflection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Family Support—spouses, parents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Not feeling completely successful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Experiencing students’ successes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Feeling valued by administrators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Displaying morals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Building self-confidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Learning to relax</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>External</strong></td>
<td>• Other jobs monotonous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Each day completely different—fun and unique</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Teachers learn from students, too</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Becoming a facilitator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Becoming the leader of the class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Working with a worthy staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Attending graduate school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• (1) Furthering education, (2) Multiple degrees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Changing majors to get to education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Changing teaching assignments—(1) in the same school, (2) different districts, (3) looping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Learning how to manage discipline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Punctuality and preparedness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Stickler for the rules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• First 2-3 years figuring out what I was supposed to do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Learning how to implement lessons on your own—(1) standing on your own two feet, (2) adapting the curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Internal and External</strong></td>
<td>• Teacher is secure in teaching environment—solid relationships with school—(1) Acceptance, (2) Feeling like part of a family, (3) Making the classroom their own, (4) No cliques, (5) Making yourself fit in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Self-Motivation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Value the experiences of teaching, working with children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Refreshing to be in the classroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Experiencing being a group participant with students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Learning to balance school and family, cooperation with others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Learning something from everyone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Positive mentoring and seeking help</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4

Specific Areas within Relating to Self

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Areas</th>
<th>Supporting Evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feelings about Students</td>
<td>- Learning about students—(1) Differentiated Instruction, (2) Learning Styles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Making an impact on children’s lives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Engaging and interactive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Developing lifelong learners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Looping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Growth besides test scores</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Teacher is secure in teaching environment, solid relationship with school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Self-Satisfaction and motivation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Participating in worthy professional learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Learning to manage discipline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Just knew what I was supposed to do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Becoming a veteran teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feelings about School and External Environment</td>
<td>- Believing in the school and its mission—(1) Same Philosophy, (2) School Improvement Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Positive administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Administrators valuing teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Positive community involvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Welcoming visitors to the classroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Developing trust with superiors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Earning respect of administrators and outside influences</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5

*Further Evidence in Relating to Control*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Areas</th>
<th>Supporting Evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Internal</td>
<td>● Not putting forth the best for the students in the classroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Speaking out too much, being too opinionated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Getting involved in problems that do not involve you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Unprofessional behavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Being more serious about the job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Choosing not to have a voice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Aggressiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Not showing total self</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External</td>
<td>● (1) ESOL help, (2) neighboring teachers and veteran teachers, (3) teaming with teachers, (4) student teacher mentors, (5) modeling teacher behavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Relating personal life to professional life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Developing positive parental rapport—(1) developing trust with parents, (2) having outside relationships with parents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Learning by trial and error—(1) learning to think on my own, (2) creating independence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Outside recognition of work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Being male in ECE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Politics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Not relying on administration—lack of trust and support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Not relying on county administration to follow through</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Testing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Low Test Scores</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● No Child Left Behind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Redundant, required work, too much paperwork</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Curriculum demands</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 6

Specific Areas within Relating to Control

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Areas</th>
<th>Supporting Evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Testing/Government</td>
<td>● Testing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Being judged by test scores</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● No Child Left Behind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Time spent away from teaching because of testing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Special Ed influences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People</td>
<td>● Not relying on administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Not relying on district people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Family obligations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Lack of Mentors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Nonclassroom people spouting unneeded rhetoric</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Demands and</td>
<td>● Redundant, required paperwork; too much paperwork</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Requirements</td>
<td>● Scheduling of day dictated by superiors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Too many committee meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Not enough planning time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Too much isolation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Teacher’s Processes

Teachers’ Processes: Relating to Students

According to the teachers’ experiences, developing relationships with the students was why they taught. Kevin supported this,

I love coming to school with the kids and having a relationship with them. It’s entertaining. I walk around with a smile on my face everyday because as bad as it gets it’s always something you can go home and tell a story or laugh about.

Kevin continued

I think if I didn’t teach I would be bored with anything else I had to do. It’s just something entertaining and I like seeing the kids be successful, helping them.

Becky echoed what Kevin said,
I have a chance to be myself with the kids. I have a chance to open up and share the moment with them. To see the enjoyment they get from it and to have the same feeling. I don’t feel like I am doling out work to them. We are actually doing something that’s enjoyable, and the day passes quickly. It is always so much fun to see them finally understand something and latch on to it and apply it, especially in their writing.

Carly focused on wanting to meet her students’ needs and helping them be successful in the learning environment.

No two children learn exactly alike and I think it is wise to choose/select the curriculum that meets the needs of the majority of the kids, but that won’t hold true for every kid in your class. Teachers need to have the freedom to make those decisions and choices because we are here everyday and we know how the child is performing and where that child is and most of the time we know what to do to fix the problem.

Kevin continued the discussion about the curriculum and using differentiated instruction. Differentiated learning (pause) is very difficult for me. I have a classroom full of high level to low level kids, this year. I have all the special ed and the gifted kids in one class. We do collaboration, but we have to do a lot of differentiation with each one because just because this kid can do this doesn’t mean the other one can do that, so you try to find middle ground, but that isn’t helping the higher kid and the lower kid is still behind.
Several of the teachers interviewed carried fond memories of a special teacher and wanting to be a special teacher. Terry said that what she liked best about teaching was

Realizing when I am 80, somebody is going to remember me as a teacher, you remember her, you know. That’s a neat feeling. I remember my teachers that way.

I have certain teachers that I remember that made an impact.

Chris shared, too,

It is rewarding to know that you have accomplished what it takes to be a teacher.

To know who have done that and to feel successful as a teacher is really a wonderful feeling.

**Teachers’ Process: Relating to Self**

The teachers’ experiences revealed that they needed knowledge and understanding of themselves to teach. The way that these teachers related to themselves broke down into three different areas. Teachers related to themselves through their emotions (internally), through specific tasks (externally), and through a combination of their emotions and tasks (internal and external). There was a relationship between intrinsic motivation and teaching. Internal desire to educate people, to give knowledge and value, was in their teaching as a vocational goal. Fulfillment of teaching was provided with intrinsic rewards. Carly shared

My favorite thing about teaching is that every day is unique. It’s ever changing. I learn something new everyday and I am challenged everyday. That is the thing that keeps me in the field and what I like most about the job.
Ginger continued that, “I just had to go through trial-and-error each day. I had to learn it on my own.” Lauren reflected that going back to grad school and getting a master’s degree helped her to get where she is in the teaching field today. “It gives you a drive that definitely wasn’t easy in the process, but when you look back on it you say, ‘Wow, that really wasn’t so bad and look where I am now.’”

Both Peter and Kevin addressed the recognition of work aspect. When asked in the interview, “When did you start feeling successful as a teacher?” Peter responded I love what I do. I never feel what I do is good enough. There have been two times when I went ‘WOW!’ I was nominated for Teacher of the Year a couple of years ago in this school. I still remember when they came to me and asked me could they put my name of the ballot. I went ‘ME? WHAT?’ I don’t belong on the ballot. Then a year later a student nominated me for the Disney Hands Award. Those were the times I got to sit back and go, ‘WOW, I am making a difference somewhere.’

Kevin continued with similar thoughts

I feel like I am good at what I do. I am not an awards person, but when I won Teacher of the Year at my other school, I felt like I had accomplished something. I needed to hear the positives every once in awhile. The negative things drag you down. The negative stuff took like eight positives to get rid of that one negative thing because it would just drag you down.

Lauren talked about how the extrinsic factors affected her personally and her career
When I was pregnant with my second child I really started looking into other areas, other careers, I couldn’t find balance between home and school. Being the obsessive compulsive person that I am I really needed that balance and I thought, okay this isn’t for me. I definitely think that was not my best year as a teacher.

Jackie talked about why she left education for two years before returning to the classroom.

The reason I actually took the job at the University when we moved here was because I did not want to do special ed anymore. Two and a half years full with 40 kids on my case load, I was done with it.

Terry, who had four different administrators in five years talked about learning the processes that one has to go through under such circumstances.

Other issues that I have worked on a school based level is the turn over of administrators and having to learn to work with so many different leadership styles. I feel like I can get along and work with just about anybody.

Kevin summed it up with some advice he received from a colleague when he first started teaching

I can go from the janitor to the principal and talk about relationships. When you walk in to school get on the good side of the secretary, janitor, and the cafeteria people. If they are on your side, everything else will take care of itself. Your room will be clean, you will always be full, and the secretary will do anything for you.
Ginger discussed the emotion-task combination of teaching. She emphasized how difficult it was going in as a first year teacher at her school where there was a veteran faculty.

When I first started teaching at school it was very cliquish. There were people who had been there 20-25 years. I was the new person, the outsider who came in. The only way I survived, even on the playground was that I would walk up and strike up a conversation with them. I made everybody crafts. I made treats and put them in the break room just trying to make friends. I would go visit them. I had nothing, absolutely no teaching materials, but if someone said ‘I am trying to find something on St. Patrick’s Day,’ I would get something and say ‘Look, you can borrow this book from me.’ I had to do something. If I had not done something I would not have made friends.

Terry related both the emotional and the task to learning and how she could relate her personal life to her professional life.

I think what I have encountered in my own personal life has made me a better teacher. It makes me more empathetic towards my students. Robert is black and I am white. We are living in a biracial household. I have some insights into what my black students lives are like. I know what my few white students lives are like. I feel I could understand to a good extent what their lives were like because of my children’s lives.

Learning to overcome fear and having a voice in the school is another combination factor. “Dealing with my fears is another process I had to go through,” Becky shared.
Learning how far was too far if I step on someone’s toes, I say too much or too little. Learning how to build rapport and making sure that we are comfortable with each other, especially with the collaboration that I am doing with the other classrooms. Just to have that easiness with another staff member, not to have any competition, but to be there as support and help.

Relating to self had the emotion-task combination. It identified how teachers had the opportunity to balance the intrinsic rewards of teaching with the stress of learning and adapting to become successful.

*Teachers’ Processes: Relating to the Environment*

From the interviews, the teachers shared that connecting with the work environment was an important aspect of teaching. Sometimes teachers had to gain an understanding of their environment to develop feelings of acceptance. In a couple of interviews the teachers talked about a process they went through where they started out with a negative experience. The situations caused stress between the teachers and the administrators and also caused the teachers to experience personal stress. Over time these negative experiences turned into positive ones. Ginger discussed it very candidly.

My first year was difficult. Out of 20 children, six are now in Behavior Disorder classes. My first year in Pre-K was that class and I was also a first year teacher. I had an assistant principal that did not want to be at our school. She had issues with the county and she was riding her time out. It seemed like she was very structured, and she didn’t think that I was very structured. It was my first year and I was learning to deal with all of these different behaviors. She never came to my
classroom. She would never speak to me in the morning. She would never say, ‘Good Morning!’ If I said ‘Good Morning’ she would ignore me. She was very rude to me. She came into evaluate me and went through and picked on everything. She went as far as to say my room was not arranged correctly when it was arranged perfectly according to Pre-K standards and she gave me a ‘Needs Improvement’ on my classroom arrangement, which I went to the principal and had it fixed because it was arranged correctly. She looked for something wrong. I felt like the way in which she would speak to me or if she saw me doing something she didn’t like, she was so negative. I did not think I would be able to stay another year. I felt like she would target me. Anything that I did wrong she was going to ‘get me’ for it. I really felt so insecure about being a first year teacher and then having to deal with her negativity towards me that I was like, ‘Am I going to be able to do this for the next 29 years?’ She left and we got a wonderful assistant principal who became our principal and things just completely changed.

Lauren continued these thoughts about interdependencies that have harmed her career, causing her to experience stress in the work environment.

I did not feel respect from my former boss in my early years and not feeling support I kind of did the opposite of what you usually do. It was almost like self-fulfilling prophecy, you know if she doesn’t come out here and watch what I do, then I would do my own thing and I thought it was not until my second or third
year that I decided that I needed to prove to her what I really could do. I let spite run everything. It was me thinking too much.

Believing in the school and the school’s mission was another environmental factor that Peter supported by adding an additional comment at the end of his interview. Honestly, I think who I have become today as a teacher is more a result of the school that I am in. The people around me have molded me as much as I have molded myself. Sometimes they would start me going in a direction and I would continue it on, but I think it is very important for a young teacher especially to hire into a like philosophy. Over the years there has been a lot of shared governance. I learned gradually what the process was and what it enabled me to do as a professional. I think it is very important for a teacher to understand what he’s getting himself into. It is important to find out if the school meshed with your philosophical approach to teaching, to learning, to assessment. I was lucky to find it in this school.

Terry believed that she had a meaningful voice in the Partnership.

I have been with the Partnership since they opened it up to teachers at the schools. I have been here the whole time. I have stuck with it. I think when I talk to people about it, they listen. I know and understand what our original intentions were. I saw what we’ve done and where we are. I can talk about where things went off track and what things had worked well and what things came up that we weren’t anticipating.

Jackie’s views were similar.
Let’s talk about the University Partnership. I think the Partnership has done plenty of good things for this school, I can also tell you that we were cheated by the Partnership, both county and university-wise. We were told that we would be getting things as a result of the Partnership and after that first year the money disappeared and we have been fighting for everything ever since.

The dialog pertaining to the Environmental Factors showed that good communication was important for teachers to feel comfortable with their environment.

*Teacher Processes: Relating to Control*

The teachers’ experiences explain their need for both internal and external control in the teaching environment. Peter said,

I didn’t like the teacher I was becoming and I was honest enough with myself to admit it. I knew that if I was going to stay in the profession and do what I initially wanted to do then I had to do something different. I had to engage myself and them.

When asked what issues she had overcome in her career that she thought impeded her teaching, Jackie responded,

I don’t know if I had overcome it yet, and I don’t know if it necessarily had impeded me either. I have a problem keeping my mouth shut. I have a problem nodding my head and smiling and being a yes person. I am not sure that I had overcome it and I guess I need to get better at least, masking it slightly or thinking of some better ways to phrase some thoughts, but I don’t think I want to stop doing it because I won’t be true to who I am or how I feel about education.
Peter again shared about getting involved with problems that led to unprofessional behavior,

   We hired an interim teacher and there was a lot of conflict in the grade level. I learned the value of KMS—Keep Your Mouth Shut. Unfortunately I learned it too late because I allowed myself to be involved in some very unprofessional behavior.”

Lauren replied to the question “If you could do one thing differently in your career, what would it be?” in the following way,

   I thought I would take it more seriously my first three years teaching, I do know that I touched some children’s lives those first three years, yet. . . I really didn’t know what the heck I was doing, but I didn’t strive to figure it out.

These teachers acknowledged that through their experiences they needed to grow and change from the inside out. The stress that they experienced was a part of what they had to go through to understand that they needed to make some changes in themselves. They had to self-assess and reflect on what they were doing that needed changing and how they were going to change it.

The External Control divided out into three different areas that teachers felt like caused stress in their lives. They also felt like they did not have control over these areas. The three areas were: testing/government, outside people, and school demands and requirements. Testing and Government included factors like No Child Left Behind, testing, and outside people sitting in judgment both officially and unofficially. The more a teacher understood about the students, their students’ development, and their students’
learning processes, the more the teacher realized how No Child Left Behind does not apply to the students or their needs. Teachers had to put aside what they knew was best for their students and administer the mandated tests.

Peter continued these thoughts on No Child Left Behind by saying

   No Child Left Behind, for example is essentialist in its viewpoint—this is what the children have to know, this is what you teach them, and this is the time you have to teach it in.

Terry talked about it from a change viewpoint

   If I could change one thing in my career it would be No Child Left Behind, the president, and his administration. In Connecticut the school systems have bound together and have a lawsuit challenging the federal government and No Child Left Behind and the lack of funding. I found that quite interesting. Testing was one of the key components under the area of testing and government. Even though school district administrators know that standardized testing do not completely measure student achievement or student ability, test scores are continuously used. These test scores are also used to determine school readiness, to identify mental handicaps, to track students’ ability throughout their school careers, to determine the curriculum taught, to pace the curriculum, and to direct how teachers should teach the curriculum.

   Kevin talked about the negative outside influences that impact his classroom. He said,
Test scores. . . test scores. . . test scores. . . they are saying that kids have to score this on this day. Well if this kid comes in and has had a bad day or hasn’t slept last night because something is going on at home, they aren’t going to do well and that is the one shot they’ve get. It’s not like the SAT and they can go back in two months and take it again. That is the one shot and the one grade they get. We can spend the whole year getting ready and they score badly. They are trying to say a child is what proves a teacher’s job. The child doesn’t score 300 so the teacher isn’t doing his job. If a child starts at 200 and makes 275, that is a gain of 75 points. That is a gain to me. It’s not 300, but it is a gain. That bothers me and that’s coming down nationally. That is the one big thing that works me right now because you’ve got these people in Congress telling teachers what to do and everything.

Peter discussed the actual amount of time testing actually takes away from teaching.

My children are currently taking four DCRCT tests that take up three days, two and a half hours each day. They are also taking the ITBS, five days, three and a half hours each day. They are taking the Georgia Writing Test, two days, an hour each day. The CRCT, five days, four hours each day. That is all the time that is wasted. What I am saying is that we allegedly have 180 days to teach and that kills it. You take away all that time you are talking about 165 days of instruction . . . 165 days of honest instruction.

Continuing, Peter said,
There is no tactful way to say this, but I do not like it when people who are not educators or have education degrees and have never actually taught in the classroom make decisions that affect what I am currently doing with my children.

Jackie shared,

What I like least about teaching are the district people who haven’t been in a classroom forever, if ever. There are plenty of them in this county who don’t know up from down and who couldn’t tell you what an eight year old does if you held a gun to their head. Yet, they are the ones who make the decisions and tell us what we have to do.

She continued about other negative influences,

When I finish my PhD I want to remain in the classroom because I have far too many professors across the board who haven’t stayed in the classroom more than the minimum before they got their PhD and they are teaching and they haven’t been in the classrooms in 5, 10, 20 years and it makes such a difference.

Terry discussed about the outside people sitting in judgment of what she did with her students,

There is no breathing room anymore. You have to make time to have fun with the kids. You are guilty and wonder if somebody is going to come in and catch you. I feel like if you are doing something fun somebody is going to come in and catch you. I feel like if you were doing something fun somebody is going to walk in to do an observation and I am not doing what I am supposed to be doing…what they think I am supposed to be doing.
Peter discussed a positive school culture,

As a professional, it is my job to do professional reading and participate in professional development. I am not going to say that everything that I see of is great for my classroom. I have been around long enough to know that in general anything works if you tie yourself to it and do it consistently. But I also know that you could take a bit from here and a bit from there to pair it up to ultimately benefit as a wide of range of children as you could. In contrast, a teacher with a negative perception of professional learning will resist change and not be nearly as successful as a teacher.

Terry discussed the demands made on teachers’ time,

I don’t know if I will be sitting here in another 12 years. Coming from bureaucracy, administrations, and regulations, all the paperwork makes it hard to do your job. All the extra paperwork that is being pushed and the fact that we don’t get any help to do it.

Ginger shared that,

the paperwork was what she liked least about teaching. All the time I spend taking anecdotal notes and doing paperwork, trying to maintain the political part of Pre-K where everything had to be so perfect and then it takes away from me where I could be putting my energy into lesson plans or doing something for the children. Sometimes I would have to spend the whole afternoon catching up on paperwork instead of doing something that benefits my children.
Lauren agreed with Ginger, “What I like least about teaching is the red tape, the paperwork, and the lack of planning. The politics of the school building can get in the way.”

Isolation was another area that teachers struggled with. Lauren said,

I was in a trailer the first three years. . . I was out in no man’s land. I was not part of the team we were all spread out throughout the building. I encountered resentment. It was definitely a growing experience.

Carly continued that thought,

Sometimes teaching is also isolating. You got into your classroom and you are doing things with your class and you don’t always have the opportunities to interact with your coworkers and your peers. When you are teaching you are isolated from other adults and the opportunities are short and far between where you speak to each other professionally and personally. That is difficult sometimes.

**Textual and Structural Descriptions**

What did the teachers experience through the growth process? (textual description). When the teachers talked about the steps/processes that they had been through over the course of their careers they used words/phrases like “perseverance,” “determination,” “having a necessary drive,” “trusting myself,” “reality,” and “adaptation.” One individual talked about it as learning to “stick it out.” “Basically, it just takes guts and courage and perseverance and determination to stick it out and those first couple of years are challenging for any teacher.” Another individual talked about how it was time to put down roots. While each one of her moves was necessary, she wanted
stability in her world. One person said it was like taking “baby steps.” She had to learn what worked and what did not work. Each day taught her something new, but it was baby steps, one at a time, that she had to learn on her own. “There is always something that I need to get better at,” one teacher explained. Another shares,

My first year I thought I had all the answers. I was lying to myself like you wouldn’t believe. I think that is the realization that you know what. . . I am not any less of a teacher to ask for help with a child, with an academic area. It was the realization that I didn’t know everything I needed to know.

In what context did the teachers have this experience? (structural description).

Some teachers talked about going from feeling unconfident to confident or shy to more outgoing. One person said, “I used to be shy and it took college and teaching to open me up a bit.” Another shared,

That first year, I felt like I was so under the microscope and everybody was looking at me and I was failing. I can’t stand to fail and I felt like I was barely holding my head above water. After some time and learning what to do and how to do it, now I feel very confident.

Another person responded,

I was more of a shy person anyway and I didn’t want to be the center of attention. That was tricky when I had to start asserting myself with people. That is something that I have worked on a lot just even with staff to make sure that I am interacting to the best of my ability.
These teachers looked inside themselves and found a way that worked for them to overcome their shyness and their lack of confidence to become veteran teachers.

The participants addressed the process of moving from a novice, to a mentee, to a veteran teacher. Some participants talked about the people who had mentored them and how they were now mentoring the new teachers. One teacher shared

By the time I reached my third year of teaching I had a very supportive group of teachers, and I really fell in love with them. They adopted me. It was like a family and that was something I hadn’t had in my first school.

Another teacher shared

I had great mentor teachers my first year of teaching because they knew I was struggling. They could see the frustration on my face coming in dog tired, leaving dog tired, taking everything home with me. They had the Old Mother Goose effect where they take you under their wing and helped me out and told me what to do when I had questions.

Then he continued,

That is what I am trying to do now with the younger teachers and mentor them. I hope I am doing a good job.

Another teacher shared about growing into a veteran teacher,

I find myself slipping into one of the veteran roles which you know seems like yesterday I was looking to other teachers and now people are getting to the point where they look to me.

This was echoed by another teacher,
People do come and ask me about curriculum and I am the team leader for our grade level and we have new staff. I was thinking of myself as a new teacher up until two years ago and this year we have some new teachers and that helped me realize how much I do know and that I am probably no longer a new teacher. These teachers have grown from the novice to the veteran, learning to positively impact the younger teachers around them as they mature.

Another context was that these teachers saw themselves mature from novice teachers to veteran ones. This was shown as these teachers reflected on events that had happened with their students and in the classroom. One teacher shared her experience:

I think it was also difficult to learn how to make your classroom gel. I guess that takes some experience and technique. I guess there are teachers who naturally have that knack and they walk into it, but I think a lot of us have to learn that and it takes some practice and some trial and error. I think that is one thing that has been hard to overcome, but I got there.

Another teacher shared,

Probably my fourth year is when I had come to this new place that I was very fond of. I was teaching the reading/writing block that I enjoyed and that I was good at and I got to experience some successes. To have the kids respond to me so well. To me, if nothing else, pretending that I had a positive attitude about it even when I didn’t want to. It was my fourth year when I started to enjoy my business of working with them.
Teachers realized that they had to work with their students and develop their space and sense of belonging to become a veteran teacher.

**The Essence of the Experience**

The process of going from a novice teacher to a veteran one begins with teachers being highly self-motivated and wanting a challenge. These people have the ability to adapt and change with the system without feeling that they are losing control of their personal and professional environments.

When looking at the themes, the theme of Relating to Control reflects the teachers’ feelings on the elements that they cannot or will not control in their environment. The External Control elements are all elements that the teachers cannot control. They must accept these elements, overcome the stressful situations, and learn to adapt to or work around them. The quicker the teachers find ways to adapt to these elements, the quicker they feel secure in their environment. The Internal Control elements are elements that they could control if they wanted to. The teachers could adapt and change to allow these elements not to be such predominant factors in their environment. Sometimes teachers do make the necessary internal changes and sometimes they do not. When teachers reflect on these Internal Control elements, they discover traits they do not like about themselves. It has to be a conscious choice for the teacher to change. Whether or not the teacher changes these elements, the teacher must find a way to handle them if the teacher plans on staying in the field long enough to grow from a novice teacher to a veteran one.
CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

Discussion Relevant to the Literature Reviewed

The four constructs that helped formulate the Conceptual Model for this paper were Teacher Self-Efficacy, Teacher Motivation, Teacher Stress, and Teacher Burnout. In the interviews, the teachers spoke of their experiences in teaching and how their careers had developed over time. Relating these experiences to the Conceptual Model, it showed that teachers had experiences based on the four constructs that were discussed and had stories to share relating to each one. When discussing teacher growth, it was never discussed as a linear process. The teachers’ careers had been learning processes that had successes and setbacks. The teachers’ success stories had to outnumber their setbacks for them to survive in the teaching field.

Consistent with the literature, there were some commonalities that emerged in the teachers’ interviews. The teachers interviewed did possess the majority of characteristics Bandura (1977) first identified as self-efficacy traits. The ten teachers interviewed did display a commanding motivation to accomplish the goals set for them even if it meant putting forth great effort to do so (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2002; Woolfolk Hoy, 2002). While it was a process for the teachers to develop these skills, the teachers talked about their setbacks in learning to have the necessary skills to cope with unforeseen setbacks and problems (Bandura, 1977). They also discussed their persistence when they encountered problems and difficulties. Oftentimes they had to put forth great
effort to overcome these struggles (Bandura, 1977; Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2002).

The one characteristic that was discussed in the literature that all of the teachers did not possess was overestimation of their skills. Literature (Bandura, 1997) suggests that it is more profitable for the school and the school environment when teachers overestimated their teaching skills and motivation. Three teachers did not view themselves as the best in the field of education. They were still in the growth process that would allow them to get there, but they had not achieved what they perceived to be their best, yet. All of the teachers discussed their feelings of ineptness and insecurities when they first started out; seven of them did discuss how they grew into successful teachers, possibly overestimating their teaching skills to some extent. There were three, however, that did not express those sentiments. Although they discussed how their teaching skills and performances were better than they had been in the first years of teaching, they still felt that they were not yet where they needed to be as teachers. Motivation, however, was present in all ten interviews.

This research was consistent with the literature in showing that success for the teachers interviewed included Bandura’s (1986) Triadic Reciprocal Causation model where the interaction of teacher behavior, personal understanding, and environment played a role in teacher growth. The reflection on these interactions and how the teachers perceived their own actions and behavior were able to change and affect their environment (Bandura, 1986; Pajares, 2002; Woolfolk Hoy, Hoy & Kurz, 2007). All ten of the interviews included discussion about teacher behavior, their personal
understanding and perception of what has happening around them, and the school environment being important to their growth and development.

Throughout the interviews some of the teachers shared how their actions, behaviors, and the environment had affected them throughout their careers. All of them discussed personal experiences in their teaching. They drew upon what they had experienced, the environment that it had been experienced in, and their personal take on these experiences.

All teachers’ growth was consistent with Bandura’s (1997) Social Cognitive Theory. His theory helped to explain how teachers have control over their lives through their actions. Teachers need to understand what reality is and how to have and demonstrate self-control. It is also necessary for teachers to process the information presented, demonstrate the understanding, and model the needed behaviors in order to be successful (Bandura, 1997; Bandura, 2006, Pajares, 2002). Teachers’ self-efficacy beliefs are influenced and formulated from Mastery Experiences, Vicarious Experiences, Social Persuasion, and Emotional States (Bandura, 1993; Pajares, 2002; Woolfolk Hoy & Burke-Spero, 2000). The interviews revealed examples of these four influences. Teachers did experience these influences to grow. Their reflection on these areas was discussed in-depth throughout their interviews.

While they did not realize that they were applying Tschannen-Moran’s, Woolfolk Hoy’s, and Hoy’s (1998) Multidimensional Model of Teacher Self-Efficacy, that is exactly what they were doing. They were relating their teaching and school experiences to the four sources of self-efficacy. They then carried their thought processes through the
model to reflect and evaluate their teaching experiences. Through their discussions it was evident that these were cyclical processes that they continuously used.

In these teacher interviews, other self-efficacy expectations were also verbalized. Their comments supported the research in the literature review on the expectations of teacher self-efficacy. According to Woolfolk Hoy’s (2004a), Tschannen-Moran’s and Woolfolk Hoy’s (2003), Woolfolk Hoy’s and Hoy’s (2003), and Kardos’s (2002) research, teachers with strong self-efficacy put a lot of effort into teaching and displayed a commitment to teaching. The teachers pursued graduate degrees throughout their careers. The schools where these teachers worked had strong parent involvement components. There were stable administrations that sought to have open lines of communication and rapport with their teachers. Teachers were provided worthy professional development. Teachers were constantly promoting positive student achievement.

All ten interviews verbalized these characteristics. Some interviews focused on some of the research more than others, but these components were addressed completely in the interviews. All teachers interviewed shared a commitment to the teaching profession. Furthering one’s education was important to all the teachers interviewed. Every teacher stated he or she had either completed working on a graduate degree, was currently working on a graduate degree, or planned to start working on a graduate degree in the near future. They considered this an important part of their career growth and development.
Three teachers discussed the positives of working in schools where parental involvement was present (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2002). While some teachers worked in schools that had more parent involvement than others, there was some parental involvement in all schools, especially with the Pre-K programs. These teachers considered parental involvement an important aspect of their school.

Four teachers discussed the need for cooperation between administrators and teachers (Woolfolk Hoy & Hoy, 2005 & Goddard & Goddard, 2001) and four discussed the problems they encountered when they had transient administrators or administrators who were perceived as weak. Dealing with a variety of administrators had been a difficult process for these teachers. Growth from the teachers’ points-of-view had been difficult because one year an administrator would like what the teachers were doing and the next year a new administrator would strongly dislike the same teaching practices.

The need for worthy professional development (Choy, Chen & Bugarin, 2006 & Cohen & Hill, 2001) was stressed by three teachers and expanded on by one. The realization that occurred to this particular teacher was that he did not need professional development only because he needed to renew his certificate. There were actual areas that he needed specific help in to make him a better teacher.

Teachers who stayed in the teaching field wanted to relate to their students. Teachers interviewed in Brunetti’s study (2001) discussed that developing and nurturing positive connections with their students led to teacher growth and a sense of personal fulfillment. One example in Brunetti’s study was given by a teacher who went as far as to say that developing positive student-teacher relationships was what kept her motivated to
remain in the field. These sentiments were echoed by the teachers in this study. One teacher said, “I actually like the teaching part. I like the interaction with the kids. I like watching them get excited when they learn something new.”

Teachers who were motivated viewed themselves as dedicated and creative (Deci & Vansteenkiste, 2004). They possessed the right attitude about positive teaching (Abdullah et al., 2006). The ten teachers interviewed perceived themselves as dedicated and creative. They perceived teaching as a positive career and wanted to work in the field of education. All discussed how they wanted to be the best teachers they could possibly be and help their students be successful in school and become productive adults.

Current research cited in this study defined motivation as an internal drive that helps one complete the task in order to achieve a specific goal (Gower, 2005). Artega (2006) stated that motivation is the instinct or drive that allows for psychological processes to be examined in a logical way. From these ten interviews it was evident that teachers were more intrinsically than extrinsically motivated. Three discussed that they did not teach for the money. Ten referred to the satisfaction they experienced helping students become more successful and watching their students grow and learn.

Six of Malone & Lepper (1987) and Sinquefield’s (2007) motivational factors -- Challenge, Control, Fantasy, Competition, Cooperation, and Recognition (not Curiosity) -- were discussed in the interviews in detail. These were important factors to the teachers when it came to developing positive self-efficacy. Control was the one factor that was discussed in all ten interviews. Being recognized and feeling appreciated was an
important factor, too. One teacher did include Fantasy in her interview. She discussed what she thought about on those days that the stress level was high.

The extrinsic motivation factors were also discussed (Wentworth, 2004). The ones that were predominant in the interviews for this research were: administrators who were assets and administrators who were not perceived as assets; the school climate; working in isolation; and having the needed resources. Eight teachers mentioned administration as an extrinsic motivator. Four teachers discussed administration positively and four discussed administration negatively. The teachers who viewed administration negatively had been through a variety of administrators with varying ideas and procedures.

Eight teachers also discussed school climate and how it is was important for the school climate to help cultivate a positive atmosphere (Choy, Chen, & Bugarin, 2006 & Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2002). Four discussed having worked in negative climates where they did not think that they fit in. They had a difficult time acclimating themselves to the different administrators and the school climate that each administrator created. One especially talked about working at four different schools and trying to fit in everywhere she went. She said that it was a struggle trying to decide what to do and when to do it. This also overlapped the discussion of working in isolation (Martin & Wilson, 2002).

Of the factors that the literature suggests could lead to stress and eventual burnout, five teachers discussed their fears of working in isolation and how reducing these feelings helped improve their teaching disposition and motivation. One teacher shared how she was her own worst enemy when it came to this. She had been working in
a trailer when she first started. She chose to stay in the trailer most of the day, having little contact with the other teachers, not forming any bonds or creating any relationships. It was not until she made the effort to meet the teachers and create friendships that this feeling of isolation disappeared, and she felt that she was a part of the school.

Having needed resources was important to all of the teachers. Working without the needed resources caused teachers to experience stress both for themselves and for their students (Goddard, Hoy & Woolfolk Hoy, 2000). Three were quite adamant about having what a teacher needed to be successful in the classroom. There were frustrations expressed because teachers do not always have the things that they need to be successful teachers and for their students to be successful learners. One Pre-K teacher discussed how difficult it was to watch all the other grades go to art, music, and physical education when her students did not have these classes. Pre-K teachers also discussed how some years there seemed to be plenty of money in the Pre-K budget (separate from the regular school budget) for materials and supplies and then other years there was very limited spending money. Teachers also voiced their concerns about not having the materials that they need to teach the standards that the students are expected to know on their respective tests (Goddard, Hoy & Woolfolk Hoy, 2000).

None of the teachers interviewed discussed the process of internalizing the extrinsic. Even though they did not discuss the internalization process or relatedness, all acknowledged that they wanted to be needed and belong in their schools. Joussemet, et al (2004) defined relatedness as a person’s need to belong and receive acknowledgement
that they are needed. For teachers to be able to internalize extrinsic motivators, they have to be able to acknowledge that they are competent and capable.

Current research suggests that 44% of new teachers leave within the first two years of beginning teaching (DeAngelis & Presley, 2007) and between 50% and 67% leave within the first five years (DeAngelis & Presley, 2007; Escandon, 2007). In this study, 50% had been in the same school from the beginning of their careers while 50% had been in different schools during the course of their careers. Out of the five that had been at the same school, one teacher had remained in the same grade throughout her career. All other teachers had either changed schools or grades.

Related to Manassero and his colleagues’ list (2006), two factors that caused stress emerged as most prevalent in this study: excessive paper work and students who act out and display bad behavior. Six of the teachers complained loudly about all the extra paperwork that is required of them. One teacher talked about how she would have remained in Pre-K if there had not been so much paper work to complete on each student.

Behavior was an issue for all the teachers who taught in the upper grades. The one that was most vocal, however, was a Pre-K teacher who had six students her first year of teaching that ended up in Special Ed because of their behavior. She nearly left the field her first year due to all the challenges that she experienced.

The literature suggests that there are both internal and external causes of stress that teachers may experience (Kowalski, 2002). From this study, the teachers talked about how often the external influences caused internal stress. Some of the systemic factors of stress that the teachers discussed were: (a) lack of administrative support;
disruptive students; (c) lack of necessary resources; and (d) poor staff and peer relationships (Kowalski, 2002). Each of these factors affected the ten teachers at one time or another. While they all had negative experiences that they could talk about and relate to, not one teacher had ever seriously considered leaving the teaching field for another career. One teacher discussed that on bad days when she had experienced one or more of these categories, she visualized herself, her husband, and her children buying an eighteen wheeler and hauling loads across the country, seeing America. Even while she was doing this though, she was planning to home school her own children. With the ten teachers interviewed, stress never became so great that it led to complete job dissatisfaction or teacher burnout.

According to Carter (1994) burnout includes a physical, emotional, and attitudinal exhaustion. Every teacher in this study discussed experiencing some type of exhaustion. They also discussed their doubts in themselves and their insecurities. However, they never reached the point where there was an imbalance between helping their students and their perceived self-efficacy. When a teacher is affected by the workload, a negative classroom, and a negative school environment for a continued amount of time then burnout occurs (Manassero et al, 2006). These teachers did have first-hand experience with all these factors, but none reached the point of experiencing burnout. This was expected since only teachers who remained in the field were used in this study.

To keep teachers from experiencing burnout, the teachers needed to believe in themselves and their abilities to teach and work in the school environment (Shaughnessy, 2004 & Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2002.) The teachers needed to experience
success in their classrooms. They needed to maintain their internal locus of control -- attributing success to their own efforts and abilities. Such people are ones who expect to succeed, will be more motivated, and likely to learn. Oftentimes they will seek out information, be likely to have good study habits, and have a positive attitude (teachermotivation/locusofcontrol.htm). The interviews revealed that teachers knew that they were in control of their lives and their environment. “Personally, being a man in early childhood education has been hard. I remember in student teaching people telling me that it would be better for me to go up to middle or high school, I would have less difficulty. . . I would feel more at home with the staff. I remember thinking they were nuts,” shared one of the male teachers. This teacher believed in himself and in his career choices. He knew he had made the right choices for himself both personally and professionally.

The same teacher continued as he shared another manifestation of internal locus of control (Neill, 2006 & Suslu, 2006). He discussed how in some of his classes he was able to get to a point to where he realized that his role as teacher had changed. There were times when he was not a teacher, or a facilitator; sometimes he was just a member of the class. The teacher was able to recognize the growth and ability of his students. He was then able to relinquish the role as “teacher” and the one who had to be in complete control in his classroom. The students and he had reached a point where they could function on equal terms. This teacher believed in his students and in himself enough to allow this process to be successful.
The external locus of control is where the teacher feels that what is happening in his/her life is beyond his/her control and the environment is the one in charge (Neill, 2006). None of the teachers interviewed thought that fate or luck was controlling their environment. They had not given in to stress. Burnout had not started to occur. If they had felt that the environment was controlling their lives instead of themselves they would have displayed symptoms of anxiety and neurotic behavior, which could have resulted in teacher burnout.

The experience of growth was unique for each individual, since the interactions within one’s environment (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2002) were subjected to an assortment of factors. As a result, the teachers grew and matured when there was evidence of both positive and negative factors in their careers. However, the positive factors had to outweigh the negative ones for the teachers to grow, mature, and remain in the field. One of the teachers said, “For every bad thing that happens to you at school, four good things need to happen to make up for it.” These teachers needed to believe in themselves and display motivation to evolve into veteran teachers. Teachers’ self-efficacy (Woolfolk Hoy & Burke-Spero, 2005) coupled with their capabilities allowed them to exercise control (Neill, 2006 & Suslu, 2006) over their own lives and over events that affected their lives.

Displaying high self-efficacy affected the teachers in positive ways (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2007 & Saffold, 2005.) It helped teachers make advantageous life choices, raise their levels of self-motivation, increase their ability to react to the negative in a positive way, and decrease their vulnerability to stress and depression. The
reality of day-to-day living was filled with setbacks, stress, and adversity. These teachers must, therefore, have each possessed a high sense of self-efficacy to succeed. The more successful experiences a teacher had, the more the teacher was able to acquire the needed skills to further enhance a successful career.

How the teachers combined the positives with the negatives and adapted in their situation determined if these teachers would grow and mature into veteran teachers. One teacher interviewed for this study talked about how he had to learn that it was acceptable to be the teacher but not have all the answers. He shared,

My first year I thought I had all the answers. I was lying to myself like you wouldn’t believe. I think it was the realization that you know what… I am not less of a teacher to ask for help with a child, than with an academic area. It was that realization that I don’t know everything I need to know.

Findings

Throughout the years, various researchers have looked at the different constructs that affect teachers (Bandura, 1977, 1986, 1997, 2006; Freudenberger, 1974; Kowalski, 2002; Manassero et al., 2006; Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2002; Woolfolk, 2004). There were vast quantities of research on Teacher Motivation and Self-Efficacy. There were numerous studies done that discuss Teacher Burnout and Stress. There was even some research on the merging of these four constructs that discussed how to use motivation and self-efficacy to overcome burnout and stress. However, there was not any research on what teachers experience when these four constructs are examined together.
It seemed logical that there were experiences that teachers had been through using these four constructs together that were worthy of documentation.

After reading the literature and analyzing what it had to say, the overall research question developed was: What were the essential characteristics that indicate growth from being a novice teacher to becoming a veteran one? There were three specific questions developed to help answer the overall research question. They were: a) What was the process that a teacher goes through from starting as a beginning teacher to becoming a veteran one? (b) Were there similarities in the process that each teacher experienced and if so what were they? (c) How did these experiences help the teacher grow and learn? The answers to the specific questions helped determine the answer to the overall research question.

**What was the Process that a Teacher Goes Through Starting from a Beginning Teacher to Becoming a Veteran One?**

When a beginning teacher enters the classroom for that first time, there are limited experiences to draw upon. There may be some experiences to recall from internships and student teaching, but as a beginning teacher there are no “real” experiences for a teacher to relate to. The research in this study showed that the teacher must learn to relate to four different emerging themes to grow into a veteran teacher. They must learn to relate to the students, to self, to the environment, and to control. When a teacher learns to relate to self, the teacher must be able to learn to relate to the internal or the emotional part of self. The internal part of self involves understanding one’s feelings about students, about oneself, and about the school environment. The teacher must also learn to relate to the
external or performance and task part of self. Then the teacher must learn to combine and balance and manage the internal and the external parts together. When learning to relate to control, the teacher must realize that there are two different areas. There are the factors of internal control that the teacher can influence and there are the factors of external control that the teacher has very little influence over.

The process that a teacher goes through in order to go from a novice teacher to a veteran one involves learning to first become aware of each of these components. The teacher cannot be afraid to address any of the components because they are all necessary to grow and become a veteran teacher. Then the teacher needs to learn to reflect on these components honestly. The teachers mentioned each one of these components, or themes, in the interviews. The difference in the interviews was that each individual teacher had different individual strengths and weaknesses with regard to the themes.

When teachers honestly reflect on these themes they are able to analyze their experiences. From the analysis it can be concluded that they are then able to synthesize what they have done and compare it to what they need to do to better adapt to their environment. Adaptation in the environment is the key to making this process work. If the teachers cannot adapt, then they will not survive. From there, they evaluate the experiences. The analysis, synthesis, and evaluation allow them to grow, learn, and remain in the field of education.
Were There Similarities in the Process that Each Teacher Experiences

and if so What Were They?

Yes, there were similarities in the process that each teacher experienced. It is important to say, however, that each teacher’s experience was unique and belonged completely to the teacher. There were, however, patterns that crossed over in the process. Each of the four constructs of self-efficacy, motivation, stress, and burnout were addressed. Other commonalities that were repeated in every interview were that each teacher demonstrated a desire to work with the students and help them achieve. These teachers showed dedication and loyalty to the profession. They believed in what they did and enjoyed it greatly. The ten self-confident teachers interviewed were all self-motivated and ambitious. They all were in some phase of completing or having already completed graduate degrees. They looked for new ways to grow as professionals and for their students to grow as learners. The teachers had to have both positive and negative experiences to be able to grow. No teacher interviewed talked only about the good things that led to high self-efficacy and motivation. Nor did they only discuss the bad things that led to teacher stress and burnout. It took a combination of both for the teachers to grow and learn. There was an internal process that each teacher went through to get where they are today. They had to internally process what they were trying to do in the classroom to be successful and to handle the external influences on them. They all used “relatedness” to internally examine the external happenings and influences. These teachers felt secure in their environments. They liked where they worked and felt respected by their peers and administrators. They had worked through any difficulties they may have experienced at
first and felt they thrived where they worked and with their administrators. They also felt that their students thrived with them.

Every teacher interviewed discussed certain aspects of their careers that had caused them to experience stress. While the variables that caused the stress were different among the teachers, stress was evident in each teacher’s professional life. Each teacher had learned to use the adaptation process to overcome the issues that were causing stress. The adaptation process took longer for some teachers as they searched to find the correct answers to the problems they were experiencing. Since the teachers in the study were able to find solutions to the majority of the problems that were the causes of stress in their professional lives, burnout had not yet become a problem for them.

*How Did These Experiences Help the Teachers Grow and Learn?*

All the teachers had experiences to share. Their experiences made them who they were and defined who they had become. Without those experiences, the teachers could not have learned to relate to the areas listed above and apply them to their world. They could not have processed these experiences and applied their perception and understanding to them. Without these opportunities they would never have developed into veteran teachers. They needed both the positive and the negative experiences to draw upon. These teachers needed to experience the success of a mastery experience and the stresses of working in the school environment to become veteran teachers.

Examining these three questions then led to the overall Research Question driving this dissertation: *What were the essential characteristics that indicate growth from being a novice teacher to becoming a veteran one?* Adaptation was the major characteristic that
has had little to no discussion in the current literature. Teachers are all about being in control and do not do well when they think they are out of control. However, how do they manage their need for control, and how do they take this need and make it work in a school environment? They have the ability to adapt. Teachers who possess adaptation skills and learn to use these adaptation skills in conjunction with their need to maintain their internal locus of control are able to go from beginning teachers to veteran ones. Teachers who cannot adapt are the ones who seek new careers and do not survive in the field of education.

Adaptation takes work on the teachers’ part. These results showed that the teachers had to be willing to work at becoming veteran teachers. It was not a simple or easy process for any of them. Every teacher interviewed had a story to share of the good and the bad experiences they had. They worked to become who they were. They did not quit when teaching and life got difficult for them. They displayed an internal strength to make an external situation successful. They were willing to work and put forth great effort to become veteran teachers.

It was not enough, however, just to be willing to work at becoming a veteran teacher. It also required the application, synthesis, and evaluation of the themes and all their sub-areas to have an understanding of what it took to become a veteran teacher.

For teachers to grow throughout their journeys, they needed to have high teacher self-efficacy and teacher motivation. The motivation could be intrinsic or extrinsic. These two constructs combined to allow teachers to be successful with their students, to want to grow as a professional, and to not leave the profession.
Limitations

The choice of transcendental phenomenology was selected because it looked at the essence of the teachers’ experiences that made them grow from beginning teachers to veteran ones. That made this a qualitative study. There could have been a quantitative piece added to this study that examined the correlation between the different emerging themes and the teachers and the other variables stated in this paper. Changing the Question Protocol to include a quantitative piece instead of using it only for qualitative results might have improved this study and/or changed the results, which certainly would have been more specific and number driven. The interpretation might have been more objective and not open to the same questions.

In this study, the researcher began with the assumption that all observations are value laden and made every attempt not to impose researcher bias and interpretations on the data. A study limitation, however, was that the researcher worked in the field of education for 26 years and anticipated what and how the teachers might interpret and answer the questions asked during the interviews. This was bracketed and addressed in relating to both the positive and the negative aspects of the research to prior events in the researcher’s career. If the bracketing experiences had been different experiences, then the Question Protocol might have resulted in different questions. Different questions would have resulted in different answers, which in turn might have resulted in different conclusions and findings.

The teachers interviewed were all from one school district. Teachers could have been selected from all over the country to participate in this study. It would have given a
broader perspective to the growth process that teachers go through during the course of their careers. The results, therefore, have limited generalizability.

Finally, only elementary teachers were interviewed, further limiting the generalizability of findings. Using middle and high school teachers in this study might have changed the results or provided different perspectives to the emerging themes. Adding college professors to the pool of interviewees could have also changed the results.

Future Research

There is limited research on teachers who left the field and went on to successful careers in another one. Future research could include examining those teachers who left the field during the first three to five years. Such research could explore if these people have gone on to be successful in another field. Do they perceive themselves as being in control of their current environments? What experiences did these teachers have that made them think they did not have control of their teaching environment? What was (were) the reason(s) these teachers left the teaching field?

Future research could include a study that examines administrators and the processes they follow in going from teacher to administrator, and such research could compare and contrast the two processes. There could also be a study done on how administrators relate to teachers and how they understand the teacher’s need for control and the adaptation process. As an administrator, what characteristics would be looked for in a teacher candidate, knowing that teachers need to be able to feel in control of their classroom, and knowing the adaptation process that teachers have to experience?
What relevant professional learning should emerge from these findings? Teachers currently in the field and teachers getting ready to enter the field should be made aware of the adaptation process that they must go through to remain in the teaching field. How should this material be presented to beginning teachers? What should colleges do to present this information to beginning teachers? What should school districts do to inform their teachers about this information? If teachers understood the process that they needed to go through to remain in teaching, they might be more willing to adapt and seek to achieve that adaptation sooner. Relevant professional learning could be designed to help educate teachers, especially the ones who have taught between one and five years, to increase teacher retention.

Conclusions and Implications

Research suggests (Goddard, Hoy & Woolfolk, 2000; Milner & Hoy, 2002; Woolfolk Hoy & Burke-Spero, 2000) that teachers who remain in the teaching field do possess high senses of self-efficacy and are highly motivated, both intrinsically and extrinsically. It is evident in the research that these teachers must feel like they have some control of their environments. Stress and burnout occur when teachers think that they or their environments are out of control. Teachers who remain in the teaching field experience internal and external adaptation processes. These adaptation processes allow growth to occur where the teacher is able to manage the themes and sub-areas that at one time made the teacher afraid that everything both internally and externally was out of control.
This information is important for colleges of education to know and understand. Colleges can help their pre-service teachers understand the processes that new teachers will experience when they enter the professional world of education. Colleges can focus on adaptation skills. They can teach their teachers about internal and external locus of control and how to apply them to the themes that emerged in this study. They can also relate the themes and the sub-areas that emerged to the real world of teaching. Helping the pre-service teachers have a better understanding of what they need to do for themselves and how they can apply it to the real world will help these students decide if teaching is the career path that they want to choose or if they need to explore another field.

Administrators in the field of education should also find this information useful in working with their faculty and staff. Administrators should want to understand the processes that the teachers need to go through to survive and remain in the field. Having this knowledge would help increase teacher retention and put together needed professional development for their staffs. Professional development could include topics on adaptation as well as internal and external locus of control, realizing the themes and sub-areas that emerged from this study. In creating awareness, administrators and teachers open up positive and different lines of communication where they can build a solid rapport that will allow teachers to feel less out of control and more a part of a winning team.

These results would also assist administrators on recruiting trips and when creating interview questions. If possible teacher candidates do not possess adaptation
skills and the other skills listed above, it is probable that they will not make strong teachers for that district or specific school. These findings will help prepare administrators to select effective staff members and eliminate turnover.

It is important for teachers, administrators, college professors, and all educators in general to understand that there is a process that novice teachers go through to remain in the field of education. When teachers are able to go through the process and have the needed experiences, they tend to remain in the field longer and are more successful than those who do not have those experiences and go through the process. These teachers who go through the process possess the characteristics of adaptation, understanding internal and external locus of control, feeling secure in their environment, and using above average intelligence to apply, synthesize, and evaluate the skills and emerging themes. This keeps them on the career path that allows them to grow from a novice teacher to a veteran one.
APPENDICES
Appendix A

Question Protocol

1. Why did you choose teaching as a profession?
2. How long have you taught and what grades have you taught during your career?
3. Why have you stayed in the teaching field?
4. What do you like best about teaching?
5. What do you like least about teaching?
6. What issues have you overcome in your career that you think have made you a better teacher?
7. What issues have you overcome in your career that you think have impeded your teaching?
8. What important issues in your school do you think you have a meaningful voice in? What indicators lead you to think this?
9. What important issues in your school do you think you do not have a meaningful voice in? What indicators lead you to think this?
10. What steps/processes do you think that you had to go through to get you to where you are today in the teaching field?
11. What interdependencies (relationships) do you feel have benefited your career? What people have you benefited from knowing in your career?
12. What interdependencies (relationships) do you feel have harmed your career? What people do you feel have harmed your career?
13. When did you start feeling successful as a teacher?
14. What do you feel that you have accomplished that your peers most respect you for? Least respect you for?

15. If you could do one thing differently in your career, what would it be?

16. Using a series of mountains and valleys, draw your career, labeling the high-points and the low –points.
Appendix B

Consent Form

Consent Form for Participation in a Research Study
Clemson University

The Evolution of Teacher Growth: What Are The Essential Characteristics of Experience That Indicate Growth From Being A Novice Teacher to A Veteran Teacher?

Description of the research and your participation

You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Dr. Bill Fisk and Ms. Jean Rollins. The purpose of this research is to understand the growth process that each individual teacher has gone through throughout the course of his/her teaching career.

Your participation will involve being interviewed by Jean Rollins and having the answers recorded to be transcribed and used as the data collection process.

The amount of time required for your participation will be one hour.

Risks and discomforts

There are no known risks associated with this research.

Potential benefits

This will be a time of reflection for each teacher. Potential benefits may include that the teachers have a better understanding of why they have remained in the field of teaching and the process that each one went through to get where they are today. This research may help us to understand if there are similarities in what teachers experience in the growth process.

Protection of confidentiality

We will do everything we can to protect your privacy. Your identity will not be revealed in any publication that might result from this study and the school district’s name will also be changed.

In rare cases, a research study will be evaluated by an oversight agency, such as the Clemson University Institutional Review Board or the federal Office for Human Research Protections, that would require that we share the information we collect from you. If this happens, the information would only be used to determine if we conducted this study properly and adequately protected your rights as a participant.
Voluntary participation

Your participation in this research study is voluntary. You may choose not to participate and you may withdraw your consent to participate at any time. You will not be penalized in any way should you decide not to participate or to withdraw from this study.

Contact information

If you have any questions or concerns about this study or if any problems arise, please contact Dr. Bill Fisk at Clemson University at 864-656-5119. If you have any questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant, please contact the Clemson University Institutional Review Board at 864.656.6460.

Consent

I have read this consent form and have been given the opportunity to ask questions. I give my consent to participate in this study.

Participant’s signature: ____________________________ Date: ______________

A copy of this consent form should be given to you.
Appendix C

Selected Significant Statements

- The office just exhausted me. Everyday you knew... every Monday you knew that was when everybody was turning in their inventory sheets and you had to do orders. On Tuesday everyone was turning in the mileage and gas receipts. Everyday was monotony. I knew what everyday was going to be like when I got up in the morning. It was refreshing to come back in the classroom.

- I think I have enjoyed learning as much as I have helped others learn. I don’t think that at any point in any year that I didn’t take away some piece of knowledge that the children brought or a perspective that they brought that helped me broaden myself as a person and a teacher. I think that has kept me in this. I have enjoyed the engagement and the interactivity.

- It is wonderful to get to a point to where I realize that I am not needed right here any more. It changes my role. I am not a teacher, sometimes I am not even a facilitator, sometimes I am just a member.

- Personally, being a man in early childhood education has been hard. I remember in student teaching people telling me that it would be better for me to go up to middle or high school, I would have less difficulty…I would feel more at home with the staff. I remember thinking they were nuts.

- The biggest regret is that I did not go back to school sooner. I had 80,000 excuses why I could not go back.
If I had gone back to school earlier I could have probably developed into a leader in curriculum, a leader in amongst the staff for professionalism and standards.

I realize I did effect what was going on in my classroom because I may or may not have presented my best.

My goal is to be an instructional lead teacher. This is a long term goal. Right now I can’t think if any reason not to be in the classroom.

When we bring up an issue, when we bring up a concern, when we bring up an area that we feel that the curriculum isn’t being addressed we are seeing that come to fruition in the school improvement plan and we are seeing that come to fruition in our professional development. My voice, as well as the other teachers’ voices, is very powerful in that.

There is this realization, too, with test scores, with student performance, that maybe I am not teaching as well as I think I am. I am not connecting it in a way that is personally meaningful to the children.

Those steps are initially hard because you have to self-assess honestly. You have to be honest with yourself about your teaching, your children and about what you are doing.

I didn’t know how to think on my feet, I guess is the biggest thing. I knew how to write a great lesson plan, how to develop a wonderful unity, but not how to handle things when they didn’t go the way I wanted them to go.

We got into collaborative planning. We wrote the same lesson plan. We put the same objective, how we were going to do it, what performance tasks we were going to have
the children do, and even though we had the same academic lesson in the same exact area we wound up teaching it differently.

- I did Pre-K for six years. I would still be there if it wasn’t for the paperwork.
- Language barriers have been something that has made me a better teacher. I have been teaching in this one school my whole career and with all the Hispanic students that we have had come through. In the first couple of years we didn’t have any assistance with them. You had to figure it out as you went. You would walk around with a Spanish-English dictionary under your arm to figure out what they were saying. That really forced me to look at my teaching practices and looking at what works best with those students new to the country and new to the language.
- Having to deal with various administrators and having one administrator one year love what you are doing and encourages you further and the very next year having another administrator telling you that is absolutely the worst thing you could be doing.
- You adapt to that new person, but sometimes I felt not only was I doing myself an injustice, but also my students.
- I still think that in this business of being teachers is a predominantly female business. However it is still viewed as an impediment to have small children. They have to take priority, and you have to say no to this or that because you have to leave because your child is sick.
- I feel like especially since I did the Red Clay Writing Project at the University that I do have people come and ask me questions about writing.
I don’t think I wouldn’t have a voice, but I would have a small voice with anything we do with Special Ed. Part of that would probably be because the rules and regulations keep changing so much it is hard for anybody who has anything else to keep up with.

I think it is what I have encountered in my own personal life that has made me a better teacher. It makes me more empathetic towards my students.

I went to school with a good number of the parents who have children here. I have already established relationships outside of work. I do try to reach out and see my students and do things outside of school.

My first “interdependency” was with my student teacher supervisor. Coming in fresh and not knowing what to expect, I learned a lot from that lady, a lot that I still use today.

There was no support with the administrators so I looked for support outside the school.

You are dependent on your teammates. If one doesn’t look good then you don’t look good.

I felt more successful as a Pre-K teacher than I do as a “regular classroom” teacher. You can see a whole lot more progress a whole lot quicker in a four year old than you do in an older student. The biggest difference is that we didn’t standardize test four year olds.

There was a lot more freedom of movement, freedom of expression, freedom to be. . . be in the moment, to enjoy children.
• I feel like I have turned into a bunch of test scores, which doesn’t feel very successful at all.

• The reason I actually took the job at the University when we moved here was because I did not want to do special ed anymore. Two and a half years, fulltime with 40 kids on my caseload, I was done with it.

• I will say this about me. . . the reason this school is doing guided reading is because of me. I boost myself on that one, for better or worse. The fact that we have adopted it and we have been doing a balanced literacy framework for four years is because of me.

• I had to take how I was taught, which didn’t work so well, in elementary, middle and high school, and I have had to figure out what about that didn’t work and why it didn’t work. I also have to force myself at times not to fall back on that.

• My dad, a college professor, is one of my biggest cheerleaders.

• My mother. . . I have issues. When I moved here, I had that cushy job at the University and I had that cushy salary. I told my mom I was going to quit that job and go back into the classroom to do my research and I really missed teaching. She was like “You are going to make less. Why are you going to do that?” Negativity just bounces off my mother in a passive aggressive way.

• There are miniature successes. Sometimes I think I know what I am doing, but for the most part I don’t. I feel like a fraud.
• In actual teaching, I would learn to play nicer. I am not sure that’s who I am. I can be conscious that I don’t play well with others, but I haven’t changed it. It is because I am stubborn and I don’t want to have to deal with it or because I think I don’t need to.

• I chose Early Childhood Education because I didn’t want to teach middle school because I hated middle school as a kid and I know how middle school kids are. I really didn’t want to teach high school, but I wanted to coach high school. I loved working with the little ones. I have a brother who is eight years younger than me so I always liked helping him out so that is the main reason I chose teaching.

• The benefits are good.

• Calling parents, talking to parents, you try to stay positive, but a lot of times the first contact with parents is because little Johnny has done this or that.

• My first year I struggled with discipline. You learn that you have got to have some type of control. I have gotten better. Having a kid myself has let me get better.

• I have never been a great planner. I don’t plan things out step-by-step. I can teach things from the hip. When I first started I didn’t have enough to do during the day. Now I don’t have enough time during the day to get in what we need to get done.

• Differentiated learning is very difficult for me. I have to do a lot of differentiation with this class because just because this kid can do this doesn’t mean that the other one can do it. The hardest thing is catching up the lower level kid and accelerating the higher level kid.

• Test scores. . . test scores. . . test scores. . . they are saying that kids have to score this on this day. Well if this kid comes in and has had a bad day or hasn’t slept last night
because something is going on at home, they aren’t going to do well and that is the one shot they’ve got. We can spend a whole year getting them ready and they score badly.

- They are trying to say a child proves a teacher’s job.
- Everybody I have worked with I can say I have learned something from, even the negative ones you can learn from them. I am one of those people who think you can learn something from anybody from the man on the street to the two year old. Everybody I have worked with has taught me something.
- I am respected for my exuberance.
- I would not do anything differently in my career. There are some relationship things, parent things, and administration things that if I did now I would handle in a more professional manner. I would be more professional about things, but you learn from that, too. Making mistakes is just part of it.
- I came from a home that valued education. I had a belief in school and a belief in education. I guess I had that sense of efficacy that I would be able to influence children and influence their desire to learn.
- Everyday I have an opportunity to become better at what I do. I think I could teach for 30-40 years and I still wouldn’t be the teacher that I would like to be.
- My favorite thing about teaching is that everyday is unique.
- I think it is difficult to learn how to make your classroom gel. I guess that takes experience and technique.
Because I had to learn so many things independently that does impede me now. When we meet as a team and everybody wants to do the same thing and I may have a different idea that I think would be more beneficial for the kids, it is hard for me to meet in the middle.

The more experienced I become as a teacher the more I would like to have that voice and that voice be valued.

I am the team leader, and we have new staff.

I am thinking as a teacher right now I don’t have much voice in curriculum. I find that frustrating. I have gone through the EdS program and I have an advanced degree in curriculum and I have some experience in teaching this grade and these children and it is frustrating as a teacher to have the administration, district, or the government say that this is the program that we want you to adhere to and this is how we want you to teach.

I think colleges do a wonderful job preparing teachers to teach, but the reality of the classroom is that teaching is so much more than just that.

The socialization of the kids into the classroom environment so that you have those children working for you cooperatively enables you to get so much more accomplished.

My peers least respect me for being too structured.

I did a long term sub as a teaching assistant and the BD kids and mildly handicapped children. I worked in Pre-K for two years, but I did blocks of time so I would go to a
school and stay. I did regular ed, special ed, kids with behavior problems, I was exposed to everything.

- I am able to expose these children to things like art, music, vocabulary and all different sorts of aspects of teaching and life experiences that I know that they will never have if I hadn’t been there to teach them something.

- Knowing in my heart that I am going to be a positive influence on somebody.

- I think I am now too strict. I think that I have them so structured now that I am impeding their creativity.

- I think I have an important voice in PACT (Parent and Child Time) in my school. Through Pre-K we have been really involved with our parents with PACT and everything we do we have set an example for the other grades that have to do PACT now. We want parents to come to school and learn how to work with their children so that they will go home and start working with their children.

- Now I feel very confident and everybody thinks highly of me.

- It seemed like my third year I could breathe.

- My peers knew in the beginning that I wasn’t very confident, and I would be saying that I can’t do this. This is not working. I feel like a failure. I said that all the time. I think that just being able to go from that to being confident and being successful in what I do now. I have accomplished this and I am confident that these children are learning and I feel good about myself being a teacher. I am not second guessing myself as a teacher and I am not asking someone, “Did I do this right? Am I okay?” I think they respect me a lot more now because I don’t seem so insecure.
• Being too much of an overachiever is a problem.

• It was the summer before me freshman year of college and I just had this epiphany when teaching bible school at church. I had a child that needed a lot of TLC, and at that point I knew what I need to do.

• I like the actual teaching part.

• It was great because our principal did let us do our own thing, left us alone, but that also meant that you had to fend for yourself and you had to figure out things on your own. It was not an easy first year.

• We have a large Hispanic population and it has really, really grown. I am very passionate about helping these children and not helping these children, but helping these families try and make it in our society.

• I am not one to speak my mind like I should. I tend to, even now, and I have worked with these people for ten years, but I tend to be more on the quiet side when it comes to important issues, just because I don’t like to rock the boat. I will sit on the fence before I take a side publicly.

• If I don’t have a meaningful voice in things it is because I don’t put my voice there.

• My mom tells me that I will gain confidence with age. I keep waiting on that.

• As for issues in the building, we are such a family here, that we don’t do anything at the school without input from others.

• I am a really by the book person. I get stressed out if I don’t get things done.

• I think being a teacher you constantly reflect, reflect on every decision that you make and therefore the more you reflect the more you can improve and you can make
changes and modifications. Anyone who goes through these reflective processes is going to help themselves.

- My husband is the always the one that has helped me with the positives, he has helped me with any situation. I can take it to him and he has listened and he is such a wonderful person himself that he can see all sides of the issues and he will help me see all sides of an issue when I am particularly heated about one side which can calm me down and make me ready to go back and face another day.

- I have a good rapport with kids.

- Had I put children first as opposed to my timidness first, it would have made a big difference and it would have gotten the ball rolling faster for me instead of waiting a few years before I knew what was going on.

- I had to come up with a bunch of strategies because there wasn’t any support there. Things I wasn’t doing well I didn’t necessarily know how to fix. I didn’t know who to go to or who to bounce it off of. They were very kind people, but it was very much a closed door place.

- I feel like I could be a secretary at times with all the paperwork and filing.

- I was more of a shy person anyway and I didn’t want to be the center of attention. That was tricky when I had to start asserting myself with people.

- I know that teaching math was a big deal. Math, I seem to have one way to teach it and if they don’t get it I am always strapped with what to do next. I don’t have different strategies.
• This is my fourth school now and each time I feel I am starting over which is tough. I am ready to get some roots somewhere. Each time it has been necessary. It has always been an eagerness for a change, to do something different. Part of me still wants some stability and I miss that.

• A lot of times I think I don’t use my voice for the things I might need to use it in.

• I know trusting myself was a big step.

• Learning how to build rapport and making sure that we are comfortable with each other, especially with the collaboration that I am doing with the other classrooms and people feel like they are not being observed by me or not sure what to do with me. Just to have that easiness with another staff member, not to have any competition, not to take control of their classroom, but to be their support and a help.

• So many things translate over to my faith that I can say that you have to have hope, you have to keep getting up in the morning, at school, at home, wherever you are. Patience to know that carries over as a part of who I am and I have to express that at school just like I have to do everywhere else.

• Prayer. . . I pray a lot. That has been a big factor. I think that I have that spiritual aspect and all the spiritual friends that I have that have tried to help me in every area. That has been a big help and it has kept me going. By the time you leave here if you don’t have somewhere else to go it is really hard.

• Anytime I run into a teacher who is very negative about things I feel have harmed my career.
- I remind myself that you don’t talk about your kids when you are outside that little comfort circle where you can safely do it behind closed doors. It is better sometimes not to verbalize it because of over venting. I try to stay away from that. I do not want to give a bad impression about my school and my kids and I don’t want to think about my kids and my school because I know who these kids are. They are people to me; they become a person, not an incident.

- Showing the kids I care about them.
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