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THE INFLUENCE OF CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT,
ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT, PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT,
AND ECONOMIC FACTORS ON THE RETENTION OF NOVICE TEACHERS

by

Katrina Moody Dwyer

Abstract of a Dissertation
Submitted to the Graduate School
of The University of Southern Mississippi
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

May 2013
ABSTRACT

THE INFLUENCE OF CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT, ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT, PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT, AND ECONOMIC FACTORS ON THE RETENTION OF NOVICE TEACHERS

by Katrina Moody Dwyer

May 2013

The purpose of this study was to examine the impact of selected factors upon the intent of novice teachers to remain in the classroom. Teachers are leaving the profession in numbers that have prompted significant concern among policymakers and administrators. Many qualified college students are not considering the field of education as a potential career (Petty, 2007). Given that attrition rates among teachers are higher in their earliest years within the profession, it is essential to identify factors that contribute to the satisfaction and retention of novice teachers (Stockard & Lehman, 2004).

The primary data for this study were obtained from 93 teachers, all within their first to fifth year of experience, who were teaching in school districts located along the coastal areas of the state of Mississippi. The study examined differences in novice teacher perspectives regarding classroom management, administrative support, parental involvement, and economic factors depending upon school level (elementary, middle, high), school performance levels (Star, High Performing, Successful, Academic Watch, Low Performing, At Risk of Failing, Failing), and teacher preparation program (traditional, alternative) by using ANOVA, MANOVA and multiple linear regressions.

The study further examined novice teacher perspectives regarding these factors and their relationship to overall intent to persist. Results of the analyses associated with
the hypotheses indicated that there were no significant differences in the perspectives of
novice teachers regarding the influence of classroom management, administrative
support, parental involvement, and economic factors depending on the school level or
performance level of the school at which they were employed. There were also no
significant differences in perceptions as a result of the type of teacher preparation
program. This study did indicate that there were significant relationships among the
perceptions of novice teachers regarding the factors of classroom management,
administrative support, parental involvement, and current economic factors and their
intent to persist in the classroom. It was determined that the combined variables
impacted intent to persist and that the strongest predictors were administrative support
and economic factors; the latter was a negative predictor of intent to persist. From these
findings, recommendations for policy, practice and further studies were developed.
The University of Southern Mississippi

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Dean of the Graduate School

May 2013
DEDICATION

I would first like to acknowledge my appreciation to God for empowering me with the motivation and determination to attempt, and more importantly complete, this venture in my life. This work is dedicated to a number of people I am beyond blessed to have had serve as my support system throughout this process. First, I would like to thank my parents Brian and Therese Moody, who remain my role models for what I want to be when “I grow up.” They have always supported me and encouraged me in all of my endeavors, and to this day, remind me that I can do anything I put my mind to. I also want to thank my husband, John Allen Dwyer, for being my “rock” over the past couple of years. You always remind me of my potential and remain my biggest fan. Finally, I want to thank my son, Kade Allen Dwyer. You were my motivation before you were even born. At the lowest points of this process, I was able to find the drive I needed to get back on track just by thinking of you. I love each and every one of you!
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to sincerely thank and recognize my dissertation committee chair, Dr. Michael Ward, for his constant support and motivation throughout this endeavor. His consistent words of encouragement were often what I needed to remind me that I had the potential to complete this process. His vast knowledge and expertise, combined with his determination to make sure I produced a piece of work I would be proud of, will never go unappreciated. I know he went above and beyond in his role as my committee chair, and for that, I will forever be grateful.

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Throughout my life, my parents, Brian and Therese Moody, have always instilled a mindset within me that taught me to never give up and to always put forth the effort to be the best at whatever I sought to achieve. You both have been my biggest supporters throughout my thirty-two years and you made no exception throughout this venture. Without the two of you, this accomplishment would not have been achievable. I thank God daily for blessing me with such amazing parents. I love you both!

To my husband, John Allen Dwyer, thank you for always reminding me of my true potential on those days when I was overwhelmed and questioning my abilities. You are truly my best friend and number one fan. Your words of encouragement always came...
at the perfect time. I thank God for bringing you into my life. We truly are the perfect team. I love you more than Sea World!

Finally, to my son, Kade Allen Dwyer. You will never truly understand the impact you had on my drive to complete this venture. At the hardest points of this process, when I thought I couldn’t do anymore, you would give me the kick (literally) I needed to get back on track! Being a mother you would be proud of was one of my strongest motivators. I want a future of success and nothing but good for you, and I know that in order for you to grasp the concept of working hard to achieve your dreams, I must lead by example. Never doubt how much Mommy loves you!
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

For many years, researchers and multiple organizations have reported a severe teacher shortage in America’s schools (Darling-Hammond, 2003). Teachers are leaving the profession at an increasing rate, and many qualified college students are choosing not to enter the profession of education (Petty, 2007). School districts have been forced to come to terms with the fact that teacher turnover rates are steadily increasing and have become a major concern and financial burden within the field of education.

The purpose of this study was to examine the impact of selected factors upon the intent of novice teachers to remain in the profession. Research often provides explanation behind the grounds for a teacher’s decision to leave the profession, more specifically the classroom. Some often cited reasons ranged from reaching eligibility for retirement to a number of factors that lead to a lack of job satisfaction. Such factors include a deficit in support from administrators and parents, as well as a belief on the part of the teacher that he/she lacks efficacy with regard to the day-to-day responsibilities of a classroom.

In order for a teacher to provide an environment that supports overall student achievement, the management of student behavior is central (Mitchell & Arnold, 2004; Rieg, Paquette, & Chen, 2007), yet it is often cited as a primary influence on overall job satisfaction and teacher’s ultimate decision to leave the classroom (Perrachione, Peterson, & Peterson, 2008). It is common for novice teachers to openly admit to feeling ill-equipped to handle and address issues pertaining to classroom management and student behavior (Mitchell & Arnold, 2004). Addressing this issue is important in that research
supports that the probability of increased student success is in fact linked to classrooms where teachers have the ability to effectively manage behavior and discipline (Ma & MacMillan, 1999).

An additional factor that is often cited as having strong influence on a teacher’s decision to either leave or persist is the level of administrative support (Brock & Grady, 2001). It is key for administrators to realize that a new teacher has to overcome many challenges (Menchaca, 2003) and that novices want an administrator who provides the needed support that has been linked to a higher sense of job satisfaction (Mihans, 2008). If a teacher believes that he/she is not only supported, but respected by the administrator, he/she is more willing to persist in the current position, regardless of difficulty (Darling-Hammond, 2003).

It is also important for parents and teachers to grasp the importance of their relationship, or their lack thereof, in the overall educational process (Witmer, 2005). Parental involvement is not only one of the guiding tenets of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) (U.S. Department of Education, 2012), but also extremely influential on student success (Marzano & Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2003). Yet, even with the value of parent and teacher relationships being apparent, the lack of parental involvement and support is still cited as a strong determining factor for a teacher to who is considering leaving the classroom (Elfers, Plecki, & Knapp, 2006). Such frustrations support the concept that collaboration needs to occur among teachers, administrators and parents in order for students to thrive (Witmer, 2005).

Many teachers throughout the nation are also expressing frustration stemming from overcrowded classrooms, the stressors of meeting demanding standardized testing
expectations, and the political and economic pressures of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) (Hargreaves, 2003). The increased accountability brought about by NCLB, intertwined with the shortage of teachers, has left numerous school districts in dire need of teachers (Lambert, 2006). NCLB requires accountability for student achievement as well as the presence of a highly qualified teacher in each classroom (U.S. Department of Education, 2011).

In order to meet these expectations, NCLB created mandates for all involved in the educational process, including teachers, schools, districts, and states (Heck, 2010). NCLB allowed each state to develop its own academic standards, but students must be tested annually and results must be publicly reported for students as a whole and also for various subgroups. In addition, if federal funds are received by a school, they are subject to consequences if they do not demonstrate Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), which is the Act’s metric for the demonstration of academic growth in relation to the period of instruction (Jennings, 2011).

Furthermore, with the nation’s recent trends in unemployment rates, newly emerging issues regarding current economic factors are also worth taking into consideration when determining a teacher’s likelihood of remaining in the classroom. More than five million layoffs have been announced in the United States since the beginning of 2008 (Challenger, 2009). In late 2010, the average time frame of unemployment surpassed six months, the first time that has happened since 1948, when the Bureau of Labor Statistics began tracking that number (Peck, 2010).

It is important to determine the impact of the nation’s current economic downturn on teacher layoffs. Difficult economic times often result in the tightening of school
Due to the fact that most districts devote more than half of their spending to teacher compensation, current budget cuts have ultimately led to the most substantial teacher layoffs in recent memory (Goldhaber & Theobald, 2011). To put such layoff possibilities into perspective, Giroux (2010) reported that in 2010, nearly 26,000 teachers in California, 20,000 teachers in Illinois, 13,000 teachers in New York, 8,000 teachers in Michigan, and 6,000 teachers in New Jersey were presented with the possibility of layoffs due to ever growing budget cuts.

Regardless of whether a teacher decides to exit the classroom for one reason or for multiple reasons, teachers are choosing to leave at a rate that is cause for concern. Of even greater concern is the fact that analysis of turnover rates reflect that this transition is occurring earlier rather than later in many educators’ careers. Numerous reports pinpoint the first through fifth years of experience as the range in a teacher’s career when he/she is likely to exit (Darling-Hammond, 2003; Yost, 2006).

With increasing rates in student enrollment, many districts are addressing the issue of teacher shortages by lowering the expectations and standards for the educators who fill job vacancies (Ingersoll & Smith, 2003). People hired may be considered experts in their subject matter, but in many instances did not receive a traditional teacher education. They are often not aware of, nor trained in, how to approach the additional stressors involved in the daily life of a teacher. With the strict guidelines of No Child Left Behind and the pressures of high-stakes testing, having a teacher who is unable to handle the day-to-day obstacles of a classroom may ultimately have a negative impact on overall student and school success.
It is the responsibility of leaders within the field of education to make the issue of teacher retention a priority and determine what needs to be done to address the factors that may ultimately cause a teacher to leave the classroom, particularly within their first five years of experience. Once such factors are determined, suggestions for adjustments to policy and practice need to be made. Resources also need to be provided that will possibly lower attrition rates and keep valuable teachers in today’s classrooms.

The social cognitive and self-efficacy theories and the relationship of these theories to teacher retention provided the theoretical framework for this study. One stems from the other, and both theories attempt to describe one’s perception of his/her ability to successfully carry out actions to achieve and attain goals set before him/her (Yilmaz, 2009). These personal beliefs will determine how much effort one puts forth, his/her length of persistence and resilience, and how he/she will cope with the experience (Bandura, 1977). These theories are linked to an educator’s awareness of his/her capabilities and ability to ultimately influence student learning (Onafowora, 2005). Once this personal mindset is established by a teacher, it will determine the effort put forth in the classroom, the goals set both for one’s self and students, and the overall level of ambition (Tschannen-Moran, Hoy, & Hoy, 1998).

Statement of the Problem

The issue of teacher attrition affects all of America's schools (Olson, 2003). Many school districts throughout the United States are facing a decline in teacher retention rates. Restructuring strategies, such as No Child Left Behind (NCLB), have resulted in a nationwide effort to address this emergent issue (Ingersoll, 2001).
The goal of NCLB is to improve student achievement by ensuring all students perform on grade level in both reading and mathematics. In order to meet this goal, mandates for teachers, schools, districts and states were developed and implemented (Heck, 2010). Ten years after the enactment of NCLB, the education policy community is determining what changes need to be made, and NCLB has become an issue of heated debate (DeBray & Houck, 2011).

One of the most controversial elements of the law, especially among teachers and school officials, is the “highly qualified teacher” provision, which uses the lever of federal education dollars to force states to raise the current teacher standards (Porter-Magee, 2004). High-stakes standardized test scores are being looked to as a primary indicator of quality teacher instruction (Harrell, Leavell, & van Tassel, 2004). The emphasis that this law and the government has placed on the requirement of “highly qualified” teachers makes it increasingly essential to scrutinize the role of the teacher on their ability to increase student standardized test scores (Reid, 2010, p.2).

Teacher pay for performance is another policy topic that is gaining traction in state legislatures and at the federal level (Tienken, 2011). The primary goal of performance pay has ultimately been higher test scores, with the most prominent strategy being motivating stronger teacher performance relative to test scores through financial incentives. These things are being done in the belief that if teachers are rewarded for success, they will try harder. If they try harder, more children will achieve higher test scores in the end (Gratz, 2011).

President Obama, in an effort to improve the quality of classroom teaching, has repeatedly indicated his support for policies that would provide financial rewards for
outstanding teachers. The concept of pay for performance was even embedded within the administration’s Race to the Top (RTTT) initiative through their encouragement of states to develop performance pay plans for teachers in the hope that such an approach would ultimately have a significant impact on overall student performance (Woessmann, 2011). The RTTT funding was offered on a competitive basis to states that could restructure their educational systems to meet the standards suggested by the administration (Gratz, 2011). In regards to the success of such an approach, a review of data from pay for performance, or merit pay schemes, revealed that the results of such programs throughout the United States and abroad are quite mixed. Some of the developed programs reflected significant student achievement gains, while others did not (Ritter & Jensen, 2010).

If NCLB and recent Obama administration initiatives require that classrooms have highly qualified teachers, who will be rewarded if their students perform well, the ramification for teachers, districts and schools who do not meet these requirements are profound. The focus on how to measure teacher quality has taken precedence over actually defining what a quality teacher is and effectively preparing teachers for the profession (Harrell et al., 2004). Some assert that national and local influences need to instead focus on the professional needs of the already qualified novice and veteran teachers who are currently staffing the nation’s schools (Ingersoll, 2002).

In order to retain a high quality staff, it is critical to understand the complex factors that relate to teacher attrition. School leaders face difficult contextual challenges as they work to ensure that all students achieve at levels mandated by NCLB requirements. In addition, principals are obliged to find teachers who are highly qualified, committed, and prepared to face the challenges of today's classrooms. While schools are
increasingly more accountable for student learning, states have focused on the problem of teacher supply (Darling-Hammond, 2003).

Statistics reflecting the drop in retention rates within the field of education are further emphasized by the growing number of teachers leaving the profession at some point within their first few years of teaching (Ingersoll, 2001). Estimates of teachers who choose to leave the profession within the first three years to pursue other careers remain at an unacceptably high level of 33.5% (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2004). Although there is great effort that is focused on the recruitment of new teachers, the focus needs to be adjusted and placed on efforts to retain quality teachers who are already in the classroom (Fraser-Abder, 2010). Given that attrition rates among teachers are higher in their earliest years within the profession, it is especially important to understand factors that contribute to both the satisfaction and retention of novice teachers (Stockard & Lehman, 2004).

It is clear that a solitary explanation for this dilemma is nonexistent, but lack of job satisfaction and stress from teaching have been shown to play a significant role in predicting teacher retention and commitment (Freedman & Appleman, 2009; Rieg et al., 2007). The actual reasons that teachers become discontented and decide to leave the classroom are varied, but research often reveals that lack of classroom management, administrative support, and/or parental involvement are often primary influences (Ingersoll, 2001; Mihans, 2008; Rieg et al., 2007). A survey conducted in 2004 determined that one of the primary reasons teachers decide to leave the field of education is job dissatisfaction that stems from a variety of elements such as low pay, feeling a lack of support from administration and fellow teachers, not being included in decision
making opportunities, and issues with classroom management (Freedman & Appleman, 2009). In a review of the literature on teacher resiliency, Bobeck (2002) contended that relationships (mentoring programs, administrative and parental support), career competence and skills, personal ownership of careers, sense of accomplishment, and sense of humor are factors often responsible for whether teachers remain in the classroom.

The declining rates in teacher retention also come with a price, literally. The financial impact of teachers leaving the classroom and/or the field of education is reported to cost school districts an estimated $12,500-$16,500 per exiting teacher, totaling a national average expenditure of $2.6 billion a year (Colgan, 2004). According to the National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future (NCTAF), the problems associated with teacher retention cost the nation more than $7 billion dollars each year in America’s public schools (2007). These projected costs were derived by accumulating the variety of expenses related to teacher attrition. These costs include continuous recruitment, administrative processing and hiring, and training of replacement teachers (Perrachione et al., 2008). Depending on the source and the variables included in calculations, estimates throughout research vary, yet findings consistently portray alarming costs.

The current economic recession has provided another variable to consider as a potential influence in a teacher’s decision to either stay or leave the classroom. Though there is not much literature regarding the direct impact of the economy on teacher retention, general literature that pertains to an employee’s decision to either quit or keep his/her current job due to economic factors is worth researching. The findings from this
research might be instructive in gauging a teacher’s occupational mindset within the field of education.

Though research exists pertaining to issues regarding novice teacher retention, school district administrators and policymakers need to determine why their teachers are leaving. This research was undertaken with the hope that it would provide a better understanding of the roles classroom management, administrative support, parental involvement, and current economic factors play in the retention of novice teachers. The findings are also intended to provide potential assistance to school and state officials in creating and supporting a school work environment that encourages teachers, more specifically novice teachers, to persist in their current positions as educators. If the nation is to understand what drives attrition and how to develop effective strategies for retaining able and committed teachers, it must first understand in some detail how new teachers experience their work in schools (Kardos & Johnson, 2007). Organized efforts to support and teach the beginning teacher the culture and expectations of the school can lead to higher retention rates, more satisfied teachers, and ultimately greater student achievement in the classrooms (Dyal & Sewell, 2002).

Research Questions and Hypotheses

The primary goal of this research was to determine whether classroom management, administrative support, parental involvement, and economic factors are significantly related to a novice teachers’ intent to remain within the classroom. This study employed a quantitative design. The researcher also developed a self-made questionnaire that met the standards necessary to conduct the intended research. Upon
gathering the completed questionnaires, the researcher analyzed the responses provided by the participating novice teachers and examined the following research questions:

1. What are the perspectives of novice teachers regarding the impact of classroom management, administrative support, parental involvement, and economic factors on their decisions to remain in the profession?

2. Are there differences in novice teacher perspectives regarding classroom management, administrative support, parental involvement, and economic factors depending upon the school level (elementary, middle, high) at which teachers are employed?

3. Are there differences in novice teacher perspectives regarding classroom management, administrative support, parental involvement, and economic factors depending upon school performance levels (Star, High Performing, Successful, Academic Watch, Low Performing, At Risk of Failing, Failing)?

4. Are there differences in novice teacher perspectives regarding classroom management, administrative support, parental involvement, and economic factors depending upon their teacher preparation program?

5. Are novice teacher perspectives regarding classroom management, administrative support, parental involvement, and economic factors related to their intent to persist in the classroom?

The following related hypotheses were also examined:

H01. There are not significant differences in novice teacher perspectives regarding classroom management, administrative support, parental involvement, and
economic factors depending upon the school level (elementary, middle, high) at which teachers are employed.

H02: There are not significant differences in novice teacher perspectives regarding classroom management, administrative support, parental involvement, and economic factors depending upon school performance level (Star, High Performing, Successful, Academic Watch, Low Performing, At Risk of Failing, Failing).

H03: There are not significant differences in novice teacher perspectives regarding classroom management, administrative support, parental involvement, and economic factors depending upon their teacher preparation program.

H04: There is not a significant relationship between novice teacher perspectives regarding classroom management, administrative support, parental involvement, economic factors, and their intent to persist in the classroom.

Delimitations

The following were acknowledged as factors that would limit the degree to which the study results could be generalized to populations and locations other than those that were included in the study:

1. Participants for the study were limited to elementary, middle and high school teachers.

2. The analysis was confined to the responses of teacher who are in their first to fifth year of experience in the classroom.

3. The research study included only educators located in school districts in a mid-south state.
4. Actual attrition rates were not measured through this study. Instead, perceptions of how classroom management, administrative support, parental involvement, and economic factors impact a teacher’s intent to stay/leave the classroom were gathered.

5. The study included only early career teachers who are currently teaching; thus, the perspectives of persons who have actually chosen to leave the classroom were not included.

Assumptions

It was assumed that the participants involved in this research would respond honestly and that their responses would not be influenced in any way by a desire to influence the outcome of the study. It was also assumed that each contributor would voluntarily participate in this study and not fear reprisal for their responses. Participants were assured that their individual responses would not be shared with outside parties, thus compromising their privacy.

Definition of Terms

Terms relevant to this research are defined below.

*Administrator*- person designated to be in charge…in the case of this study, this refers to the principal.

*Administrative Support*- assistance provided by the principal to faculty and staff.

*Classroom Management*- the degree to which a teacher demonstrates ability to run a classroom that promotes student achievement with minimal disruption.

*Efficacy*- one’s ability to produce a desired effect or outcome.
No Child Left Behind Act (NCLBA) of 2001- a federal mandate that calls for schools to close the achievement gaps among student sub-groups through high standards and accountability (U.S. Department of Education, 2010).

No Child Left Behind waiver- administrative clearance for a state from provisions of the NCLB law. The applying state must provide a viable plan that outlines how they intend to alternately prepare children for college and future careers, as well as set new goals for student achievement (U.S. Department of Education, 2012).

Novice Teacher- an educator within his/her first five years of experience.

Parental Support- when parents put forth effort to become, and remain, involved in their child’s education and encourages student success.

Pay for Performance- salary system that motivates teachers to improve learning and adequately link instruction to student learning, so that teachers can be financially rewarded (Caillier, 2010).

Race to the Top- grant program introduced by President Barack Obama and Secretary of Education Arne Duncan in 2009, which provided $4.35 billion in competitive funds designed to spur systematic reform and prompt states to embrace innovative approaches to both teaching and learning in America’s public schools (Promoting Innovation, Reform, and Excellence, 2011)

Self-efficacy- one’s perceived ability to achieve a given task (Bandura, 2001).

Student Achievement- the measurement of what a student has learned during the course of a school year based on the results of standardized tests.

Teacher Attrition- teacher decisions to withdraw from the field of education.

Teacher Retention- teacher decisions to remain within the field of education.

**Justification**

There is literature that documents studies on teacher attrition and the reason(s) behind an educator’s decision to leave the field of education. Such research has often cited the influences of classroom management, administrative support, and parental involvement, but there is not enough information regarding whether these factors have an influence on a teacher’s decision to remain, or persist, in the profession. Furthermore, because of limited research, particularly for teachers, regarding the influence of economic factors on an individual’s decision to persist in his/her career, the results of this study will hopefully expand the literature pertaining to this emerging issue. A study that can be conducted and ultimately provide additional research and findings in regards to factors that may influence a teacher’s intent to persist within the classroom could benefit school districts throughout the United States that are currently addressing the growing issue of teacher attrition.

The respondent answers to the survey items provide school district officials with feedback and findings that they can take into account when addressing the hiring, training, and mentoring of teachers, especially novices, within their schools. The results of this study play a vital and significant role in the provision of valuable information that can be shared with persons involved in the educational system: students, parents, teachers, administrators, educational professionals and policymakers. The results are also intended to bridge a gap in understanding and result in enlightenment of
administrators/policymakers regarding the needs of novice classroom teachers. In addition, the findings of this study will also assist in the ultimate strengthening of teacher quality and impact the confidence and proficiency of teaching staff, thus resulting in a more positive learning environment for students. This research was undertaken with great hope that the results of this study would assist in the potential transformation of schools that may not currently be reaching their full potential for evolving into high performing institutions.

**Summary**

Many school districts throughout the United States are facing a decline in teacher retention rates, particularly among novice teachers. Research reveals that pressures brought on by NCLB mandates, and the lack of classroom management, administrative support, and/or parental involvement is often to blame. Providing focus on the emerging issue of economic influences on job persistence is also valuable due to the current decline in employment rates and the potential influence of these factors on a teacher’s intent to persist in the classroom.

The purpose of this study was to determine the perspectives of novice teachers regarding classroom management, administrative support, parental involvement (i.e. support and/or interference), and economic factors and whether these variables are significantly related to a novice teachers’ intent to remain within the classroom. The findings of this research will assist school and state officials in regards to providing a work environment that encourages novice teachers to persist in the classroom. When capable novice teachers are retained, overall student success will also improve.
Chapter II provides the theoretical framework and a thorough review of literature that will further support the research. Efficacy is the theoretical foundation upon which this study is primarily based, and is described and discussed in depth in the review. Background information regarding teacher shortages and the impact of attrition precedes the theoretical framework. The chapter continues with a systematic review of pertinent research that addresses the study variables.
CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

A number of significant policy issues have confronted the education profession throughout recent decades, including high-stakes testing and assessments, new standards for instruction, and an increase in the focus on safety in schools (St. George & Robinson, 2011). Although education has been considered a stable occupation of choice (Henke, Zahn, & Carroll, 2001), it is not surprising that an increase in teacher turnover rates has developed due to these additional pressures; the rate has been higher among novice educators. Statistics reflect that attrition among beginning teachers is as high as 40%-50% within the first five years (Ingersoll, 2001).

Throughout recent years, research has been conducted in order to pinpoint and address the reasons that may ultimately lead novice teachers to leave the classroom. The purpose of this chapter is to provide the reader with a background on teacher attrition and the theories that help to explicate teacher choices to remain in or leave the profession. An extensive review of literature on the perceptions of the roles and impact of classroom management, parental involvement, administrative support, and economic factors on a novice teacher’s intent to persist within the classroom is also included.

Background and Context for the Study

Darling-Hammond (2003) has continuously stressed that the strongest predictor of student performance is the percentage of teachers in a school who are qualified and content-certified. Yet on a daily basis, teachers experience difficult and adverse situations that could eventually influence them to leave the classroom. When highly qualified teachers choose to leave the profession early in their careers, their potential for
professional growth is stunted and their potential for significant contributions to the children and the community goes unrealized. In addition, this turnover has a profound effect on the learning community as a whole and causes disruption within the educational process, thus impacting student learning (St. George & Robinson, 2011). It is essential to grasp a better understanding as to what keeps a teacher in the profession in the midst of difficult situations that the majority of teachers experience on an almost daily basis (Milner, 2002).

Teacher Shortages

It is often stated that today’s schools are performing poorly due to the lack of qualified teachers within the classrooms. Many claim that this is due to teacher shortages that are directly linked to increases in retirement and student enrollment. This dilemma is further magnified by the fact that the children of the Baby Boom generation are enrolling in schools, thus resulting in a steady increase in student enrollment (Van Kraayenoord, 2001). Literature suggests that influences other than retirement, many that take place within the school setting, are also causing teacher shortages and increasing turnover rates. Ingersoll (2001) analyzed data from the Teacher Follow-Up Survey conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics and found that school staffing problems are not primarily due to teacher shortages, but instead to large numbers of qualified teachers leaving their jobs for reasons other than retirement. The amount of turnover due to retirement is reasonably minor when compared to other influences, such as teacher job dissatisfaction and teachers pursuing other jobs (Ingersoll, 2001). In an additional study, it was determined that 50% of teachers who ultimately choose to leave the classroom do so because of job dissatisfaction (Ingersoll, 2002).
Other than retirement, there are a handful of common influences that are often stated as having significant impact on a teacher’s decision to leave the profession. A lack of job satisfaction is a general, yet common, factor of attrition (Ingersoll & Smith, 2003). Job dissatisfaction most often entails variables that were linked to unsupportive work conditions (Mangrubang, 2005). Examples include lack of administrative and parental support, pressures of state testing, the inability to manage one’s classroom in a manner that would be considered successful, and the lack of input or influence within the school. Ingersoll (2001) studied issues of teacher supply and determined that school characteristics including lack of administrative support, salary, student discipline and motivation, class size, inadequate planning time, and lack of opportunity for progression, have demonstrable effects on teacher turnover. Kopkowski (2008), in *NEA Today*, provided additional rationales behind a teacher’s decision to leave the profession. Reasons included pressures from testing and accountability mandates such as No Child Left Behind, a lack of support from administration, issues with student discipline, the lack of funding for programs, a lack of influence, not feeling supported and low pay.

An even more recently noted, and somewhat newly researched effect on job persistence, is the influence of the current economy. Unemployment rates are high, thus leading people to persist in their current profession, regardless of whether or not they are satisfied (“Take this Job”, 2010). Studies reflect that more people are unsatisfied in their current professions and would like to look for a new job, but are too afraid to do so because of the current state of the nation’s economy (Scott, 2010; “Take this Job”, 2010).

In regards to the field of education, tough economic times result in tight budgets, which have recently resulted in the most significant teacher layoff rates in recent years
(Goldhaber & Theobald, 2011). The effects of the recession on retirement funds have also persuaded older teachers to avoid retirement; leaving districts in a situation that results in more layoffs in the long run (Dillon, 2011). As for the reason for which teachers ultimately choose to leave the profession, it cannot be pinpointed to a single specific cause. This results in the continuous efforts put forth by researchers and educational specialists nationwide to develop approaches, suggestions, and incentives that may have a beneficial impact on the dilemma of teacher attrition.

No Child Left Behind and Initiatives of the Obama Administration

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) was passed in 1965 under the Johnson administration and it appeared to provide the promise that the federal role in education would lessen the achievement gap between students of different backgrounds without intruding on schools that were performing well without federal mandates, but in the long run, it did not deliver the anticipated corrections to the achievement gap (Standerfer, 2006). In January 2002, under the leadership of the George W. Bush administration, Congress reauthorized the ESEA. The 2002 reauthorization was commonly named No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and enacted the descriptive goal of guaranteeing that no child would be “left behind” in terms of his/her educational opportunities (Ponder, 2006). NCLB legislation is an important initiative at all levels, including the national, state, district, and school levels, because of the pressures and emphasis on accountability through standardized testing (Reid, 2010).

NCLB mandated that all students in the United States achieve proficiency on state assessments in reading, language arts, and mathematics (Manning & Patterson, 2004). Each state was also required to have a system by which it can judge the progress all its
schools are making toward student proficiency as well as meeting teacher-quality standards. Each state must also report to the public the status their schools are making towards meeting the federal mandates for adequate yearly progress (AYP) and employing highly qualified teachers (Standerfer, 2006). While teachers and other practitioners have been under pressure to meet the AYP proficiency targets of NCLB, those particular stressors may lessen some in the state of interest to this researcher. The state’s education agency applied to the U. S. Department of Education for a waiver from some of these requirements. These changes were at about the same time as the development of this literature review, and the affects of these changes could not be determined within the window of time that the implementation of the study took place.

According to Turnbull (2005), NCLB has six basic principles: accountability, highly qualified teachers, scientifically-based instruction, local flexibility, safe schools, and parent participation and choice. Turnbull further elaborated these underlying principles of NCLB. The author explained that accountability within NCLB is intended to focus on the outcomes of education by mandating assessment of student proficiency during the elementary school years. The highly qualified teacher principle was implemented to assist in the achievement of the accountability principle. The intent was to bring attention to the concept that without qualified teachers in the classroom, improved student outcomes will be illusive and accountability for achievement will be difficult to achieve. The third principle, using scientifically-based instruction is also an attempt to achieve the goals of NCLB. The researcher added that NCLB’s fourth principal, local flexibility, suggests that if districts have more flexibility to use their federal funds in a manner that is well-suited to meet their individual needs, they will
achieve better outcomes. The fifth principle, *safe schools*, theorizes that accountability and student proficiency are not possible if a safe learning environment is not provided. The sixth and final principle, *parent participation and choice*, supports and recognizes the value of parental involvement in the success of both the student and the school (Turnbull, 2005). The importance of parental involvement is emphasized, encouraged and recognized throughout NCLB. Involvement of parents, especially through adolescence, is a way to help children make smooth transitions and continue the academic success (DePlanty, Coutler-Ker, & Duchane, 2007).

According to the U. S. Department of Education, NCLB requires that all teachers in today’s classrooms must meet qualifications that would categorize them as “highly qualified” or they will fail to receive Title 1 funding (2009, p. 2). By definition, a teacher is highly qualified when he/she has sufficiently met all of a state’s licensing requirements (Strawn, Fox, & Duck, 2008). The U. S. Department of Education defines Title 1 as “the largest federally funded educational program. This program, which is authorized by Congress, provides supplemental funds to school districts to assist with the highest student concentrations of poverty to meet school education goals” (2009, p. 12).

Elmore (2003) asserts that the NCLB legislation has a number of design flaws including:

1. Overinvesting in testing
2. Failure to include all stakeholders during the design process
3. Ungrounded theories of school improvement
4. Inadequate knowledge about how to improve failing schools
5. Linking incentives to quality teachers and student performance without providing schools guidelines of how to achieve these goals

The NCLB highly qualified teacher provision has been controversial. Within these stipulations, teachers are required to be highly qualified if they are teaching core academic subjects. If they do not meet the guidelines set forth by their state that would categorize them as highly qualified, their school districts will lose federal funding (Strawn et al., 2008). This requirement is problematic because of the lack of uniformity throughout the nation in regards to the expectations teachers must meet in order to be considered highly qualified. NCLB provided the educational goals but did not help schools determine how they would fill their already overpopulated, understaffed classrooms with highly qualified teachers (Strawn et al., 2008).

Teachers are finding the pressures of NCLB unreasonable and often so strenuous that the legislation is often cited as an influence for their decision to leave the profession. Teachers are often quoted as feeling a sense of frustration towards the expectations that are universally set for each student and teacher, despite the individual needs and abilities of each child. Teachers believe that they are expected to meet what many educators believe to be unrealistic goals (Reid, 2010). Sanchez (2007) studied the impact of NCLB on teacher retention. The study focused on the relationship between the increased accountability placed on K-12 teachers. The majority of the teachers involved in the study indicated that the resulting outcomes of NCLB were more negative than positive, and that this has led to higher rates of turnover, burnout and job dissatisfaction.

In July of 2009, President Barack Obama and Secretary of Education Arne Duncan announced the Race to the Top (RTTT) grants program, which provided $4.35
billion in competitive funds designed to spur systematic reform and prompt states to
embrace innovative approaches to both teaching and learning in America’s public schools
(Promoting Innovation, Reform, and Excellence, 2011). In order to be qualified for these
federal dollars, states must implement a statewide longitudinal data system that includes
unique student and teacher identifiers, have the ability to track student data over time, and
link these data to individual teachers (Stephens, 2010). According to the Delaware
Department of Education (“Race to the Top”, 2011), states must advance reforms around
four specific areas:

1. Adopting standards and assessments that prepare students to succeed in
college and the workplace in order to compete in the global economy

2. Building data systems that measure student growth and success, and inform
teachers and administrators about how they can improve instruction

3. Recruiting, developing, rewarding, and retaining effective teachers and
principals, especially where they are most needed

4. Turning around our lowest achieving schools

The Administration also proposed replacing the NCLB goal of 100% proficiency
with the goal that by the year 2020, all students will graduate from high school, or be on
track to graduate, ready to attend college or start a career, and to also implement the
replacement of AYP with a new system that measures individual student growth over
time rather than measuring performance of a whole group of students against a set of
fixed achievement targets (Jennings, 2011).

The Obama Administration has further opted to waive requirements of NCLB,
including the 2014 deadline for all students to meet proficiency standards in math and
reading, and instead give the states the freedom to set their own student-achievement goals and design their own interventions for failing schools with the requirement that states adopt standards for college and career readiness, focus improvement efforts on 15% of the most troubled schools, and create guidelines for teacher evaluations based in part on student performance (McNeil & Klein, 2011). The Obama administration, which favors the movement towards common standards, is seeking to amend ESEA to require states to either adopt common standards or develop their own college and career ready standards in cooperation with their public university systems and in order to receive these federal formula grants, they must adopt standards that are considered common to a significant number of states by 2015 (Jennings, 2011).

As stated earlier, the state of interest to this researcher submitted a request to the U.S. Department of Education for such a waiver, and has developed and agreed to implement education reforms in exchange for relief from the federal mandates of NCLB. According to the U.S. Department of Education (2012), if the submitted plan is in fact approved, it is agreed that the following standards will be implemented:

1. Set performance targets on whether students graduate from high school ready for college and career rather than having to meet NCLB’s deadline based on targets for proficiency.
2. Design locally tailored interventions to help students achieve instead of implementing remedies prescribed at the federal level.
3. Be free to emphasize student growth and progress using multiple measures rather than just test scores.
4. Have more flexibility in how they spend federal funds to benefit students.
With the national consensus reflecting the concept that teachers do impact student achievement (Stephens, 2010), the administration has turned much focus to the development of teacher evaluation and compensation systems that, at least in part, rely on evidence that teachers are in fact influencing and improving student achievement scores. The issue lies in how to accurately link student assessment and teacher performance (Stephens, 2010). In order for the teachers to meet expectations that have been set for them, old and new, national and local remedies need to focus on the needs of already qualified and veteran teachers currently employed within schools, rather than focusing on recruiting more teachers into the profession (Ingersoll, 2002). The nation needs to understand that effective teachers represent a very valuable human resource for schools (Darling-Hammond, 2003).

**Teacher Evaluation**

Today’s public schools exist in an era of high-stakes testing, strict standards, and lofty expectations; therefore, the quality of teachers is more important than ever (Lyons, 2008). The current national discussion includes a debate concerning whether student achievement data should be used to evaluate teachers, principals, and schools (Baum, 2011). There is widespread agreement that good teaching has an impact on student academic growth. The problem lies in how student assessment data can be accurately linked to the effects of a specific teacher and in turn fairly and equitably used to evaluate teachers and make decisions regarding performance-pay and job retention (Stephens, 2010).

More recently, assertions have arisen that suggest that teacher evaluations should measure teacher impact on student learning. Propelled by the requirements of the federal
Race to the Top program, states and school districts are now developing plans that would factor student data into evaluation systems implemented in today’s schools (“Race to the Top”, 2011). The concept of incorporating student data into the evaluation and improvement of teachers is a complex issue that will definitely require experimentation and changes based on experience (Steele, Hamilton, & Stecher, 2010).

Several inherent problems with using student assessment data to evaluate teacher effectiveness have been brought forth. For instance, in North Carolina, there is an absence of standardized testing in some grade levels and subject areas. Secondly, value-added assessment requires technically skilled personnel to run this statistical model while controlling for all the other variables that might impact student achievement. Such expertise is essential to ensure a true estimate of a teacher effect is actually, and accurately, reported (Stephens, 2010). This data, usually state summative test data, typically provides information at the conclusion of the year when it is too late for any instructional adjustments (Baum, 2011). Yet teachers’ summative evaluations typically occur each spring, and as a result, teachers would have to be evaluated on the progress of their previous year rather than their current (Stephens, 2010).

Feedback from teachers who have been exposed to this form of evaluation reveals great frustration. In late February, 2012, thousands of New York teachers’ performance scores went public. The scores were based on how students in fourth through eighth grades improved on standardized tests from the Fall of 2007 through Spring 2010 school years (“Thousands of NYC”, 2012). The concern on behalf of the teachers who are being evaluated is the validity of the data. For one thing, state test data are not even applicable to 70% of teachers who either teach non-tested subjects or do not have sole charge of a
particular group of students (Sawchuk, 2011). A sixth grade teacher in Brooklyn who spoke on the publicizing of the New York teachers’ performance scores expressed her concern with the fact that taking a test that is given once a year, and regarding it as a summary of what a teacher does on a day-to-day basis, is totally inaccurate. Another teacher affected by this occurrence explained that this form of evaluation does not account for anything teachers do on a daily basis; creative successes fall by the wayside, breakthroughs with behavioral problems don’t surface in such assessments, and progress with non-English speaking students simply does not count (“Thousands of NYC”, 2011). In North Carolina, 25 Durham Public and Chapel Hill Carrboro City school teachers were asked how linking student assessment data to their performance evaluations would impact their career decisions. The overwhelming majority of them indicated that they would opt to seek employment in schools with higher student achievement, more parental involvement, and greater access and availability to instructional resources (Stephens, 2010).

One solution to this issue is the implementation of short-cycle interim assessments. Such assessments are a specific category of test designed to provide a preview of results in time to improve student outcomes whether administered weekly, monthly, or less frequently. The primary purpose of short-cycle interim assessment is to improve learning for all students through the regular review of student achievement, as well as successive adjustment of instructional strategies, difficulty levels, practice materials, and even targeted interventions (Baum, 2011).

Bringing short-cycle interim assessment to the evaluation process is not without risks, but if done properly and with the concept of improving academic performance, it
can improve the fairness and confidence in the evaluation profiles of teachers (Baum, 2011). Elements of good short-cycle interim assessment systems include: efficient testing, frequent administration, flexible testing dates, alignment to state and Common Core State Standards, data aggregation, vertically-equated scale for score reporting and comparison, explicit instructional guidance, and linkage to the state test (Baum, 2011). Ensuring that statistically derived teacher effects are valid is mandatory if teachers are to be convinced that such data should be used to evaluate their performance. If any doubts are lingering, the practice of linking student assessment data to teacher evaluation may ultimately influence a teacher’s career decisions (Stephens, 2010).

**Pay For Performance**

The education profession recognizes that teacher quality is the most important school-related factor affecting student achievement. Therefore, steps are being taken to attract highly competent and effective employees into the teaching profession and then motivate, develop, and retain them. Making such strides naturally raises questions about teacher compensation, also referred to as merit pay (Solmon, 2004).

President Obama’s education agenda features a focus on teacher merit pay (Clabaugh, 2009). Merit pay, often referred to as pay for performance, is a policy that is gaining a lot of attention. The RTTT federal grant proposal requires states to link the evaluations and pay of both teachers and school administrators to student performance (Tienken, 2011).

The idea behind merit pay is that teacher productivity will increase because teachers will ultimately be more motivated. Since the more effective teachers will make more money, they will remain in the profession, while the less capable teachers will make
less money and eventually leave their job (Clabaugh, 2009). Many states have advanced this concept including Colorado, Texas, New Jersey, Missouri, Florida, Tennessee, Nevada, Idaho, Illinois, and Indiana. All have either passed legislation or have bills under consideration to link pay to student performance on state-mandated standardized tests (Tienken, 2011). In Florida, school districts are now required to dedicate a minimum of 5% of the total salary pool to the use of teacher performance awards, and the state board of education also approved a statewide system of student performance-based merit pay.

The Denver school district has also overhauled the salary schedule to incorporate a large merit pay system (Figlio & Kenny, 2006). The system developed by Denver Public Schools in collaboration with Denver’s teachers union, was piloted for four years, and was fully funded through a citywide vote. The plan includes multiple pay incentives for teachers at both the school and individual levels. Results of a study of the program revealed that student outcomes were up in both grades and subjects, and that teacher recruitment and retention had also increased. By the 2009-10 school year, nearly three-quarters of the teachers within Denver Public Schools opted to participate in the program, which suggests an acceptance among the majority. Teachers participating in the program reported the existence of more collaboration, not competition, as was expected initially. These findings are one reflection of a limited number of studies that empirically examine the issue of merit pay (Silva, 2011).

Much controversy has arisen regarding this attempt to link pay and tenure to performance; that is, the dependence of teacher pay raises and tenure on how well students in their classroom perform (Caillier, 2010). There are mixed outlooks on the
On one hand, it is believed that a system of performance pay would allow the hard-working and most effective teachers to be paid more (Solmon, 2004). Passionate supporters of performance pay argue that such a system would align incentives for teachers so that the most talented are recruited, the best are rewarded, and the laggards are relocated to an alternate profession (Ritter & Jensen, 2010).

However, critics argue that there is a risk that a performance pay system can create a competitive and uncooperative school environment (Solmon, 2004). Performance pay would not capture all that teachers do and would instead result in a counter-productive narrowing of goals and lead to competition between educators who would have otherwise collaborated (Ritter & Jensen, 2010). Though test scores are commonly used to measure student achievement, it must be understood that such tests affect roughly a third of all teachers, only measure a few subjects, and are often used for purposes they were not designed for, such as measuring individual student growth (Gratz, 2011). If standardized tests scores become the sole criterion for merit pay, teachers who focus only on test scores will be rewarded and those who first improve the quality of children’s lives will be penalized (Clabaugh, 2009).

Theoretical Framework

There were a variety of psychological theories that were relevant to the areas of discussion within this study. In order to meet the purposes of this study, two were examined. The first, social cognitive theory, was selected because it is often referenced when evaluating the level of confidence one has as well as his/her ability to successfully perform the necessary tasks required for success. The existence of confidence, or the
lack thereof, is often cited by novice teachers as a reason to either leave or persist within the classroom.

The second theory referenced within this study is the self-efficacy theory. Derived from the social cognitive theory, this theory encompasses a person’s internal awareness of capability in regards to tasks involving organization and execution of core performance activities (Yilmaz, 2009). In relation to the teaching profession, the beliefs one has in regards to this theory will have an eventual impact on the effort he/she puts forth in his/her classroom. These beliefs will further influence how well he/she is able to deal with and overcome obstacles within the profession, how capably he/she copes with the stress and multiple demands of being a teacher, and ultimately, how long he/she will persist in the field of education (Bandura, 1977).

*Social Cognitive Theory*

Social cognitive theory has been thoroughly examined over the years and is defined in multiple fashions throughout research. This theory was developed by Bandura; his goal was to explain that the control that individuals and groups exercise through agentive actions is powerfully influenced by the strength of their perceptions of their own efficacy (Bandura, 1977). Furthermore, Bandura (2001) approached the social cognitive theory with the mindset that unless people believe they can produce the desired outcomes, they will ultimately have little, if any, incentive to pursue the goal or persevere in the face of potential obstacles they may encounter while pursuing that goal. “Social cognitive theory specifies that efficacy beliefs are developed through individual cognitive processing that uniquely weighs the influence of efficacy-shaping information obtained
through mastery experience, vicarious experience, social persuasion, and affective states” (Bandura, 1977, p. 191).

Goddard, LoGerfo, and Hoy (2004) offer an alternative description of social cognitive theory. They define the theory as the representation of the level of confidence a group exudes in its capability to organize and execute the tasks required to reach desired attainments. Understanding the notion of social cognitive theory will allow an individual to address how humans, either as individuals or in a group setting, exercise some level of control over their futures. A primary assumption of social cognitive theory is that the exercise of agency is strongly influenced by the strength of efficacy beliefs. When people, either individually or with others in a group, believe that they have the ability to reach attainments that have been set, they will more than likely approach those goals with the creativity, effort, and persistence that is required to be successful (Goddard & Skrla, 2006).

*Self-Efficacy Theory*

The social cognitive theory, in relation to the field of education, eventually evolved into the construct that researchers often refer to as “self-efficacy.” Self-efficacy is one of the important concepts of the social cognitive theory, and can be defined as “an individual’s perception of his or her own capabilities for organizing and successfully executing the courses of action required to attain designated types of performances” (Yilmaz, 2009, p. 506). Self-efficacy is most often linked to “self” confidence or the ability to reinforce self-initiated actions. It is also defined as a “people’s beliefs about their capabilities to produce designated levels of performance that exercise influence over events that affect their lives” (Bandura, 2001, p. 10).
Self-efficacy is understood to be a cognitive process that involves the development of one’s own personal belief regarding his/her capability to perform at a given level of attainment. “These beliefs will ultimately influence how much effort people put forth, how long they will persist in the face of obstacles, how resilient they are in dealing with failures, and how much stress or depression they experience in coping with demanding situations” (Bandura, 1977, pp. 193-194). The vast majority of the emphasis focuses on the beliefs and judgments a person makes rather than his/her skills.

According to Goddard et al. (2004), there are four major sources that determine self-efficacy. The first is mastery experience, which deals with the developmental process and outcome for a given task. Mastery experience is knowledge and skill that an individual has amassed and can apply to a given task. It differs significantly from the second source, which is a vicarious experience. A vicarious experience is the observation that others who are faced with the same task approach it in the same manner with a positive outcome, thus providing a sense of mentorship or guidance on how to approach situations successfully. Goddard et al. explains that the third source, social persuasion, encompasses encouragement or specific performance feedback for a given task. The key for social persuasion to be effective is that it must be based on credibility, trustworthiness and the expertise of the person providing the feedback. The final source is the affective state of the participant. The level of anxiety, stress, or excitement can have an impact on the outcome of a given task (Goddard et al., 2004).

Efficacy beliefs are best measured and depicted in degrees from high to low. An individual with a high sense of efficacy will convey confidence in his/her ability to successfully achieve a goal that is before him/her; on the other hand, an individual with a
low sense of efficacy will portray self-doubt and not foresee the possibility of achieving the goal placed before him/her. According to Schunk (2000), individuals with high efficacy beliefs about their ability to successfully complete given tasks will generally perform well on these tasks while others with lower efficacy beliefs for specific tasks tend to become idle or give up in the face of these tasks. Individuals with high self-efficacy also have high levels of future goals and they endeavor to attain these goals. On the other hand, individuals with low self-efficacy have rather modest goals, which are easier to attain. Because such individuals do not believe they can do more, they are unable to reach their capacities fully, and fail to reach the required performance (Woolfolk & Hoy, 1990).

*Teacher Efficacy*

Within the field of education, the concept of teacher efficacy has been researched and discussed throughout teacher education literature for nearly 30 years (Carlton, Fitch, & Krockover, 2008). Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001) describe the concept of teacher efficacy as the teacher’s “judgment of his or her capabilities to bring about desired outcomes of student engagement and learning, even among those students who may be difficult or unmotivated” (p. 783). Onafowora (2005) explains that self-efficacy, in regards to teachers, is accomplished when an educator becomes aware of his/her personal judgments and capabilities, thus creating and organizing instruction in a manner that motivates and encourages student learning. A teacher’s sense of efficacy will impact the effort he/she puts into teaching, the goals he/she sets both for self and students, and his/her ultimate level of aspiration (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998). Woolfolk and Hoy
(1990) explains that a teacher’s perception of his or her self-efficacy is closely related to a teacher’s ability to reach students and enable them to learn effectively.

Researchers also have proposed that perceived teacher self-efficacy is reflective of interpersonal activities. Examples of such include how teachers decide to approach classroom management, elicit support from colleagues and elicit support from school administrators (Brouwers & Tomic, 2001). With regard to working conditions within a school, it has also been shown that commitment to the profession is enhanced when teachers believe that they have efficacy to (a) enlist the support of their principals, (b) influence policies at their schools, and (c) control their instruction (Ware & Kitsantas, 2007).

Research supports the concept that teachers who have a strong sense of teaching efficacy are more likely going to be creative and innovative in their approaches to teaching (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). On the other hand, teachers who have low efficacy beliefs will understandably have difficulty meeting the individual needs of their students (Barkley, 2006). Eisenberger, Conti-D’Antonio, and Bertrando (2005) compiled a list to portray the differences between teachers with high and low self-efficacy.

Teachers With High Self-Efficacy Perception:

1. Believe they would perform teaching in an effective manner.
2. Believe they can establish communication with problematic students through extra efforts, and teach them as well.
3. Endeavor to include families in the education process of children.
4. Do their job willingly and affectionately (p. 63).
Teachers With Low Self-Efficacy Perception:

1. Have weak belief that they would perform teaching in an effective manner.
2. Do not see themselves as efficacious in classroom management.
3. Meet the families only during parent meetings.
4. Endeavor to solve disciplinary problems through negative sanctions.
5. Do not do their job affectionately (p. 63).

In regards to student success, a teachers’ sense of efficacy has often been shown to be a powerful construct related to student outcomes such as achievement, motivation, and students’ sense of efficacy. Teachers who portray a high sense of self-efficacy are characterized as demonstrating a strong ability to reach students who otherwise are considered to have areas of difficulty and create learning experiences that lead to mastery through the connections that the teacher was able to provide for the student. Teachers with self-efficacy also are known to devote more time and energy towards academics rather than focusing on discipline (Onafowora, 2005).

According to research conducted by Schriver and Czerniak (1999), teachers who have high efficacy scores often portray the following characteristics within their classrooms:

1. more time is spent teaching the objective
2. teaching is inquiry-based and student-centered
3. open-ended questioning and discussion occurs within their classrooms
4. they take personal responsibility for student learning
5. lessons are chosen effectively
6. classroom management is handled in an efficient manner
In other words, Milner (2002) explains, beliefs teachers have about their abilities to affect students in desired ways influence their persistence when things do not go smoothly. This suggests that teachers with a high sense of efficacy work harder and persist longer even when students are difficult to teach.

Though the amount of research that specifically focuses on the efficacy of novice teachers is limited, Tschannen-Moran et al. (1998) explained that low efficacy beliefs of beginning teachers may often be related to stress and commitment to teaching, as well as a lack of support and sufficient preparation. On the other hand, novice teachers who had a high sense of efficacy found greater satisfaction in teaching, had a more positive reaction to teaching, and experienced less stress. Confident new teachers gave higher ratings to the adequacy of support that they had received than those who ended their year with a shakier sense of their own competence and a less optimistic view of what teachers could accomplish. Efficacious beginning teachers rated the quality of their preparation higher and the difficulty of teaching lower than those who were less efficacious, and efficacious novices indicated greater optimism that they would remain in the field of teaching (Milner, 2002).

Cognitive social theory, and its descendant, self-efficacy theory, therefore, provide the theoretical groundwork for this research. Self-efficacy is strongly related to teacher perceptions about the desirability of remaining in the field of education and self-efficacy is impacted by professional proficiency variables (e.g., the effectiveness of classroom management practices, proficiency in instructional delivery) that fall within the teacher’s locus of control. Self-efficacy is also impacted by external variables that may fall outside the teacher’s locus of control (e.g., classroom management,
administrative support, parental involvement, economic factors). The research questions examined such variables in order to discern relationships that may in turn suggest policy initiatives that can support work environments that augment the prospects for heightened efficacy, and hence, increased likelihood of teacher retention.

Pertinent Research and Professional Perspective

There has been much discussion and research regarding the national issue of teacher attrition. Unfortunately though, data concerning the correlation between novice teacher retention and the often cited variables that lead to their ultimate decision to depart from the profession is limited. Due to the lack of studies pertaining to the specifics of this topic, there is a need for further research to investigate the impact of classroom management, parental involvement, administrative support, and economic factors on a novice teacher’s intent to persist within the field of education.

Teacher Retention

In the Education Trust publication, “Thinking K-16” (2004), Executive Director Kati Haycock stated:

Sadly, as a nation we actually do none of the things you do when you value something as highly as most people say they value good teachers. We don’t recruit them aggressively. We don’t celebrate their accomplishments or compensate them in accordance with their value. We don’t support their further development. And we don’t create vehicles for them to share their expertise. Even more alarming, we don’t even put into place the simple systems that could reliably identify which of our teachers are terrific at moving students from wherever they are academically to higher levels of
achievement, and which teachers still need the help to attain that level of effectiveness. (p. 1)

Reports reflect a continuous increase in teacher turnover rates nationwide. This has led school districts to take a closer look at the causes that are leading so many teachers to decide to leave the classroom. Reasons cited by teachers as to why they ultimately decide to leave the classroom vary, yet the influences primarily include lack of classroom management, administrative support, and/or parental involvement (Ingersoll, 2001; Mihans, 2008; Rie et al., 2007).

Teachers who have cited classroom management as a primary influence in their decision to leave the classroom often reflected on frustrations resulting from constantly addressing disruptive student behaviors that ultimately resulted in the inability to maintain authority within their classrooms and a lack of overall job satisfaction (Perrachione et al., 2008). In fact, the second most frequently cited reason for choosing to leave the classroom pertained to student disruption (Mitchell & Arnold, 2004). In order to increase student success, teachers need to possess successful and efficient classroom management skills (Ma & MacMillan, 1999). Research supports the concept that classroom management has a more influential impact on the achievement of students than home environment or socioeconomic status (Weinstein, Tomlinson-Clarke & Curran, 2004).

Teachers also cite the lack of administrative support as a determining factor in the intent to leave the classroom. When teachers do not feel adequately supported by their administrator(s), stress arises and eventually a sense of job dissatisfaction sets in (Otto, 2005). Studies reflect a positive relationship between administrative support and teacher
outcomes (Kukla-Acevedo, 2009). In fact, a teacher’s sense of job satisfaction increases when a teacher feels supported by his/her administrator(s) (Johnson & Birkeland, 2003), and he/she is more likely to remain within the current job placement when he/she feels this sense of support (Darling-Hammond, 2003). It is evident that teachers are more likely to remain in the classroom when they feel a sense of support from administration (Ingersoll, 2001).

Another often-cited influence on a teacher’s decision to either remain in or leave the classroom is the existence of, or lack of, parental support. The amount of parental support provided at home for student learning has been shown to influence a teacher’s decision to quit (Elfers et al., 2006). The involvement of parents in their child’s educational career, along with the amount of support they provide to the teacher, not only impacts their child’s academic success, but also the teacher’s sense of job satisfaction, thus increasing their odds of persisting in the classroom (Stockard & Lehman, 2004).

An additional influence that is not thoroughly researched at this time is the influence of economic factors on a teacher’s decision to remain in the classroom. It is apparent that national economic hardships are impacting the nation’s educational systems. When district budgets suffer, so does teacher pay, which ultimately results in teacher layoffs (Goldhaber & Theobald, 2011).

Research reflects that unemployment rates within the nation have been on the rise in recent years, with almost half of America’s families experiencing either a job loss or pay cut (Peck, 2010). This has led many employees within today’s job force to push aside job satisfaction for job security ("Take this Job", 2010). Due to such findings, it is
valuable to determine whether or not teachers are choosing to persist within the classroom, due in part, to the current economy.

Attempts to better understand and resolve the current dilemma of declining teacher retention rates has become a priority for school districts across the nation. Much time and effort is being put forth with the hopes of successfully identifying and addressing the underlying reasons today’s teachers are opting to leave the classroom. Numerous studies addressing this dilemma have been conducted over the years, and the findings provide a variety of influences that may provide insight into an educator’s decision to ultimately leave the classroom.

A survey conducted in 2004 determined that teachers often decide to leave the field of education due to a sense of job dissatisfaction that stems from a variety of elements such as low pay, feeling a lack of support from administration and fellow teachers, not being included in decision making opportunities, and issues within classroom management (Freedman & Appleman, 2009). In 2004, McCann and Johannessen conducted a study that ultimately resulted in a compilation of indicators that could assist school districts in possibly predicting a teacher’s intent to either leave or stay within the field of education. According to their research:

Teachers intending to leave the profession often feel:

1. the workload is unreasonable and unmanageable;
2. their efforts to correct classroom problems are futile because they are problems inherent to teaching;
3. their needs have a greater priority than the needs of the students;
4. they have a plan to escape from teaching;
5. their decision to teach was a career compromise because they had limited career choices (p. 142).

Teachers likely to remain in the profession express

1. a sense of duty to help young people benefit from instruction;
2. an interest in developing their teaching skills;
3. an interest in growing as teachers and can account for factors that have influenced their growth;
4. a commitment to strategic planning to make bad situations better;
5. a belief that bad experiences in the school are evidence of the need for good teachers;
6. the need to view disturbing episodes in the school year as shared experiences among students and faculty and not personal obstacles, aggravations, or attacks (p. 142).

Though the findings vary, research focusing on this dilemma ultimately indicates that the most alarming teacher turnover rates are occurring among novice teachers. According to Fleener (2001), anywhere between 25%-50% of beginning teachers make the decision to resign at some point during their first three years of experience. Further research suggests that as many as one-third to one-half of educators opt to leave the occupation within their first five years of service (Perrachione et al., 2008). Another study determined that thirty-three percent of teachers decide to leave the field of education within their first three years of experience, and 46% leave after five years (Ingersoll, 2001). These findings are alarming, especially when compared to the national turnover rates among other professions. It has been determined that within the field of
education, the national turnover rate is 17%, while all other professions average a rate of 11% (Ingersoll, 2002).

The declining rates in teacher retention are also quite costly. As previously mentioned, districts could potentially cost up to $16,500 per teacher who decides to leave the profession (Colgan, 2004). A study regarding teacher retention within the state of Texas revealed an overall teacher turnover rate of 15%, with nearly 40% of these exiting teachers leaving within their first three years of service. The resulting financial output for this attrition costs the state of Texas $329 million a year; this represents an average of almost $8,000 per teacher lost (Ingersoll and Smith, 2003). In an additional study, Ingersoll & Smith (2003) also reported that North Carolina spends an estimated $11,500 during the process of recruiting, hiring, and training each new teacher.

There is strong evidence that supports the concept that expert teachers are the most important factor in student achievement (Darling-Hammond, 2007). Under-qualified teachers are frequently hired to fill vacancies, yet they lack expertise and student achievement suffers. Furthermore, 75% of these under-qualified teachers leave within the first three years of service; such attrition ultimately perpetuates a rate of turnover of inexperienced teachers, which results in poor student achievement (Darling-Hammond, 2007).

Research also suggests that an alternate approach to addressing the issue of teacher retention rates would be to investigate the possible influences that may persuade a teacher to remain in the field of education despite the obstacles addressed previously. According to Bobeck (2002), there are five primary factors that are responsible for teachers deciding to remain in the field despite the challenges they face: (1) relationships
(mentoring programs, administrative and parental support); (2) career competence and skills; (3) personal ownership of careers (ability to solve problems, set goals, and help students); (4) sense of accomplishment (experiencing success); and (5) sense of humor.

Additional research conducted by Darling-Hammond (2003) determined that good teachers are more likely to remain in the classroom when they feel a sense of appreciation and support for their work, are in an environment that allows them the opportunity to learn from their colleagues, and are provided with an environment that allows accomplished teaching to flourish and grow. Providing and implementing such an environment is possible. Nieto (2003) suggests a variety of approaches to creating such an environment, including:

1. finding ways to achieve promise of public education,
2. rethinking teacher education,
3. preparing teachers for public service, and
4. rethinking professional development.

She even provides ways to positively influence a teacher’s sense of efficacy. Her suggestions include:

1. supporting teachers who love their students,
2. supporting teachers who find creative ways to teach under difficult circumstances,
3. celebrating teachers who are just as excited about their own learning as they are about their students’ learning, and
4. championing teachers who value their students’ families.
Novice Teachers

Teachers who are within their initial five years of service in the profession are often referred to as *novice teachers*. Though many of these novice teachers do in fact have the requisite skills, disposition, and commitment to succeed, they are choosing to leave the profession in large numbers (Varney, 2009). According to previously discussed statistics, the national turnover rates suggest that novice teachers account for the majority of educators who decide to leave the profession. It is estimated that 33% of new teachers quit the profession during their first few years (Roulston, Legette, & Womack, 2005). Triggered by this trend, initiatives to discover specific causes for attrition within this category of educators have been at the forefront of research regarding the national dilemma of teacher turnover rates.

The challenges faced by someone just entering a profession can often be overwhelming, and the field of education is no exception. Upon entering the profession, a beginning teacher takes on the same responsibilities and expectations as those of a veteran teacher. In one study, the qualities anticipated by principals to exist among novice teachers included proficiency or possession of professionalism, thorough knowledge in assigned content areas, effective communication skills, successful classroom management skills, and a strong desire to provide every student the opportunity to succeed (Roberson & Roberson, 2009). Due to such expectations, novice teachers often report a lack of confidence when they are presented with situations that require them to address and handle issues related to classroom management and parental communication (Mitchell & Arnold, 2004). Similar concerns are associated with the
tasks of handling behavioral issues, motivating students and managing the day to day responsibilities of a classroom (Rieg et al., 2007).

Additional areas of concern among novice teachers, who have just entered their first year of experience, include relationships with students, parents, colleagues, and administration, workload and time allotted to accomplish necessary tasks, their personal knowledge of the curriculum they are expected to teach, evaluation and grading procedures, and issues regarding control within the classroom (Roberson & Roberson, 2008). Johnson (2001), found the following items to be additional frustrations that are often cited by novice teachers:

1. being assigned to classes that veteran teachers do not want
2. receiving the students who are considered to be the most difficult and challenging
3. having overwhelming responsibilities outside of the classroom such as committee assignments
4. not receiving input or support from administration

With such frustrations being cited by novice teachers, many assert that a more organized effort needs to be made in order to support and teach the beginning teacher the expectations of the school; these strategies may ultimately lead to more satisfied teachers, thus affecting the student achievement within the classroom (Dyal & Swell, 2002). Novice teachers gain a stronger sense of efficacy and confidence if they are provided with support from multiple parties in the system, including students, administrators, and parents. This ultimately leads to a higher sense of job satisfaction and the likelihood of persistence in the classroom (Witmer, 2005).
Classroom Management

The reasons teachers decide to leave the classroom are varied, but research reveals that the lack of classroom management is a primary influence. Effective teaching requires skills such as effective classroom and behavior management, as well as the ability to manage the myriad tasks and situations that occur in the classroom each day (Mitchell & Arnold, 2004). Extensive research supports the importance of effective classroom management and its impact on overall student achievement (Rieg et al., 2007). Teachers who find that they constantly address disruptive behaviors within the classroom lose valuable instruction opportunities which in turn results in a negative affect on academic instruction, ability to maintain authority, and overall job satisfaction (Perrachione et al., 2008).

Providing a universal definition of classroom management is complicated. Based on the context, the term classroom management encompasses a number of descriptions. Bucher and Manning (2005), depict classroom management as a teacher’s ability to implement strategies that assure physical and psychological safety in the classroom, techniques that assist in changing student misbehaviors and for teaching self-discipline, methods that assure an orderly progression of events during the school day, as well as instructional techniques that encourage positive student behavior. Weinstein et al. (2004) concluded that effective classroom management involves the following elements:

1. creating a physical setting that supports academic and social goals
2. establishing and maintaining expectations for behavior
3. enhancing students’ motivation
4. organizing and managing instructional formats
5. working with families
6. identifying and integrating appropriate interventions to assist student needs

An additional dimension of classroom management consists of creating and providing an environment in which students behave in an appropriate manner without fearing punishment or expecting reward, but rather out of meeting personal expectations. This involvement of student responsibility supports the idea that students are ultimately influenced by the classroom. It also supports the concept that students do impact the daily events that occur within the classroom (Weinstein et al., 2004).

Research has identified five areas of expertise in regards to classroom management. According to Benhar (2009), if all of the following areas are mastered by the practicing teacher, it is believed that effective and successful classroom management will more than likely occur:

1. First, research and theory should guide teachers in understanding the cause for behavioral and academic problems in the classroom and how the teachers’ behaviors are related to the failure in meeting students’ needs.
2. Secondly, the teacher must create a classroom that encourages, enables, and supports teacher-parent, teacher-student, and peer-relationships that will facilitate a supportive and successful academic environment.
3. Third, once a supportive atmosphere is creative within the classroom, the teacher approaches the academic needs of the students through the implementation of instructional methods and accommodations.
4. Fourth, due to the continuous growth in classroom sizes, there is the added pressure for teachers to acquire the organizational and group management
methods that will facilitate positive academic and behavioral outcomes. Even in a classroom that provides the supportive and instructional methods that minimize many of the management issues that could potentially arise, research shows that students may still at times be disruptive to the point it may have negative effect on academics.

5. Finally, in order to establish an effective environment, the teacher must master the ability of not only managing student behavior issues that may arise, but also provide feedback that clarifies the reasoning for attention so the student may change the maladaptive behavior.

Throughout the literature, issues related to classroom management are consistently present within the descriptors provided by teachers with low job satisfaction or intent to exit the profession. A survey addressing the decline in retention among teachers within their first five years of teaching revealed that 53% decided to leave the profession due to issues with student behavior and discipline. In another study, disruptive students ranked second among the most frequently provided reasons for either considering or ultimately leaving the field of education. In addition, a commonality is often found: when years of experience are taken into account, findings reflect that inadequate classroom management skills come from newer teachers, with 35.7% having up to five years of experience, and 25% having between six to ten years (Mitchell & Arnold, 2004).

Both beginning teachers and student teachers admit to feeling insecure and unprepared when faced with the responsibility of addressing and handling issues related to classroom management; student discipline and difficult parents are the most often-
cited issues resulting in beginning and student teacher insecurities (Mitchell & Arnold, 2004). Recent graduates who received degrees in education were asked to share the primary area of concern they have developed within their first few months as practicing educators, and the dominant response was feeling inadequate in their ability to manage their classrooms. Even more specifically, those surveyed further expressed doubt in their ability to discipline, motivate, and manage students (Rieg et al., 2007).

The extensive literature that illustrates the lack of confidence among pre-service and novice teachers regarding their ability to effectively manage today’s classrooms leads many to question whether or not university programs are adequately preparing teachers for the challenges encountered within the profession. Studies of anxieties among pre-service teachers usually are based upon two areas of concern: classroom discipline and relationships. Within these areas of concern, dealing with student behaviors, disciplining students, and motivating and keeping students on task were found to cause the most apprehension among both pre-service and novice teachers (Rieg et al., 2007). Surveys of recent graduates who were anticipating their professional entrance into the classroom indicated that the area in which they felt least competent was their ability to manage a classroom (Mitchell & Arnold, 2004).

Research supports the concept that teachers who possess efficient classroom, discipline, and behavior management skills have a higher sense of job satisfaction, thus increasing the odds of student success (Ma & MacMillan, 1999). The approach a teacher takes to handling situations within the classroom will in turn determine how well the students will learn as well as perform. Unfortunately, teachers are not fully aware of the true effectiveness of their management and discipline techniques (Mitchell & Arnold,
2004). When considering whether or not these common stressors among novice teachers ultimately have any influence on overall student achievement, research has determined that the actions of a teacher within the classroom ultimately have two times more of an impact on student achievement than the school-wide policies. Furthermore, the impact classroom management has on student achievement has been shown to be greater than the influences of socioeconomic status or home environment (Weinstein et al., 2004).

Research has revealed that student teachers and novice teachers often admit that the majority of their learning occurred during their experiences in the actual classroom, not at the university (Siebert, 2005). This may imply that universities need to make adjustments to the amount of time they currently allot for student teachers to observe and participate in classroom management opportunities within a variety of settings. Exposing student teachers to classrooms in which students have multiple intelligences and addressing multiple disciplines further acquaints them with the demands and obstacles that may one day become realities within their own classrooms (Mitchell & Arnold, 2004). Providing pre-service teachers with training and knowledge that allows the transition from training to practice to go smoothly is an integral factor in making positive strides towards the overall improvement of national retention rates (Rieg et al., 2007).
Administrative Support

Most teachers agree that administration is one of the most influential factors in a teacher’s decision to remain in, or leave, the field of education. It is understandable that a beginning teacher looks to the principal for guidance and support, because in most instances, the principal is the first person they interact with in a school (Brock & Grady, 2001). Yet unfortunately, teachers often cite a lack of administrative support as one of the top causes of job dissatisfaction. Without proper or adequate administrator support, teachers feel stressed, overworked, and under appreciated (Otto, 2005). The concept of administrative support goes far beyond a principal with a positive attitude.

Administrative support encompasses the following:

1. Supervision
2. Resource availability
3. Professional development
4. Facilities

The overall effect of the above factors is that these things are central to a school’s culture. Supporting research shows that the more collegial and collaborative the school environment is, the greater the job satisfaction (Stockard & Lehman, 2004). It is important for principals to remember that a teacher’s first year in the classroom is not only challenging, but also lonely and difficult, requiring support and empathy from administration (Menchaca, 2003). According to Feinman-Nemser (2003), principals who want to retain teachers must create a supportive culture of teaching, regardless of whether a novice teacher’s early years of teaching are a time of constructive learning or a time of coping, adjustment, and/or survival. It is critical for principals to make an effort to create
and foster an environment in which positive support is available and apparent if they intend to reduce the occurrence of teacher dissatisfaction and attrition (Mihans, 2008).

Teachers also want an administrative presence that fosters support and constructive feedback. In fact, job satisfaction increases among teachers when they receive regular and supportive feedback from their administrator (Mihans 2008). Research found that teachers who chose to persevere in the field of education for more than three years partially attribute their persistence to regular feedback that they received regarding their classroom teaching (Johnson & Birkeland, 2003). Tillman (2005) found that a lack of personal contact and feedback from administration led new teachers to believe they were not valued as professionals and triggered a questioning of their competency as educators.

Darling-Hammond (2003) further reported that teachers are more willing to remain in difficult assignments when they believe that their principal is not only supportive, but respectful of their teaching efforts. Bickmore and Bickmore (2010) determined that when a principal provided a supportive environment for novice teachers, their sense of competence, respect, belonging, confidence, autonomy, and self-esteem were enhanced. Blasé and Blasé (1998) identified suggestions that are successful when implemented in an administrator’s approach to teachers. These include:

1. avoiding restrictive and intimidating approaches (administrative control gives way to collegiality)
2. believing in teacher choice and discretion
3. integrating collaboration, coaching, inquiry, study groups, and relative discussion
4. embracing growth and change
5. respecting teachers’ knowledge and abilities
6. committing to school improvement and professional community

Unfortunately, teachers often report that their administrators ignore their needs and appear not to understand the need for new teachers to ease into their responsibilities (Dyal & Sewell, 2002). In the 2002 Teacher Follow-Up Survey data, it was apparent that teachers who decided to exit the profession cited the lack of support from school administration as one area that contributed to their lack of job satisfaction (Ingersoll, 2002). Anjanette M. Bolich, the research assistant for Educational Policies from the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), stated in a 2001 study that the “lack of support and guidance is the reason why 16% of our nation’s newest teachers abandon the profession. Thirteen percent list the primary reason as a lack of respect from their administration. Nearly 20% of novice teachers in Texas left due to lack of professional support. North Carolina teachers report that 63% quit because of lack of administrative support” (as cited in Dyal & Sewell, 2002, p. 5).

Throughout research, most teachers agree that one of the most important factors in the success of a school is its administration. It is widely assumed that principals have both direct and indirect effects on teaching and student achievement (Leithwood, Louis, Anderson, & Wahlstrom, 2004). Studies have found a positive link between administrative support and teacher outcomes. Direct communication and support from a supervisor, principal, or other administrator diminishes the perception of stress and job satisfaction (Kukla-Acevedo, 2009). Administrators influence teachers’ satisfaction indirectly by promoting a safe and orderly school, by assigning teachers to positions for
which they feel qualified, by providing teachers a sense of control and influence over their work and by providing a context in which teachers can feel supported by their colleagues and students’ parents and where they can be more efficacious in their teaching (Stockard & Lehman, 2004). Such leadership qualities of a principal are linked to teacher efficacy.

Principals who use their leadership to provide resources for teachers and put forth the effort necessary to buffer them from disruptive factors, but allow teachers flexibility over classroom affairs, create a context that allows efficacy to develop (Lee, Dedrick & Smith 1991). Furthermore, principals can increase efficacy and overall retention of teachers if they are known to celebrate their teachers’ accomplishments, support teacher professional development, and provide opportunities for teachers to share their expertise (Haar, 2007). There is obviously a demonstrated link between administrative support and teacher attrition. It is apparent that teachers are less likely to quit schools when they feel they have a role in their school and are supported by their administrators (Ingersoll, 2001), and when novice teachers’ needs are met, their practice is improved and are more likely to remain within the field of education (Wang & O’Dell, 2002).

**Parental Involvement**

In today’s society, teachers are unable to handle every situation that arises in the classroom on their own. For decades, research has reported on many obstacles pertaining to parental involvement. Most commonly discussed issues include poor school-family relationships in communities, reasons for the lack of parental involvement, and data that shows that the support of parents declines as children move from elementary school to high school (Flynn & Nolan, 2008).
It is vital that today’s society understands that teacher-parent and school-home relationships are an integral part of the educational process (Witmer, 2005). Parental involvement has even been identified as one of the guiding tenets of the No Child Left Behind Act (Texas Education Agency, 2005). According to the U. S. Department of Education (2010) the law requires that each school and local educational agency shall readily have materials and training available to assist parents in improving their children’s achievement. Examples of such assistance include literacy training and how to use technology to foster parental involvement.

The emphasis placed on the support of parents may be due in part to the fact that parental involvement has been identified as one of the top factors influencing student achievement (Marzano and Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2003). According to Lindsay (2002), when parents are actively engaged in a positive way in their children’s education, student achievement, motivation, and concern for learning all increase. Matuszny, Banda, and Coleman (2007) support the notion that parental involvement influences not only students, but also the teachers, schools and parents involved. According to their research, parental involvement has a positive effect on:

1. Student achievement
2. Students’ educational aspirations
3. The length of time students stay in school
4. Teachers’ perceived efficacy of their own teaching habits
5. Teachers’ perceptions of parent effectiveness
6. Parents’ ratings of schools
7. Parents’ ambition to increase or improve their own educational training
8. Parents’ own perceived efficacy about their parenting skills
9. Students’ drive to increase their independence (p. 25).

While the reasons that may influence a novice teacher to leave the classroom are varied, one study found that the lack of support provided at home for a students’ learning was viewed by approximately a third of teachers (35%) as a strong or moderate reason to consider leaving the school (Elfers et al., 2006).

Opportunity for teacher/parent communication also suffers when a lack of teacher effort to reach out to parents occurs. Flynn and Nolan (2008) provided reasons given by teachers for their own resistance to communicating with parents. Some include parents being seen as a threat, teachers not understanding the importance of the parents’ role, teachers not believing it is their responsibility to contact parents, and teachers not wanting to spend the time working with parents.

The unwillingness of teachers to foster alliances with the home has also been linked to a lack of self-efficacy (Flynn & Nolan, 2008). This self-doubt among teachers, more so novice teachers, has been directly linked to a void in teacher preparation. The focus in teacher preparation programs regarding parental involvement involves the provision of strategies to deal with situations that are considered challenging rather than providing techniques on how to build the initial relationship with parents that would foster a collaborative approach to their child’s education (Flanigan, 2007).

In regards to parents, reasons that are often cited for a lack of involvement on their behalf include feelings of intimidation, lack of understanding of the importance of their role, a lack of self-efficacy, preexisting negative feelings about school, belief that
teachers do not care, language barriers, the fact that parents generally hear from teachers only when there is a problem, and a sense of being overwhelmed by day-to-day responsibilities (Hoover-Dempsey, Walker, & Sandler, 2005). Additional insights into the home-school relationship were reflected in a study conducted by Epstein (1986). Epstein (1986) found that school-related issues, including lack of communication between teachers and parents, had a direct effect on parental involvement. The study determined that 16% of parents interviewed never received correspondence from their children’s teachers, 35% stated they never attended any parent-teacher conferences, and 60% admitted to never having direct conversation with their child’s teacher on the phone.

A lack of efficacy on behalf of the teacher can also have an influence on parental involvement. Teachers who have high levels of efficacy are more likely to engage in parent involvement than teachers with a low sense of efficacy (Hoover-Dempsey, Bassler, & Brissie, 1992). This helps clarify the fact that parental involvement has an impact on not only student success, but also a teacher’s sense of efficacy and job satisfaction. Research that examines the role of social support has produced consistent results, with teachers who report receiving more support from their colleagues and from parents as having a greater sense of job satisfaction and being more likely to stay in their jobs (Stockard & Lehman, 2004). Further supporting this idea, Knobloch and Whittington (2003) suggest that novice teachers feel more efficacious and confident if they receive positive feedback, guidance, and encouragement from their students, other teachers, administrators, parents, and community members. Since relationships are the building blocks of effective teaching and student success, teachers, administrators, parents, and students need to work collaboratively (Witmer, 2005).
Economic Factors

Though not thoroughly researched at this point, economic factors are beginning to receive attention as a factor in a person’s decision to remain in his/her current profession. Unemployment rates are at alarming highs, and job satisfaction is no longer a priority (“Take this Job”, 2010). It is beneficial to research to what extent, if any, attrition and retention in the field of education are influenced by current economic factors.

In the state in which the research was conducted, the unemployment rate in the three counties (referred to as Counties A, B, & C) rose in December of 2011 and was higher at that point than it was a year earlier. More specifically, unemployment was at 9.1% in County A, 9.2% in County B, and 10.3% in County C. This translates into 1,800 people in County A, 6,830 in County B, and 8,350 in County C who were unemployed (“Unemployment Rate”, 2012). In a 2010 national survey, findings showed that 44% of families had experienced a job loss, a reduction in hours, or a pay cut in the past year (Peck, 2010).

Tough economic times mean tight school district budgets, and because most districts allocate more than half of their budget dollars to teacher pay, budget cuts have resulted in the most sizeable teacher layoffs in recent history (Goldhaber & Theobald, 2011). A 2011 analysis revealed that, despite a private-sector job growth rate of 1.7 million, local governments had reduced the number of teachers and education personnel they employ by nearly 200,000 people (“Teacher Jobs at Risk”, 2011). Furthermore, due to the dwindling of personal retirement accounts due to the recession, older teachers are opting to delay retirement, which means more layoffs would be needed to close budget gaps (Dillon, 2011).
The Executive Office of the President provided the following data reflecting the impact of the recent economic downturn on the field of education:

1. Nearly 300,000 educator jobs have been lost since 2008. This translates into 54% of all job losses in local government. More specifically, local governments have shed nearly 300,000 education jobs between August 2008 and August 2011. By another measure, employment of teachers fell 7.2 percent between 2007-2008 and 2010-2011.

2. Local governments have lost nearly 200,000 education jobs over the past year. Just within the past 12 months, education employment has fallen by 194,000 jobs.

3. State and local funding cuts predict that as many as 280,000 teacher jobs are at risk for the upcoming 2011-2012 school year (“Teacher Jobs at Risk”, 2011).

Gains of state legislative seats by conservatives in 2010 have also resulted in reduced education budgets. An example of the significant impact of these dramatic changes in state legislatures on teachers are the recent events in Wisconsin. Republican governor, Scott Walker, wanted to require public workers within his state to pay more for their health insure and pensions, which would cut the take-home pay of many by nearly seven percent. He also wanted to weaken most of the public-sector unions by curtailing their collective bargaining rights (Davey & Greenhouse, 2011).

Due to the fact that such budget issues exist nationwide, state and local officials are finding themselves resorting to budget cuts more often then not. A middle school teacher who would be directly impacted by the proposed changes in Wisconsin said that
she and her husband, also a teacher, would lose nearly $1,200 a month under the state’s new plan, which would be too deep of a cut to manage. She further stated that she would have no other option but to look for another job if the plan was enacted (Davey & Greenhouse, 2011).

With employers still trimming rather than adding jobs and a record number of unemployed looking for employment, job holders are hanging on to their current positions, even if it means being unhappy (“Take this Job”, 2010). In fact, Scott (2010), in surveying workers, found that job satisfaction is the lowest it has been for a very long time and that more people say they want to look for a new job than in any poll in recent memory. Current surveys show many workers would like to find a new job once the labor market improves, but most are fearful of doing so now. This mentality has resulted in the lowest frequency of people leaving their jobs since 2000 (“Take this Job”, 2010).

The search for literature pertaining to the likelihood of novice classroom teachers choosing to persist in their career due to the current economy did not yield any research specifically related to this topic. It is worth exploring whether or not, in an economy where jobs are harder to obtain, if teachers are more likely to persist in the classroom, even when they find their work to be unsatisfactory. Research into this topic is important and could be potentially beneficial to the field of education by adding to the literature pertaining to this emerging issue.

*Pre-Service Training*

As most teachers and teacher educators would agree, the process of becoming a teacher is not always easy (He & Cooper, 2011). This has led many to look at the preparation educators are receiving prior to their entrance into the professional world.
Universities face numerous complexities and problems within the process of teacher education (Brewer, 2006). According to Darling-Hammond and Youngs (2002), strong evidence shows that teacher preparation contributes to teacher effectiveness, success, and overall retention. Yet with extensive literature finding a trend in pre-service and novice teachers feeling unconfident and unprepared to effectively manage today’s classrooms, many question whether or not university programs are ultimately preparing teachers for the challenges encountered within the profession.

Studies of anxieties among pre-service teachers usually are based upon two areas of concern: classroom discipline and relationships. Within these areas of concern, dealing with student behaviors, disciplining students, and motivating and keeping students on task were found to cause the most apprehension among both pre-service and novice teachers (Rieg et al., 2007). Surveys of recent graduates who were anticipating their entrance into the field of education indicated that their number one area of concern, the area they felt least competent in, was their ability to manage a classroom (Mitchell & Arnold, 2004).

In order to alleviate a variety of stressors that have ultimately been linked to a teacher’s decision to leave the field of education, teacher preparation courses at universities may need to consider revamping their programs. It is also important that teachers are provided with many opportunities to acquire the knowledge and skill to make them experts in their field. This includes the aspects of education that cannot be taught through a textbook. Examples of such professional aspects include dealing with parents, individually getting to know students and their needs, and handling issues and concerns that many of today’s children are faced with (Bergeron, 2008).
Research has also revealed that student teachers and novice teachers often admit that the majority of their learning occurred during their experiences in the actual classroom, not at the university (Siebert, 2005). According to Jones, Jones, and Vermette (2011), new teachers must have an eye for assessment and infuse active learning in all they do. In their preparation, teacher education graduates have been exposed to educational theories supporting this concept. However, novice teachers struggle in their efforts to incorporate these ideas into their daily instruction. They find themselves caught up in the demands of being a first year teacher and can quickly lose sight of the ideals they were taught and may find themselves unable to bridge the gap between their university studies and daily practices. This may imply that universities need to make adjustments to the amount of time they currently allot for student teachers to observe and participate in classroom management opportunities within a variety of settings.

Exposing student teachers to classrooms with multiple intelligences and disciplines further acquaints them with the demands and obstacles that may one day become realities within their own classrooms (Mitchell & Arnold, 2004). The focus should be on raising competence and confidence primarily through successful authentic mastery experiences. Practical applications of this construct for teacher education programs should be geared to the greater understanding of how to provide authentic experiences for teacher candidates that not only teach them what to do (raising competence), but how to do it well in a variety of contexts (raising confidence) (Yost, 2006). Providing pre-service teachers with training and knowledge that allows the transition from “training to practice” to go smoothly is an integral factor in making
positive strides towards the overall improvement of national retention rates (Rieg et al., 2007).

The more successful experience a teacher candidate has working with diverse groups of students, the higher the confidence level of the teacher, which in turn, positively influences self-efficacy. Thus, if the environment is conducive to positive growth and provides the novice teacher with opportunities for success, then the likelihood is that his/her self-efficacy will increase. On the other hand, if the novice teacher experiences little success early or while student teaching, judgments of low self-efficacy may determine how long the teacher will persist in developing a strong teaching repertoire (Yost, 2006). Although it is obvious that first-year teachers will frequently face challenges, growing evidence also supports the concept that individuals who receive their education through strong teacher preparation programs manage these challenges more successfully that those who do not receive adequate training (Darling-Hammond, 2006).

Summary

Due to the recent focus on accountability in the United States’ public schools, administrators need to have qualified and effective professionals teaching all the students. With the mandates of the “No Child Left Behind Act,” the factors that are leading to success with teacher retention need to be identified for implementation by school districts and administrators. Recruiting teachers can be difficult for some school districts, but it can be cost ineffective if the teachers choose to leave the profession within three to five years (Griffin, 2007).
This study provides a more thorough understanding as to why teachers, more specifically novice teachers, ultimately chose to remain in the field of education. This researcher hoped that studying the effects of classroom management, administrative support and parental involvement (variables that are often referenced in research pertaining to teacher choices to leave the field of education) on teacher attrition, along with an examination of the impact of economic factors, would provide educational administrators, professors, and classroom practitioners with information that could potentially shed light on the dilemma of teacher attrition. The researcher was also hopeful that such information would prompt initiatives to implement new and/or revised approaches and strategies within the field of education that could ultimately increase the retention of teachers.
CHAPTER III
METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the research design and methodology that were utilized to implement this study. It also outlines the research questions and hypotheses, participants in the study, the research design, instrumentation, data collection process, and statistical process for the analysis of data. The goal of this study was to determine whether classroom management, administrative support, parental involvement, and economic factors significantly impacted a novice teacher’s intent to persist within the classroom.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

This study investigated the impact of classroom management, administrative support, parental involvement, and current economic factors on a novice teachers’ intent to remain in the classroom. Research reflects that low retention rates among novices are often associated with frustrations linked to a lack of job satisfaction. Areas of concern most often referenced by teachers include the management of student behavior (Mitchell & Arnold, 2004; Rieg et al., 2007), low levels of administrative support (Brock & Grady, 2001), lack of parental involvement and support (Elfers et al., 2006) and most recently, current economic factors (“Take this Job,” 2010).

Based on the literature, the following research questions were proposed:

1. What are the perspectives of novice teachers regarding the impact of classroom management, administrative support, parental involvement, and economic factors on their decisions to remain in the profession?

2. Are there differences in novice teacher perspectives regarding classroom management, administrative support, parental involvement, and economic
factors depending upon the school level (elementary, middle, high) at which teachers are employed?

3. Are there differences in novice teacher perspectives regarding classroom management, administrative support, parental involvement, and economic factors depending upon school performance levels (Star, High Performing, Successful, Academic Watch, Low Performing, At Risk of Failing, Failing)?

4. Are there differences in novice teacher perspectives regarding classroom management, administrative support, parental involvement, and economic factors depending upon their teacher preparation program?

5. Are novice teacher perspectives regarding classroom management, administrative support, parental involvement, and economic factors related to their intent to persist in the classroom?

The following related hypotheses were also examined. In light of the limited research on the relationships among the specific variables tested, the researcher chose to pose these as null hypotheses:

H01. There are not significant differences in novice teacher perspectives regarding classroom management, administrative support, parental involvement, and economic factors depending upon the school level (elementary, middle, high) at which teachers are employed.

H02. There are not significant differences in novice teacher perspectives regarding classroom management, administrative support, parental involvement, and economic factors depending upon school performance level (Star, High
Performing, Successful, Academic Watch, Low Performing, At Risk of Failing, and Failing).

H0₃: There are not significant differences in novice teacher perspectives regarding classroom management, administrative support, parental involvement, and economic factors depending upon their teacher preparation program.

H0₄: There is not a significant relationship between novice teacher perspectives regarding classroom management, administrative support, parental involvement, economic factors, and their intent to persist in the classroom.

Participants in the Study

The purpose of this study was to generate insight into novice teacher perceptions about the impact of classroom management, administrative support, parental involvement, and economic factors on their intent to persist within the classroom. In order to implement this research, the researcher determined that the subject population for this study would consist of educators who were within their first five years of teaching. Age, ethnicity, and gender of the subjects varied. Upon receiving approval from the University of Southern Mississippi Institutional Review Board (IRB) (Appendix A), the researcher contacted human resources administrators within the participating districts to address procedures for implementing the study. These procedures are described later in the section on data collection.

Participation in this research was voluntary, and individual subjects were not identified by name. Subjects were surveyed via postal mail and surveys were administered at the beginning of the first semester of the 2012-2013 academic school year. The target study sample included 284 novice teachers from 34 schools (elementary,
middle, and high) in six districts along the coastal areas of the state of Mississippi. Of those to whom instruments were sent, 93 novice teachers responded. This represented a return rate of 33%.

Research Design

This study employed a quantitative design in which the researcher objectively observed without influence or participation throughout the research process. The researcher also developed a self-made questionnaire. The content included within the questionnaire met the standards necessary to conduct the intended research. The areas of focus included classroom management, administrative support, parental involvement, economic factors, and intent to persist.

The dependent variables for the study were novice teacher perspectives regarding classroom management, administrative support, parental involvement and economic factors, and intent to persist in the classroom. The independent variables in the study were school level (elementary, middle, high), teacher preparation program, school classification and school performance level. These variables are based on literature that addresses the frustrations of novice teachers and the role of these frustrations in an educator’s decision to either persist or leave the classroom.

Instrumentation

Prior to instrument distribution, the researcher requested and received IRB approval through the University of Southern Mississippi. Quantitative data were collected via a self-designed survey instrument entitled Novice Teacher Perceptions: The Impact of Select Factors on the Intent to Persist Instrument (Appendix B). Due to the lack of availability of an instrument with content that would allow the researcher to
thoroughly address the purposes of this study, the researcher developed this instrument for distribution to novice teachers in the school districts where superintendents provided permission for implementation of the study.

In order to provide the researcher with information about the participants, the instrument requested personal demographic information including gender, age, and race. This section of the instrument also requested information on the participants’ professional status, including traditional/alternative preparation program, education level, and number of years teaching. The instrument further solicited information concerning school characteristics (e.g., school level—elementary school (ES), middle school (MS), high school (HS); school performance status). The instrument was color-coded in order to inform the researcher of the district from which each returned survey came.

The items contained within the instrument were developed to allow novice teachers to describe their perspectives regarding classroom management, administrative support, parental involvement, economic factors, and intent to persist. The survey used a Likert Scale format, requiring responses from among six ordinal ratings in which 1 =”Strongly Disagree”, 2 =”Disagree”, 3 =”Slightly Disagree”, 4 =”Slightly Agree”, 5 =”Agree”, 6=“Strongly Agree.” The ratings provided to the participant were developed to prevent neutrality and force an “agree” or “disagree” response.

Demographic Items

A demographic questionnaire was developed for this research and asked participants about their personal characteristics, including gender (Male/Female), age (21-26, 27-32, 33-38, 39+), race (Black/White/Hispanic/Asian/Native American/other), and preparation program (Traditional/Alternative). A second set of demographic items
requested professional information, including education level (Bachelors/Masters/Specialist/Doctorate) and number of years teaching. The final category of demographic information addressed school characteristics, including school level (Elementary/Middle/High) and school performance status (Star/High Performing/Successful/Academic Watch/Low Performing/At Risk of Failing/Failing).

**Classroom Management Subscale**

Six statements (Section A, Items 1-6) were designed with the intent to measure novice teachers’ perceptions of classroom management and address Research Questions 1-4. The participants reflected on the statements using the previously described Likert Scale with a possible average score of 6. A high overall average score within this subsection represented a higher likelihood that the surveyed teacher would remain in the field of education due to the influences of classroom management. Items 4 and 5 within this section were reverse-oriented in order to avoid response set.

**Administrative Support Subscale**

Seven statements (Section B, Items 7-13) were designed with the intent to measure novice teachers’ perceptions of administrative support and address Research Questions 1-4. Participants reflected on the statements using the previously described Likert Scale with a possible average score of 6. A high overall average score within this sub-section represented a higher likelihood that the surveyed teacher would remain in the field of education due to the influences of administrative support. Items 9 and 11 within this section were reverse-oriented to avoid the occurrence of response set.
**Parental Involvement Subscale**

Six statements (Section C, Items 14-20) were designed with the intent to measure novice teachers’ perceptions of parental involvement and address Research Questions 1-4. Participants reflected on the statements using the previously described Likert Scale with a possible average score of 6. A high overall average score within this sub-section represented a higher likelihood that the surveyed teacher would remain in the field of education due to the influences of parental involvement. Item 17 within this section was reversed-oriented to avoid the occurrence of response set.

**Economic Factors Subscale**

Five statements (Section D, Items 21-25) were designed with the intent to measure novice teachers’ perceptions of economic factors and address Research Questions 1-4. Participants reflected on the statements using the previously described Likert Scale with a possible average score of 6. A high overall average score within this sub-section represented a higher likelihood that the surveyed teacher would remain in the field of education due to the influences of economic factors. Items 22 and 25 within this section were reversed-oriented to avoid the occurrence of response set.

**Intent to Persist Subscale**

Five statements (Section E, Items 26-30) were designed with the intent to measure novice teachers’ intent to persist in the classroom and address Research Question 5. Participants reflected on the statements using the previously described Likert Scale with a possible average score of 6. A high overall average score within this sub-section represented a higher likelihood that the surveyed teacher would remain in the field of
education. Items 26 and 27 within this section were reversed-oriented to avoid the occurrence of response set.

**Instrument Validity and Reliability**

The researcher took steps to strengthen the validity and reliability of the instrument and determine its overall suitability for the implementation of this study. In order to ensure content validity of the developed instrument, the researcher assembled a panel of experts. These professionals included a former state superintendent whose state dealt extensively with teacher shortage issues, the director of personnel for a school district who has prior administrative experience at both the middle and high school levels, a former district superintendent who is currently serving as principal of a middle school, and the chief financial officer (CFO) of a school district. The panel members’ responsibilities included determining whether the survey was appropriate and whether items are suitable for the purposes of the study. The researcher requested that each of the experts complete and return a validity questionnaire (Appendix C), along with any additional recommendations for modifications that they believed would improve the overall validity and utility of the instrument.

Reliability was verified by piloting the approved survey among 12 novice teachers. In order to ensure reliability, a Cronbach’s alpha was used as a measure of internal consistency of the overall instrument and its subscales. The data from the responses of the pilot test participants were analyzed using the statistical program SPSS. The Cronbach’s alpha reliability coefficient test was used to determine reliability for each subscale. The test disclosed a reliability of greater than 0.70 for all subscales, with the exception of one (Classroom Management), which produced a reliability result of .65. It
was decided that the subscale items would remain in the model because the Cronbach’s alpha was only slightly below the 0.70 level. The subscale addressed novice teacher perceptions in regards to factors pertaining to classroom management; this and other subscale results are reported in Table 1.

Table 1

*Pilot Study Cronbach’s alpha*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subscale</th>
<th>Cronbach’s alpha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Management</td>
<td>.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Support</td>
<td>.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parental Involvement</td>
<td>.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic factors</td>
<td>.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intent to Persist</td>
<td>.83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Collection Process

School districts along the coastal areas of the state of Mississippi were selected for this study. The researcher distributed letters to the superintendents of qualifying districts, requesting clearance to survey novice teachers currently employed within their schools (Appendix D). The letter explained that permission must be provided by the district superintendent and returned to the researcher before any surveys would be distributed to teachers. The superintendent’s returned permission form signified consent. The researcher accumulated all of the signed permission forms and included them in the application requesting Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval. IRB approval then cleared the researcher to distribute the instrument to participants in order to collect data.
The researcher contacted human resources administrators within the participating districts. The researcher outlined the purpose of the study as well as the definition of a novice teacher (individuals who are within their first five years of experience as teachers) in regards to the goal of this study. The researcher proposed two options for the distribution of surveys. The human resources administrators could request that the researcher contact each school principal within that district to gather a total count of novice teachers employed at the individual school, and send surveys to each school site with the agreement that upon receiving the surveys, the principal would distribute them. Alternatively, the human resource administrator could provide the district total of novice teachers and distribute the surveys personally. Both options were ultimately employed.

Each prospective participant was provided with a copy of the informed consent materials, including the cover letter (Appendix E), and the materials on informed consent (Appendix F). Within the consent letter, teachers were informed that their participation was voluntary. They also were informed that if they chose to participate, they would not be individually identified, and that all of their responses would be kept confidential and would not be shared with other persons in any form other than as summary information. They were also assured that they would not be individually identified on any of the surveys or reports. The surveys were formatted and coded in a manner that allowed the researcher to determine the school district from which responses came. Participants also received assurance within the consent letter that there would not be any penalty if they decided not to participate. Teachers willing to participate in the study received the instrument as a hard copy with a self-addressed stamped envelope. The researcher set a timetable of three weeks to distribute and receive completed instruments. Ninety-three
completed surveys were returned to the researcher via postal mail in the included pre-addressed and stamped envelope.

The data collected for this study were viewed only by the researcher and her participating committee members. The participants in this study, as well as the superintendents and building principals, were also provided with the researcher’s contact information in case they wanted further clarification on any aspect of the study. Participants were further informed that, while neither they nor their schools were identified in the written results of the study, they could obtain copies of the results by contacting the researcher.

Analysis of Data

SPSS was used to analyze all of the data. Descriptive statistics were used to provide analyses of the data in the form of frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations. No individuals, schools, or school districts were identified by name.

The reliability and internal consistency of the variables were analyzed after responses for the full study were received. A Cronbach’s alpha test of coefficient reliability was performed on each category of items in order to determine its ability to measure a single construct. A Cronbach’s alpha of 0.70 or greater is considered to be acceptable. For this study, each subscale yielded a reliability of greater than 0.70 with the exception of the Economic Factors which yielded a reliability of 0.63. The items for this subscale were retained because the Cronbach’s alpha test was slightly below 0.70. However, the reader should take note of this lower Cronbach’s alpha, as other issues that arose with this subscale will be addressed in Chapters IV and V. These results are profiled in Table 2.
Table 2

*Cronbach’s alpha for Final Study*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subscale</th>
<th>Cronbach’s alpha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Management</td>
<td>.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Support</td>
<td>.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parental Involvement</td>
<td>.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Factors</td>
<td>.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intent to Persist</td>
<td>.70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Descriptive statistics were run for the demographic items and all of the variables within this study; these statistics included frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations. Value codes were created for the demographic variables, which included gender, age, race, teacher preparation program, education level, school classification, and school performance level. The value codes were assigned for gender as follows: Male=1 and Female=2. Age was coded as: 21-26=1, 27-32=2, 33-38=3, 39+=4. The value codes for race were: Asian=1, Black=2, Hispanic=3, Native American=4, White=5, and Other=6. Teacher preparation program was coded as follows: Traditional=1 and Alternative=2. Similarly, value codes were assigned to the variable of education level as follows: Bachelors=1, Masters=2, Specialist=3, and Doctorate (EdD, PhD)=4. Value codes for the number of years taught were coded as follows: 0-0.5=1, 1-1.5=2, 2-2.5=3, 3-3.5=4, 4-4.5=5, and 5+=6. Finally, value codes assigned for school classification were: Elementary School=1, Middle School=2, and High School=3. Value codes for the school
The descriptive statistics allowed both the researcher and the readers to further examine information pertaining to the participants within the study. The responses compiled from completed instruments provided the researcher the information required to determine the statistical means for a novice teacher’s intent to persist within the field of education based on classroom management (Section A, Items 1-6), administrative support (Section B, Items 7-13) parental involvement (Section C, Items 14-20), economic factors (Section D, Items 21-25) and the intent to persist (Section E, Items 26-30).

Research Question 1 required basic descriptive statistics. A multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was used in the examination of the data for Research Question 2 and the related hypothesis, Hypothesis 1, which addressed whether differences in novice teacher perspectives regarding the roles classroom management, administrative support, parental involvement, and economic factors are related to the school classification (elementary, middle, high) at which teachers are employed. Research Question 3 and Hypothesis 2 also used a MANOVA in order to determine if there were differences in novice teacher perspectives regarding classroom management, administrative support, parental involvement, and economic factors depending upon the school performance level (Star, High Performing, Successful, Academic Watch, Low Performing, At Risk of Failing, Failing). A MANOVA was also used in the examination of Research Question 4 and its related hypothesis, Hypothesis 3, in order to determine if there were differences in novice teacher perspectives regarding classroom management, administrative support, parental involvement, and economic factors depending upon whether they participated in
a traditional or alternative teacher preparation programs. For Research Question 5 and Hypothesis 4, a multiple regression was used to address the relationships among novice teacher perceptions of classroom management, administrative support, parental involvement, economic factors and the intent to persist in the classroom. Analysis provided the researcher with the necessary information to determine the status of teachers relative to demographic and descriptive variables, and whether or not to reject, or fail to reject, the null hypotheses.

Summary

The impact of classroom management, administrative support, parental involvement, and economic factors on a novice teacher’s intent to persist in the classroom still remains somewhat vague. Most research supports the concept that the variables of classroom management, administrative support, and parental involvement can influence a teacher’s overall sense of job satisfaction. An item of emerging interest is the potential impact of economic factors on a teacher’s intent to persist. This suggests that within a teacher’s career, regardless of years of experience, the factors addressed within this study may influence an educator’s intent to remain within the classroom.

Employing a quantitative design, the researcher attempted to identify the influences of features cited as factors that have influence on teacher job satisfaction, and the impact they have on a novice teacher’s intent to persist within the classroom. The independent variables were classroom management, administrative support, parental involvement, and economic factors. The dependent variable was current novice teacher perspectives on remaining in the classroom. The study was conducted at the beginning of the first semester of the 2012-2013 school year in elementary schools, middle schools,
and high schools, all located within coastal districts in Mississippi. A survey created by the researcher (Novice Teacher Perceptions: The Impact of Selected Factors on the Intent to Persist) was used in order to implement this study.
CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to investigate the perceptions of novice teachers regarding the impact of classroom management, administrative support, parental involvement, and economic factors on their intent to persist. It was also of value to determine if the variables of school level, school performance level, and teacher preparation program of novice teachers influence their intent to persist. Data were collected from questionnaires completed by novice teachers currently employed within school districts located in the coastal area of the state of Mississippi. Chapter III outlined the statistical methods for this study and Chapter IV describes the results of the analyses of data from the returned questionnaires.

The researcher received permission to conduct research from superintendents of six school districts along the coastal area of Mississippi. Within these 6 districts, teachers from a total of 34 schools participated in this study. Two hundred eighty-four survey instruments were sent to teachers who were categorized as novice and employed at these sites. Of those delivered surveys, 93 were completed and returned. This represented an overall return rate of 33%.

Descriptive Statistics for Novice Teacher Profiles

Demographic Items

Participants were asked to provide information about their gender, age, race, teacher preparation program, education level, years taught, school classification, and school performance level. Descriptive statistics were used to describe the demographic information provided by the respondents. Frequency tables were also generated for all
variables. Of the 93 participants, 12 were male (12.9%) and 81 (87.1%) were female. Table 3 provides frequencies and percentages for these data. Table 3

*Frequencies of Respondents’ Gender (N=93)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>87.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4 outlines the frequencies and percentages for novice teacher respondents’ age brackets. Out of the 93 total respondents, 33 (35.5%) were 21-26 years of age, 31 (33.3%) were 27-32 years of age, 14 (15.1%) were 33-38 years of age, and 15 (16.1%) were 39+ years of age. Table 4

*Frequencies of Respondents’ Age (N=93)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Category</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21-26</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>35.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27-32</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33-38</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39+</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The 93 respondents categorized their ethnicity as follows: 1 (1.1%) Asian, 4 (4.3%) Black, 2 (2.2%) Hispanic, 1 (1.1%) Native American, and 84 (90.3%) White. One (1.1%) respondent left this portion of the demographic section blank on the survey. Table 5 provides the frequencies and percentages for these data.

Table 5

*Frequencies of Respondents’ Ethnicity (N=93)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native American</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>90.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>93</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6 identifies the frequencies associated with the preparation program attended by the 93 respondents. Findings were as follows: 69 (74.2%) completed a traditional teacher preparation program and 24 (25.8%) completed an alternative teacher preparation program.
Table 6

Frequencies of Respondents’ Preparation Program (N=93)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preparation Program</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Traditional</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>74.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>25.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of the 93 novice teachers who reported their education level, 63 (67.7%) reported that they have a Bachelors degree, 28 (30.1%) reported that they have a Masters degree, 1 (1.1%) respondent reported that she/he has a Specialists degree, and 1 (1.1%) respondent reported that she/he has a Doctorate. Table 7 reflects these frequencies and percentages.

Table 7

Frequencies of Respondents’ Education Levels (N=93)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education Level</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bachelors</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>67.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masters</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>30.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialist</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctorate</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Out of the 93 respondents who reported number of years of experience as a teacher, 13 (14%) reported that they had 0-0.5 years of experience, 18 (19.4%) reported 1.0-1.5 years of experience, 24 (26.8%) reported 2.0-2.5 years of experience, 15 (16.1%)
reported 3.0-3.5 years of experience, 14 (15.1%) reported 4.0-4.5 years of experience, and 8 (8.6%) reported 5 years of experience. The demographic frequencies and percentages can be found in Table 8.

Table 8

*Frequencies of Respondents’ Experience Levels (N=93)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experience Level</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-0.5</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.0-1.5</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>19.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.0-2.5</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>26.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.0-3.5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.0-4.5</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>93</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Among the participants, 93 answered the item concerning school classification. Of these, 51 (54.8%) reported that their school was categorized as an Elementary School, 18 (19.4%) reported that their school was categorized as a Middle School, and 24 (25.8%) reported that their school was categorized as a High School. Results are shown in Table 9.
Table 9

*Frequencies of School Classification of Respondents’ Schools (N=93)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Classification</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>54.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>19.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>25.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There were 93 participants who responded to the item regarding the performance level of schools. Of these, 47 (50.5%) reported that their schools were Star schools (the state’s highest performance rating), 32 (34.4%) reported that their schools were High Performing schools (the state’s second highest rating), 10 (10.8%) reported that their schools were Successful schools (the state’s third highest rating), 1 (1.1%) respondent reported that his/her school was an Academic Watch school (the state’s third lowest rating), 1 (1.1%) respondent reported that his/her school was a Low Performing School (the state’s second lowest rating), and 2 (2.2%) respondents reported that their schools were At Risk schools (the state’s lowest rating). Table 10 reflects these frequencies.
Table 10

*Frequencies of Performance Level of Respondents’ Schools (N=93)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance Level</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Star</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>50.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Performing</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>34.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Successful</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Watch</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Performing</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At Risk of Failing</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>93</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The instrument included five sections that each provided items associated with the following variable subscales: Classroom Management, Administrative Support, Parental Involvement, Economic Factors, and Intent to Persist. Descriptive statistics were calculated for each subscale of the instrument and used in the analyses for the research questions and related hypothesis. These analyses are described in the following section.

**Descriptive Statistics for Key Research Constructs**

Following the demographics section, the instrument was divided into the following five subsections to provide construct subscales: Classroom Management, Administrative Support, Parental Involvement, Economic Factors, and Intent to Persist. Participants were required to respond to each item via a Likert response scale. The descriptive results from these analyses follow.

The first portion of the survey, Section A: Classroom Management, included 6 items and required participants to select the corresponding Likert response scale option.
that best matched their perceptions of their personal experiences regarding classroom management. The scale for this section was as follows: 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Slightly Disagree, 4=Slightly Agree, 5=Agree and 6=Strongly Agree. Most items were worded as positive statements. However, in order to avoid response set, Items 4 and 5 were reverse-oriented. The reversed value for Item 4 was M=2.97 and SD=1.57. The reversed values for Item 5 were M=4.30 and SD=1.29. The reversed means for Items 4 and 5 were used in the calculation of the mean for the factor of Classroom Management. The data in Table 11 reflect values prior to reversal, with the exception of the Total figures, which were calculated after the values were reversed.

After data were collected and analyzed, it was determined that while Item 4 was behaving as a reverse-oriented question, it did not work well within the subscale. While other items within Section A addressed teachers’ current capabilities and circumstances relative to classroom management, Item 4 asked the respondents to reflect upon their preservice training rather than their actual practice. The researcher therefore omitted Item 4 in this and other analyses. As initially intended, Item 5 was reversed and ultimately behaved as a reverse-oriented item. The aforementioned changes resulted in no change to the Cronbach’s alpha of 0.74 for the subscale.

Table 11 shows that Item 3 (“I feel that I am able to develop relationships with my students that allow me to successfully accomplish the daily goals of instruction.”) had the highest mean (M=5.49). The ratings of 5 and 6 correspond to the responses Agree and Strongly Agree, so the determined mean for Item 3 (M=5.49) suggests that overall, the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they are able to successfully accomplish daily goals within their classrooms based on their ability to develop relationships with
their students. Item 5 (“I often lose valuable instructional time due to classroom disruptions and behavioral issues.”) had the lowest mean (M=2.72); however, this item’s polarity was reversed (M=4.30, SD=1.29), so rather than suggesting that the mean corresponds to the responses of Disagree and Slightly Disagree, in actuality, this suggests that the majority of teachers surveyed either slightly agreed or agreed that they do not believe that they lose valuable instructional time due to classroom disruptions and issues with behavior. The lowest mean for an item in which the polarity was not reversed was M=5.26 for Item 1 (“I am able to quickly and successfully control disruptive behavior in my classroom.”). This mean still remained in the Agree to Strongly Agree response range, which suggests that the majority of the respondents believe that they are quick to manage and control disruptive behavior within their classrooms.

Table 11

*Descriptives for Respondents’ Perceptions of Classroom Management (N=93)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subscale</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Management</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.26</td>
<td>0.750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5.43</td>
<td>0.615</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.49</td>
<td>0.653</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*4</td>
<td>4.05</td>
<td>1.590</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*5</td>
<td>2.72</td>
<td>1.280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5.28</td>
<td>0.785</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>4.71</td>
<td>0.741</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*reverse-oriented item
The second portion of the survey, Section B: Administrative Support, included 7 items and also required participants to select the corresponding Likert response scale option that best matched their perceptions of their personal experiences regarding administrative support. The scale for this section was as follows: 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Slightly Disagree, 4=Slightly Agree, 5=Agree and 6=Strongly Agree. Most items were worded as positive statements. However, in order to avoid response set, Items 9 and 11 were reverse-oriented. The reversed values for Item 9 were M=5.16 and SD=1.11. The reversed values for Item 11 were M=5.13 and SD=1.18. The reversed means for Items 9 and 11 were used in the calculation of the mean for the factor of Administrative Support. The data in Table 12 reflect values prior to reversal, with the exception of the Total figures, which were calculated after the values were reversed. As depicted in Table 12, Item 8 (“My administrator(s) is available to answer questions and to clarify procedures that will simplify my experience as a teacher.”) had the highest mean (M=5.27). The ratings of 5 and 6 correspond to the responses Agree and Strongly Agree, so the determined mean for Item 8 (M=5.27) suggests that overall, the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their administrator(s) is available to answer questions and clarify procedures that ultimately simplify their practice as a teacher.

Item 9 (“My administrator(s) does not address and resolve disciplinary issues that arise both in my classroom and/or throughout the school.”) had the lowest mean (M=1.83); however, this item’s polarity was reversed (M=5.16, SD=1.11), so rather than suggesting that the mean corresponds to the responses of Strongly Disagree and Disagree, in actuality, this suggests that the majority of teachers surveyed either agreed or strongly agreed that their administrator(s) does address and resolve disciplinary issues that may
arise throughout the school. The lowest mean for an item in which the polarity was not reversed was M=3.95 for Item 13 (“My administrator involves me in important decisions made within the school.”). This mean is just below the value for the Slightly Agree response, which suggests that the respondents only slightly perceive that they are involved in decisions made in their schools. An adequate Cronbach’s alpha (0.88) was also attained.

Table 12

*Descriptives for Respondents’ Perceptions of Administrative Support (N=93)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subscale</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Support</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.74</td>
<td>1.310</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5.27</td>
<td>0.980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*9</td>
<td>1.83</td>
<td>1.080</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5.17</td>
<td>1.176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*11</td>
<td>1.89</td>
<td>1.175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5.11</td>
<td>1.165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3.95</td>
<td>1.506</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.99</td>
<td>0.877</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*reverse-oriented item

Section C: Parental Involvement also included seven items and required participants to select the corresponding Likert response scale option that best matched their perceptions of their personal experiences regarding parental involvement. The scale for this section was as follows: 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Slightly Disagree, 4=Slightly Agree, 5=Agree and 6=Strongly Agree. Most items were worded as positive
statements. However, in order to avoid response set, Item 17 was reverse-oriented. The reversed values for this item were $M=4.57$ and $SD=1.18$. The reversed mean for Items 17 was used in the calculation of the mean for the factor of Parental Involvement. The data in Table 13 reflect values prior to reversal, with the exception of the Total figures, which were calculated after the values were reversed, with the exception of the Total figures, which were calculated after the values were reversed.

As depicted in Table 13, Item 20 (“I believe that building a relationship with parents and maintaining their involvement in my classroom is necessary for student success.”) had the highest mean ($M=5.48$). The ratings of 5 and 6 correspond to the responses Agree and Strongly Agree, so the determined mean for Item 20 ($M=5.48$) suggests that the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that building a relationship with parents that also provides opportunities for their participation in the classroom is essential for student success. Item 17 (“The majority of my students’ parents do not feel comfortable contacting me when they have questions or concerns.”) had the lowest mean ($M=2.41$); however, this item’s polarity was reversed ($M=4.57, SD=1.18$), so rather than suggesting that the mean corresponds to the responses of Disagree and Slightly Disagree, in actuality, this suggests that the teachers surveyed, on average, either slightly agreed or agreed that most parents of their students do feel comfortable contacting them with questions or concerns. The lowest mean for an item in which the polarity was not reversed was $M=3.81$ for Item 15 (“I believe that the majority of my students’ parents are actively involved and concerned with their child’s academic success.”). This mean is located within the Slightly Disagree to Slightly Agree response range, which suggests that the respondents do not agree or disagree that the parents of their students are actively
involved and concerned with the academic success of their child. An adequate
Cronbach’s alpha (0.80) was also attained.

Table 13

*reverse-oriented item

The next portion of the survey, Section D: Economic Factors included 5 items and
required participants to select the corresponding Likert response scale option that best
matched their perceptions of their personal experiences regarding economic factors. The
scale for this section was as follows: 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Slightly
Disagree, 4=Slightly Agree, 5=Agree and 6=Strongly Agree. Most items were worded as
positive statements. However, in order to avoid response set, Items 22 and 25 were
reverse-oriented. The reversed values for Item 22 were M=2.48 and SD=1.72. The
reversed values for Item 25 were M=2.99 and SD=1.51. The reversed means for Items
22 and 25 were used in the calculation of the mean for the factor of Economic Factors.
The data in Table 14 reflect values prior to reversal, with the exception of the Total figures, which were calculated after the values were reversed, with the exception of the Total figures, which were calculated after the values were reversed.

As depicted in Table 14, Item 22 (“The current economy and unemployment rates have not influenced my decision to remain in the classroom.”) had the highest mean (M=4.39); however, this item’s polarity was reversed (M=2.48, SD=1.72), so rather than suggesting that the mean corresponds to the responses of Slightly Agree and Agree, in actuality, this suggests that the teachers surveyed, on average, either slightly disagree or disagree that the current economy and unemployment rates have influenced their decision to remain in the classroom. Item 21 (“If I could find a higher paying job outside of the classroom, I would leave the profession immediately.”) had the lowest mean (M=2.38). This mean is located within the Disagree and Slightly Disagree response range, which suggests that the respondents disagree or slightly disagree that they would leave the profession of education immediately if they could find a higher paying job outside of the classroom.

A word of caution to the reader is in order here. The Cronbach’s alpha for this section was somewhat low (0.63). The subscale further proved to be somewhat problematic in its application to the subsequent analyses. Even though Item 22 received a high score, it behaved inconsistently with its orientation and it’s correlation to other items. Due to the low reliability of the subscale, any conclusions relative to economic factors should be interpreted with caution.
Table 14

Descriptives for Respondents’ Perceptions of Economic Factors (N=93)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subscale</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Economic Factors</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>2.38</td>
<td>1.421</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*22</td>
<td>4.39</td>
<td>1.800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>23</td>
<td>3.49</td>
<td>1.659</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>24</td>
<td>3.19</td>
<td>1.657</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*25</td>
<td>3.98</td>
<td>1.546</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.49</td>
<td>0.630</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*reverse-oriented item

The final portion of the survey, Section E: Intent to Persist, included 5 items and required participants to select the corresponding Likert response scale option that best matched their perceptions of their personal experiences regarding intent to persist. The scale for this section was as follows: 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Slightly Disagree, 4=Slightly Agree, 5=Agree and 6=Strongly Agree. Most items were worded as positive statements. However, in order to avoid response set, Items 26 and 27 were reverse-oriented. The reversed values for Item 26 were M=4.30 and SD=1.47. The reversed values for Item 27 were M=4.68 and SD=1.43. The reversed means for Items 26 and 27 were used in the calculation of the mean for the factor of Intent to Persist. The data in Table 15 reflect values prior to reversal, with the exception of the Total figures, which were calculated after the values were reversed, with the exception of the Total figures, which were calculated after the values were reversed.
As depicted in Table 15, Item 30 (“My ability to manage my classroom and student behavior impacts my decision to continue teaching in the classroom.”) had the highest mean (M=4.46). The ratings of 4 and 5 correspond to the responses Slightly Agree and Agree, so the determined mean for Item 30 (M=4.46) suggests that on average, the respondents slightly agreed or agreed that their ability to effectively manage the behavior of their students does impact their decision to remain in the classroom. Item 27 (“I plan on remaining in the classroom until I am able to find a better job opportunity.”) had the lowest mean (M=2.33); however, this item’s polarity was reversed (M=4.68, SD=1.43) so rather than suggesting that the mean corresponds to the responses of Disagree and Slightly Disagree, this suggests that the majority of teachers surveyed either slightly agreed or agreed that if a better job opportunity were to arise, they would not opt to leave the classroom. The lowest mean for an item in which the polarity was not reversed was M=3.37 for Item 29 (“The support and involvement I receive from parents impacts my decision to remain a classroom teacher.”). This mean is located within the Slightly Disagree to Slightly Agree response range, which suggests that the respondents do not agree or disagree that the support and involvement of their students’ parents impact their decision to remain in the classroom. An adequate Cronbach’s alpha (0.70) was attained.
Table 15

Descriptives for Respondents’ Perceptions of Intent to Persist (N=93)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subscale</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intent to Persist</td>
<td>*26</td>
<td>2.77</td>
<td>1.505</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*27</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>1.447</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>28</td>
<td>4.05</td>
<td>1.484</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>29</td>
<td>3.37</td>
<td>1.428</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>30</td>
<td>4.46</td>
<td>1.411</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.40</td>
<td>0.704</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*reverse-oriented item

Hypothesis Results

The researcher developed five research questions for this study. Each research question, with the exception of Research Question 1, was assigned a related hypothesis. Results for Research Question 1 were purely descriptive in nature, and were profiled in Tables 11-15. The reader is reminded of the previously-mentioned problems associated with the economic factors subscale. Thus, any conclusions related to economic factors should be cautiously interpreted.

The goal of Research Question 2 was to determine if there were differences in the perspectives of novice teachers regarding the impact of classroom management, administrative support, parental involvement, and economic factors depending upon the school level (elementary, middle, high) at which they were employed. The null hypothesis (HO₁) for Research Question 2 predicted that research findings would reflect that there are not significant differences in novice teacher perspectives regarding
classroom management, administrative support, parental involvement, and economic factors depending upon the school level of employment. As previously stated, a Likert response scale was implemented for participant response. The format for the scale was as follows: 1=Strongly Agree, 2=Disagree, 3=Slightly Disagree, 4=Slightly Agree, 5=Agree and 6=Strongly Agree. A multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was run; the researcher determined that there was not a significant difference in teacher perspectives (Pillai’s Trace=\(F(10,174)=1.19, p=0.30\)). This resulted in the researcher’s determination to fail to reject the null hypothesis. The descriptive statistics for novice teacher perspectives regarding classroom management, administrative support, parental involvement, and economic factors based on their school level of employment are described in Table 16.

Table 16

*Descriptives for Respondents’ Perceptions of Classroom Management, Administrative Support, Parental Involvement and Economic Factors based upon School Level of Employment (N=89)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Elementary (n=51)</th>
<th>Middle (n=18)</th>
<th>High (n=24)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Management</td>
<td>5.24</td>
<td>5.17</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Support</td>
<td>5.09</td>
<td>4.83</td>
<td>4.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parental Involvement</td>
<td>4.75</td>
<td>4.52</td>
<td>4.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Factors</td>
<td>2.71</td>
<td>2.98</td>
<td>3.27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The goal of Research Question 3 was to determine if there were differences in novice teacher perspectives regarding classroom management, administrative support, parental involvement, and economic factors depending upon school performance levels (Star, High Performing, Successful, Academic Watch, Low Performing, At Risk of Failing, Failing). The null hypothesis (H0) for Research Question 3 predicted that research findings would reflect that there are not significant differences in novice teacher perspectives regarding classroom management, administrative support, parental involvement, and economic factors depending upon school performance level. A Likert response scale was also implemented for participant response within this portion of the survey. The format for the scale was as follows: 1=Strongly Agree, 2=Disagree, 3=Slightly Disagree, 4=Slightly Agree, 5=Agree and 6=Strongly Agree. Once again, a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was run and resulted in the researcher determining that there was not a significant difference in teacher perspectives (Pillai’s Trace= F(10,166)=0.50, p=0.89). This resulted in the researcher’s determination to fail to reject the null hypothesis. The descriptive statistics for novice teacher perspectives regarding classroom management, administrative support, parental involvement, and economic factors based upon school performance level are outlined in Table 17. It should be noted that the performance level options “Academic Watch”, “Low Performing”, and “At Risk” were not reflected within the resulting tables due to exceptionally low numbers of respondents who reported these performance levels for their schools (Academic Watch=1, Low Performing=1, At Risk=2).
Table 17

*Descriptives for Respondents’ Perceptions of Classroom Management, Administrative Support, Parental Involvement and Economic Factors based upon School Performance Level (N=89)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Star (n=47)</th>
<th>High Performing (n=32)</th>
<th>Successful (n=10)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Std. Deviation</td>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Management</td>
<td>5.24</td>
<td>0.51</td>
<td>5.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Support</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>4.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parental Involvement</td>
<td>4.63</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>4.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Factors</td>
<td>2.96</td>
<td>0.96</td>
<td>2.81</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The goal of Research Question 4 was to determine if there were differences in novice teacher perspectives regarding classroom management, administrative support, parental involvement, and economic factors depending upon their preparation program (Traditional or Alternative). The null hypothesis (HO₃) for Research Question 4 predicted that research findings would reflect that there are not significant differences in novice teacher perspectives regarding classroom management, administrative support, parental involvement, and economic factors depending upon their teacher preparation program. As before, a Likert response scale was implemented for participant response within this portion of the survey. The format for the scale was as follows: 1=Strongly Agree, 2=Disagree, 3=slightly Disagree, 4=slightly Agree, 5=Agree and 6=Strongly Agree. A multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was run and resulted in the researcher determining that there was not a significant difference in teacher perspectives...
(Pillai’s Trace=\(F(5,83)=1.28, p=0.28\)). This resulted in the researcher’s determination to fail to reject the null hypothesis. The descriptive statistics for novice teacher perspectives regarding classroom management, administrative support, parental involvement, and economic factors based upon teacher preparation program are described in Table 18.

Table 18

*Descriptives for Respondents’ Perceptions of Classroom Management, Administrative Support, Parental Involvement and Economic Factors based upon Teacher Preparation Program (\(N=89\))*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Traditional ((n=66))</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Alternative ((n=23))</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Management</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.19</td>
<td>0.54</td>
<td>5.08</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Support</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>4.72</td>
<td>1.04</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parental Involvement</td>
<td></td>
<td>4.70</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>4.37</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Factors</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.90</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>3.03</td>
<td>1.26</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The goal of Research Question 5 was to determine if novice teacher perspectives regarding classroom management, administrative support, parental involvement, and economic factors were related to their intent to persist in the classroom. The null hypothesis (\(H_0\)) for Research Question 5 predicted that research findings would reflect that there was not a significant relationship between novice teacher perspectives regarding classroom management, administrative support, parental involvement, economic factors, and their intent to persist in the classroom. A Likert response scale was also implemented for participant response within this portion of the survey. The format for the scale was as follows: 1=Strongly Agree, 2=Disagree, 3=Slightly Disagree,
4=Slightly Agree, 5=Agree and 6=Strongly Agree. A multiple linear regression was used to test this particular hypothesis. The model summary reported the variability explained by the model as 26%. Since the $F$ is the average amount of variability and is used to test the statistical significance of the model, the ANOVA table indicated that the regression was statistically significant with $F(4,84)=7.29, p<.001, R^2=0.26$. Based on this result, the researcher rejected the null hypothesis. The results portrayed in Table 19 indicate that intent to persist is predicted by classroom management, administrative support, parental involvement and economic factors. As reflected in the table, economic factors had the strongest influence and administrative support was the second strongest. Administrator support was a positive predictor. Economic factors were a negative predictor; i.e., a negative economy is associated with intent to persist, and a positive economy would be associated with diminished intent to remain in the profession. However, the reader must view findings pertaining to economic factors with caution due to the problems that arose with the subscale.
Table 19

*Regression Coefficients for Predicting Intent to Persist*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Unstandardized</th>
<th>Standardized</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>2.76</td>
<td>0.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Management</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Support</td>
<td>0.314</td>
<td>0.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parental Involvement</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Factors</td>
<td>-0.26</td>
<td>0.10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Summary

This study of the relationship of selected factors to the intent of novice teachers to persist included 93 participants from along the coastal areas of the state of Mississippi. Data for this quantitative study were entered into SPSS to be statistically analyzed and reported. Descriptive statistics, ANOVA, MANOVA and a multiple linear regression analysis were used to identify statistically significant differences among the variables and the results were report in this chapter. Chapter V will provide a discussion of these results.
CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this study was to investigate and analyze the perceptions of novice teachers regarding the influence of classroom management, administrative support, parental involvement, and current economic factors have on their intent to remain in the classroom. The intent of this research was to provide findings on the variations in perspectives among novice teachers regarding the impact of these commonly cited variables in order to help school districts gain a deeper understanding of potential factors that contribute to teacher attrition. Additionally, the findings of this study may better enable school and state officials to address a work environment that promotes the retention of novice teachers in the classroom. This chapter includes a summary of the procedures, major findings, discussion of the findings, limitations of the study, recommendations and conclusions.

Summary of Procedures

The data for this study were obtained from 93 novice teachers employed within elementary, middle, and high schools located in districts along the coastal areas of the state of Mississippi. The study examined differences in teacher perceptions with regard to the influence of classroom management, administrative support, parental involvement, and economic factors have on intent to persist in the classroom. For this quantitative study, responses were evaluated using descriptive statistics, ANOVA, MANOVA, and a multiple linear regression.

Letters requesting approval to conduct research were sent to 10 school district superintendents. Permission to conduct research was granted by superintendents in six of
the school districts; approval was provided for a total of 34 schools. Once permission was received from The University of Southern Mississippi Institutional Review Board, the researcher contacted the human resources administrators within each of the contributing school districts to determine how surveys would be distributed. Two options were provided by the researcher and both were ultimately employed. Subjects were surveyed via postal mail and surveys were administered at the beginning of the first semester of the 2012-2013 school year. Participants had three weeks to complete and return the instrument in the self-addressed, stamped envelope that was provided. Of the two hundred eighty-four surveys mailed to the 34 schools, 93 were completed and returned. Data were accumulated and entered into SPSS for analysis. A Cronbach’s alpha test for consistency was performed on each of the instrument subscales in order to test reliability. Descriptive statistics, ANOVA, MANOVA and a multiple linear regression analysis were used to identify statistically significant differences among the variables.

Major Findings

In order to fulfill the study’s objectives, the researcher collected and analyzed demographic, school data, and data on the perspectives of teachers regarding the classroom management, administrative support, parental involvement, current economic factors, and participant intentions relative to remaining in the classroom. The following content addresses the major findings from the demographic and descriptive data. It further addresses the answers to the research questions established for this study.

The frequency data from the sample group portrayed that the majority of the respondents were white females. Most participants were either between the ages of 21-26
(35.5%) or 27-32 (33.3%). The remaining respondents were 33 years or older (31.2%), which was interesting because most people tend to think of novice teachers as being younger in age. It is possible that the participants who were 33+ years of age migrated from previous professions in search of an alternative field of work because they were not ready to leave the work force and/or needed to retain benefits that would have otherwise ceased if they quit working all together. Another explanation may be that the field of education is often considered *recession proof*, so it appeals to many people as a profession that offers a sense of job security. According to Haskvitz (2011), the idea that the teaching profession has long been thought of as recession-proof may have been one of the reasons teachers took lower starting salaries right out of college. There is also the possibility that the opportunity to obtain a teaching license via the alternative route appeals to older individuals due to the shorter time span required to complete the program in comparison to the traditional route, which was the only option in past years.

With regard to practice, 14% of participants had 0-0.5 years of experience and 19.4% of respondents had 1-1.5 years of experience. The most frequently selected experience level was 2-2.5 (26.8%) years of practice. As the years of experience increased, the percentage of respondents in those categories decreased. There were 15 (16.1%) respondents who had 3-3.5 years of experience, 14 (15.1%) who had 4-4.5 years of experience, and 8 (8.6%) who reported five years of experience. Assuming that the participants’ experience levels were representative of novice teachers in the populations from which the sample was drawn, this correlates with previously discussed findings in the literature that suggested that most teachers who opt to exit the profession do so within their first three to five years of experience.
The majority (74.2%) of the respondents obtained their teaching license by completing a traditional preparation program and the degree obtained by most of the respondents was a Bachelors (67.7%), followed by a Masters (30.1%). With regard to the classification of the respondents’ current teaching locations, most of the teachers worked in an elementary school setting. Finally, the majority of the schools that the respondents worked in were rated as Star, High Performing or Successful on the state’s accountability scale. These findings are not inconsistent with the data in the Mississippi Accountability Model, which corroborates that the majority of the schools along the coastal region of Mississippi are classified within the three highest performance levels. However, it should be noted that of the 93 total respondents, only 4.4% were reported that they teach in low-performing schools. One (1.1%) worked in a school that was under Academic Watch, 1 (1.1%) worked in a school categorized as Low Performing, and 2 (2.2%) reported their school to be At Risk of Failing. Such a minimal response from the lower performing schools might be explained by participants intentionally reporting erroneously due to discomfort with this particular question and/or an unwillingness of the superintendents and building administrators in low-performing districts/schools to support teacher participation in this study.

Descriptive statistical summaries indicated that the novice teachers who participated in this study were largely positive in regards to the employment factors being analyzed. In the case of the Classroom Management subscale, all of the mean values for this section averaged within the Likert Scale categories of Slightly Agree to Strongly Agree, suggesting that the respondents did not perceive themselves as having any severe issues with their abilities to manage their classroom. It is worth noting, however, that the
response to Item 5 ("I often lose valuable instructional time due to classroom disruptions and behavioral issues"), when reversed as intended, suggested that respondents barely agreed that they don’t lose instructional time, which suggests the existence of some issues pertaining to classroom management.

With regard to the subscale of Administrative Support, the majority of the participants believed that their administrators are generally supportive. Most of the mean values for this section averaged within the response range of Agree. The two aspects of administrative support that ranked lower on the Likert Scale pertained to the content of Items 7 and 13. For Item 7 ("My administrator(s) provides me with professional input, feedback, and suggestions on a consistent basis"), the mean (M=4.74) trended toward the Agree response, which suggests that the respondents on average likely agree that their administrator(s) provide feedback and suggestions consistently. Item 13 ("My administrator involves me in important decisions made within the school") had a mean valued at 3.95. This mean is just below the value for the Slightly Agree response, which suggests that the respondents only slightly perceive that they are involved in the decisions made in their schools. Thus, while neither of those findings depicted a strong sense of displeasure on behalf of the respondents, both responses suggest the perception that there is room for improvement in these dimensions of administrative support.

Parental Involvement was perceived in a somewhat positive manner. Most of the mean values for this section averaged within the range of Slightly Agree to Agree. The facet of parental involvement that ranked lower than the other items pertained to the level of contribution and concern parents have regarding their child’s academic success. Item
15 ("I believe that the majority of my students’ parents are actively involved and concerned with their child’s academic success") had a mean value of 3.81, which trended toward the Slightly Agree response, suggesting that the novice teachers who participated in this study slightly perceive that parents are concerned with the level of their child’s academic success.

The reader should recognize that due to the low reliability of the Economic Factors subscale, conclusions about the subscale should be interpreted with caution. The descriptive data for this portion of the survey suggest that the respondents do not seem to believe that they are consigned to the profession of teaching because the poor economy doesn’t offer them a lot of other employment options. The component of current economic factors that ranked lower than the other items pertained to whether or not the respondents would leave the profession for a higher paying job. Item 21 ("If I could find a higher paying job outside of the classroom, I would leave the profession immediately") had a mean value of 2.38, which trended toward the Disagree response. This suggests that the novice teachers who participated in this study do not intend on leaving the classroom for an alternate profession that offers higher pay. Item 22 ("The current economy and unemployment rates have not influenced my decision to remain in the classroom") was reversed in polarity, thus suggesting the teachers surveyed, on average, either slightly disagree or disagree that the current economy and unemployment rates have influenced their decision to remain in the classroom.

Even though the Economic Subscale did not behave as intended, it is interesting that respondents at least partly agreed that they do not feel compelled by a bad economy to persist in the classroom. Participants only slightly disagreed that they are not worried
about their prospects as teachers because of the effect of the economy on school budgets—the concern appears to be on their minds at least to a degree. Findings suggest that the respondents are somewhat ambivalent about the relative importance of job security and job satisfaction, with job satisfaction appearing to be of slightly greater importance.

With respect to data pertaining to Intent to Persist, respondents were positive, but not as positive as they were in many of the previous findings. Based on the findings, the majority of the teachers do not appear to be persisting in the role of teachers simply until a better job opportunity presents itself. The respondents, on average, also slightly agreed that they will remain in the classroom until the point of their career that they are eligible for retirement. The lowest mean for an item in this subscale was M=3.37 for Item 29 (“The support and involvement I receive from parents impacts my decision to remain a classroom teacher.”). This mean is located within the Slightly Disagree to Slightly Agree response range, trending somewhat toward Slightly Disagree. This suggests that the respondents are probably not influenced in great degree to stay based on the level of parental support.

Major findings from other analyses include results associated with the hypotheses. Research Question 2 asked if there were differences in novice teacher perspectives regarding classroom management, administrative support, parental involvement, and economic factors depending upon the school level (elementary, middle, high) at which teachers are employed. The MANOVA used to test the related null hypothesis (HO1) indicated that there were no significant differences in teacher perspectives based upon respondents’ school levels. The mean responses of elementary, middle and high school
teachers regarding the subscale of Classroom Management, once reverse-polarity items were re-oriented, fell between the responses of Agree and Strongly Agree, but trended toward the Agree response. This suggests that with respect to Classroom Management, participants in this study, irrespective of school level, were confident in their abilities to manage student behavior and disruptions within their classrooms.

In regard to Administrative Support, respondents, irrespective of school level, were generally positive about their administrators’ performance as a leader and the level of support and interest in their professional needs they receive from administrators; however, respondents appeared to believe that there is a need for more effort on behalf of their administrator(s) to involve them in important decision-making within the school. The mean values, once reverse-polarity items were re-oriented, for the responses of elementary, middle and high school teachers fell between the responses of Slightly Agree and Strongly Agree, but trended toward the Agree response.

The mean values for Parental Involvement suggest that the novice teachers within this study, irrespective of school level, were somewhat positive about the involvement and support received from the parents of their students. The mean values of both elementary and middle school teachers trended toward the Agree response, while the mean value of respondents who teach at the high school level trended toward the Slightly Agree response. This difference was not statistically significant, but is of interest given the general perceptions of decline in parental involvement as students grow older.

With regard to Economic Factors, the mean values for the responses of elementary, middle and high school teachers fell in between the responses of Disagree and Slightly Agree, but trended toward the Slightly Disagree response. These results
suggested that the novice teachers who participated in this study, irrespective of school level, did not seem to believe that they are consigned to the profession of teaching because the poor economy doesn’t offer them numerous other employment options. Again, the reader is reminded to interpret conclusions for this particular subscale cautiously. In summary, it was determined that there were not significant differences in novice teacher perspectives regarding classroom management, administrative support, parental involvement, and economic factors depending upon the school level (elementary, middle, high) at which teachers are employed.

Research Question 3 asked if there were differences in novice teacher perspectives regarding classroom management, administrative support, parental involvement, and economic factors depending upon the school performance levels (Star, High Performing, Successful, Academic Watch, Low Performing, At Risk of Failing, Failing). The MANOVA used to test the related hypothesis (HO₂) indicated that there were no significant differences in teacher perspectives regarding classroom management, administrative support, parental involvement, and economic factors depending on the schools’ performance levels. Due to low response rates, it should be noted that the performance level options “Academic Watch”, “Low Performing” and “At Risk” were not reflected within the results. Overall, the mean response values for Classroom Management suggest that, regardless of school performance level, the participants in this study were confident in their abilities to supervise student conduct and disruptions within their classrooms. With regards to Administrative Support, participants at all of the performance levels were generally satisfied with the performance of their administrator(s), but appeared to be less positive about the effort on behalf of
administrators to involve teachers in schoolwide decision-making. The subscale of Parental Involvement suggested that the participants, irrespective of performance level, were somewhat positive about the participation of the parents of their students. Finally, in regard to Economic Factors, participants from schools across the performance levels did not seem to believe that the poor economy is a major factor in their perspectives on remaining in the profession, though the reader is reminded to interpret conclusions for this subscale with caution.

Research Question 4 asked if there were differences in novice teacher perspectives regarding classroom management, administrative support, parental involvement, and economic factors depending upon their teacher preparation program (Traditional, Alternative). Upon using a MANOVA to test the related hypothesis (HO3), the researcher found no significant differences in teacher perspectives of classroom management, parental involvement, administrative support, and economic factors based upon preparation program. In regard to Classroom Management, the mean response values of participants, irrespective of a traditional or alternative teacher preparation experience, believed they are capable of managing student behavior. In reference to Administrative Support, respondents, both those from traditional preparation and alternative preparation programs, were satisfied with their administrator(s) performance but appeared to be less positive about their effort to involve teachers in decision making opportunities. The mean values for the Parental Involvement subscale suggested that participants, whether traditionally prepared or alternatively prepared, were somewhat positive about the overall involvement of their students’ parents. Finally, though they must be approached cautiously, the mean values for Economic Factors suggest that
novice teachers, irrespective of the nature of their preparation experience, did not seem to believe they are consigned to the profession of teaching because of the poor economy.

Research Question 5 asked if novice teacher perspectives regarding classroom management, administrative support, parental involvement, and economic factors were related to their intent to persist in the classroom. Consistent with past literature, the combination of these factors was found to be linked to a novice teacher’s intent to persist (Ingersoll, 2001; Mihans, 2008; Rieg et al., 2007), with economic factors and administrative support being the strongest predictors. The economic factors were a negative predictor; in other words, a negative economy is associated with intent to persist, and a positive economy would be associated with diminished intent to remain in the profession. Even though unexpected issues arose with the interpretation of the Economic Factors subscale, when all factors are taken into account, while there does appear to be some ambivalence, overall, the participants within this study appeared to intend to remain in the profession. Furthermore, classroom management, administrative support and parental involvement, factors that have consistently appeared in the literature as having strong influence on a novice teacher’s overall sense of job satisfaction, appear to be related to this choice, as does the emerging variable of economic factors.

Discussion

Literature indicates that attrition rates among teachers are highest in the earliest years of experience (Ingersoll, 2001; Perrachione et al., 2008; Stockard & Lehman, 2004). Research suggests that as many as one-third to one-half of teachers will quit the profession at some point within their first five years as an educator (Ingersoll, 2001; Perrachione et al., 2008). In order to focus on this critical point in a teacher’s career, the
researcher implemented the study with respondents who were currently in their first to fifth year of experience. The study contributes, therefore, to the body of research regarding this timeframe in an educator’s career that, according to literature, is when a substantial proportion of teachers decide to leave the profession. Due to the fact that attrition rates are highest in the earliest years of experience, it is important to focus on and understand factors that result in the satisfaction and retention of novice teachers (Stockard & Lehman, 2004).

The reasons that teachers ultimately decide to leave the field of education are varied, but quite often associated with a lack of classroom management, administrative support and parental involvement (Ingersoll, 2001; Mihans, 2008; Riege et al., 2007). Additionally, a somewhat newly researched effect on job persistence, though not well researched in regard to persistence in the field of education, is the influence of the current weak economy (“Take this Job”, 2010).

The goal of this research was to gauge a novice teacher’s intent to persist based on their perceptions of classroom management, administrative support, parental involvement and economic factors. Overall, the results from this study suggest that when the above variables were combined and analyzed in the Intent to Persist subscale, the majority of respondents were positive about persisting in the role of teacher. However, when the factors of classroom management, administrative support, parental involvement, and economic factors are analyzed individually, the mean values for each of these subscales are higher than the measures of their influence in the analysis associated with the hypothesis that addressed intent in the profession. This could be attributed to the wording of some items within the Intent to Persist subscale. For instance, Item 29 (“The
support and involvement I receive from parents impacts my decision to remain a classroom teacher.”) may have been interpreted differently among respondents. The mean value of this item trended toward the response, Slightly Disagree, but it is undetermined if this average was obtained because the majority of the participants do not feel adequately supported by parents or because parental support simply does not matter that much to them.

The subscale results from this study that pertain to classroom management suggest that the teachers who participated in this research, irrespective of school level, school performance designation, or the nature of their teacher preparation experience, have a generally positive outlook on their abilities to successfully control disruptive behavior in their classroom, establish classroom expectations successfully, and develop relationships with their students. These findings are consistent with research that supports the notion that teachers who possess effective classroom and behavior management skills have a higher sense of job satisfaction, thus increasing the intent to persist (Ma & MacMillan, 1999). It was interesting to note that in the Classroom Management subscale, while the mean responses of teachers who participated in alternative teacher preparation programs was slightly lower than those for their traditionally prepared counterparts, these differences were not significant. The lower means for alternatively prepared teachers appear to be consistent with previous research about their problems with classroom management, but the lack of significance in the difference between the means falls short of corroborating this literature that suggests that alternatively prepared teachers tend to experience greater difficulty in managing student behavior. According to Freytag (2002), teachers who instruct students before they are
fully credentialed struggle with many of the responsibilities a teacher faces on a daily basis; classroom management is often among the responsibilities with which they struggle. This lack of preparation and entrance into the profession without the certain fundamental skills necessary to ensure learning places their students at a disadvantage.

Respondents in this study also reflected in a generally positive manner on the role that their administrator(s) plays in their school. Administrative support was one of the stronger predictors of intent to persist, suggesting that if this were to diminish, intent to remain might weaken. Items that received the highest ratings in this subscale pertained to administrators successfully clarifying procedures and creating a positive school climate. Participants also believed that their administrator(s) provide professional input and feedback on their performance. These findings concur with literature that suggests that if principals want to retain teachers, they should create a supportive culture (Feinman-Nemser, 2003) and foster an environment in which positive support is readily available (Mihans, 2008).

This study also determined that respondents are somewhat positive about parental involvement. The majority of the participants recognized the importance of building relationships with parents, which literature suggests is one of the top factors that influence student achievement (Marzano & Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2003). The findings from this study also reflected that most of the respondents receive sufficient support from their students’ parents. High school respondents, consistent with some literature that suggests that parental support wanes as students reach the upper grades (Leon, 2003), were somewhat less positive about parental involvement. However, these differences were not statistically significant. The findings
on teacher perceptions about parental support and their link to teacher retention are consistent with extensive prior research. Teachers who reported that they receive support from both their colleagues and from parents have a greater sense of job satisfaction and are more likely to persist in the profession (Stockard & Lehman, 2004).

Due to the recent economic downturn, the researcher believed that addressing the impact of current economic factors on intent to persist could add and emerging dimension to the body of literature on novice teacher retention. The literature specifically pertaining to the likelihood of novice teachers choosing to persist in the field of education due to economic conditions is very limited. Though not thoroughly researched at this point, economic factors are starting to receive attention as variables in one’s decision to persist in his/her profession. Research that reflects that job holders outside of the field of education are hanging onto their current jobs, even if it means being unhappy, due to the current state of the economy ("Take this Job," 2010), are inconsistent with the findings of this study that the current economic difficulties did not appear to be impacting teachers’ decisions about remaining in the classroom. As previously discussed, the Economic Factors subscale proved to be somewhat problematic in its application, yet findings still suggest that the participants within this study do not seem to believe they are confined to the classroom due to the fact that the current state of the economy does not offer numerous alternative employment opportunities.

Ultimately, this study determined that of the factors analyzed, economic factors and administrative support are the strongest predictors of novice teacher intent to persist. There is an apparent contradiction in the fact that, while participants responded to items in the Economic Factors subscale in a manner that suggested they do not believe the
current state of the economy plays a major role on their decision to remain in the classroom, results suggest that the economy is the strongest predictor, albeit a negative predictor, of the intent to persist. The researcher cautions readers that such results might be linked to the problematic behavior of the subscale. For example, Item 22 (“The current economy and unemployment rates have not influenced my decision to remain in the classroom.”) behaved inconsistently in orientation and correlation with the other items in this subscale. It was written in a manner that was intended to behave positively, yet it performed otherwise. Overall, the researcher believes the issues that arose with this subscale are specifically correlated to the wording of the items.

The findings of this research reflect overall positive trends in responses for all of the subscales under investigation. Research supports these findings and indicates that effective classroom management impacts teacher retention (Ma & MacMillan, 1999) and a teacher is more likely to remain in the classroom when they have administrators’ support (Darling-Hammond, 2003; Ingersoll, 2001). Furthermore, literature supports the concept that parental support increases a teacher’s willingness to persist in the classroom (Elfers et al., 2006; Stockard & Lehman, 2004). Yet the researcher also acknowledges that overall positive trends in responses may have been impacted by the low response rate from low-performing schools. Participants from schools in the performance level categories of “Academic Watch”, “Low Performing” and “At Risk” were not well represented among those who responded to the survey. They accounted for only 4 out of 93 total responses. An increase in response rates from low-performing schools might have altered the findings in regards to intent to persist, moreso intent to persist based upon school performance level. Literature indicates that schools that are classified as
low-performing have higher rates of teacher turnover. These higher rates of attrition impose hardships on students, administrators and parents, and ultimately counteract the attractiveness of teaching positions in low-performing schools (Clotfelter, Ladd & Vigdor, 2004). Such research suggests that if this study had included teachers from a more representative school performance sample, a positive mean value for the intent to persist would have been less likely.

The results of this research also reinforced the theoretical framework within this study. As discussed throughout the literature and further verified through the respondent feedback, both social cognitive theory and self-efficacy theory do in fact impact a teacher’s overall intent to persist. Social cognitive theory encompasses the amount of confidence one has to successfully perform necessary tasks, and this level of confidence, or lack thereof, is often cited as a reason to either persist or leave the classroom. Most of the participants within this study provided positive responses to the items within the survey, thus suggesting that they had a positive sense of efficacy. A teacher’s sense of efficacy will impact the effort put into the profession, the goals that are set for both one’s self and students, and the ultimate level of aspiration (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998), or overall intent to persist.

The theory of self-efficacy also relates to a teacher’s overall intent to persist. The beliefs one has in regard to this theory will influence how well a teacher is able to deal with commonly cited frustrations and obstacles faced within the profession (e.g., the effectiveness of classroom management practices, administrative relationships, parental involvement, economic factors), how successfully he/she copes with the stress and demands of being a teacher, and ultimately, how long he/she will persist in the field of
education (Bandura, 1977). As verified by the findings of this study and the concepts of these closely related theories, when novice teachers believe that they have the ability to accomplish goals that have been set, they will more than likely approach those aspirations with the creativity, effort, and determination that is required to be successful (Goddard & Skrla, 2006).

Limitations

There were some factors that limited the findings of this study. Eligible participants were limited to teachers who worked in schools located in districts along the coastal region of the state of Mississippi. With regard to the demographic item pertaining to the performance level of the school at which participants taught, findings reflected that low-performing schools were poorly represented. The majority of the feedback came from teachers located in higher performing schools, so perceptions suggesting that the majority of teachers are reasonably content with the factors addressed in this study may be skewed. Furthermore, though the response rate was considered adequate for analyses, it was not as high as the researcher desired.

The study was confined to the participation of teachers who were currently teaching; thus, the perspectives of teachers who actually chose to leave the profession were not included. Also, actual attrition rates were not measured through this study. It specifically focused on teacher perceptions of classroom management, administrative support, parental involvement, and economic factors and their impact on intent to persist.

Clarity of some of the items within the survey was sometimes difficult to attain. This is most relevant to the Economic Subscale items. Some problems arose with the low reliability of the subscale. The researcher determined that the Cronbach’s alpha for this
section was low (0.63) in comparison to the remaining subscales, yet decided in collaboration with advisors to retain it because it was just below the acceptable reliability coefficient of 0.70. Unfortunately, and unintended by the researcher, Question 22 ultimately behaved as a reversed item upon analysis, even though it was worded and anticipated to behave positively. Other items within this section could have been worded in a fashion that would have come across more clearly to the respondents. These issues may also have contributed to the apparent contradiction between the responses to the Economic Factors subscale items, which indicated that novice do not appear to be consigned to their profession by a weak economy and the results of the regression analysis for Hypothesis 4, which found that economic factors were the strongest negative predictor of intent to remain in the profession. The findings in the descriptives and hypotheses analyses related to this subscale therefore need to be viewed with caution.

Recommendations for Policy and Practice

The issue of teacher attrition has become a national dilemma (Olson, 2003). Statistics reflecting the drop in retention rates are further emphasized by the increasing number of teachers who opt to leave the field of education at some point within their first few years of teaching (Ingersoll, 2001). In order to counteract such statistics, it is critical to recognize the complex influences that relate to teacher attrition and make necessary changes and accommodations that would foster the retention of novice teachers. If the nation is to comprehend what drives attrition and how to develop strategies to retain teachers, it must first understand how new teachers experience their work in schools (Kardos & Johnson, 2007).
The most commonly cited reasons that cause novice teachers to become discontented and decide to leave the profession often revolve around one or more issues pertaining to classroom management, administrative support and parental involvement. Due to a lack of literature pertaining to a teacher’s decision to remain in the profession, the researcher believed that further investigation into the impact of these variables could potentially provide an enhanced understanding of efforts that need to be pursued in order to increase the retention rates of novice teachers. Furthermore, due to the limited amount of research regarding the influence of economic factors on intent to persist, the researcher also included this factor within the research goals.

Although there were no significant differences in the perceptions of the participants within this study, it was determined that novice teachers who showed intent to persist also reflected in a generally positive manner on their experiences with classroom management, administrative support and parental involvement. In regard to economic factors, findings associate with the Economic Factors subscale of this study were contradictory as to whether current economic difficulties are not impacting teachers’ decisions about remaining in the classroom. Though responses to the Economic Factors subscale items suggested that the participants within the study did not seem to believe the current economy locked them into the classroom, the regression analysis associated with Research Question 5/Hypothesis 4 found economic factors to be a relatively strong negative predictor of teacher intentions to remain in the profession. Again, this may also be due in part to the fact that the Economic Factors subscale proved to be somewhat problematic in its application.
Based on the findings of this study and previous research, educational stakeholders need to consider implementing a variety of policies and procedures that may positively impact the issue of novice teacher retention. Many of the frustrations cited throughout literature, combined with the findings of this study, serve as a foundation for recommendations for policy and practice.

As previously discussed, it is common for novice teachers to admit feeling ill-equipped to handle issues pertaining to classroom management (Mitchell & Arnold, 2004). Additionally, feedback from recent graduates who were anticipating entering the field of education indicated that the area they felt least competent to address was their ability to manage a classroom and student behavior (Mitchell & Arnold, 2004). This is an area of concern that the researcher believes needs to be better addressed through pre-service training at the university level and in the practicum experiences for aspiring teachers. It is not uncommon for novice teachers to admit that the majority of their learning occurred during their experiences in the actual classroom, not in the university (Siebert, 2005). This leads many to question whether or not university programs are adequately preparing teachers for the challenges encountered upon entering the profession. Universities cannot expect pre-service teachers to adequately grasp and comprehend the many obstacles and responsibilities that a teacher faces on a daily basis solely through university classroom experiences.

In order to better prepare potential educators for the realities of the profession, universities need to provide opportunities throughout the program for student teachers to observe and actively participate in classroom management opportunities within a variety of settings. Exposing student teachers to classrooms in which they can observe and
address multiple disciplines further enlightens them about the demands and obstacles that may one day become realities within their own classrooms (Mitchell & Arnold, 2004). The researcher further suggests that universities make an effort to enlighten potential teachers about the realities of the field of education at an earlier point in the preparation program. Pre-service teachers are often not provided with the opportunity to actively participate in actual classroom settings until they begin student teaching, which takes place during the final semesters of their preparation programs. By this point, many students feel so vested in the degree into which they have put so much time and effort that they opt to complete the program, regardless of whether they have begun to harbor doubts about becoming an educator. Providing pre-service teachers with training and familiarity with actual classroom experiences that allow the transition from training to practice to go efficiently is a crucial factor in making positive advances towards the overall improvement of national retention rates (Rieg et al., 2007). Classroom management, as a core practice, needs to be at the forefront of teacher preparation programs.

Administrative support is also a factor that novice teachers reflect upon as having a strong influence on their overall intent to persist. This study corroborated previous findings that teachers who believe that they are supported by administrators are more likely to remain in the profession. Too often, administrators fail to realize the challenges that a new teacher faces upon entering the profession. A beginning teacher is typically expected to take on the same responsibilities and meet the same expectations that a veteran teacher assumes. In one study, the qualities cited by principals as desired characteristics of novice teachers included possession of professionalism, thorough
knowledge in assigned content areas, successful communication skills, effective classroom management skills, and a passion to provide every student with the opportunity to succeed (Roberson & Roberson, 2009). Realistically, such characteristics are not easily obtained without experience and/or guidance. Such expectations, combined with previously cited frustrations such as being assigned to classes that veteran teachers do not want, receiving the students who are considered to be the most difficult and challenging, having overwhelming responsibilities outside of the classroom such as committee assignments, and not receiving input or support from administrators, can result in novice teachers feeling overwhelmed and deciding to leave the profession (Johnson, 2001). The researcher suggests that administrators remain sensitive to these frequently cited frustrations and put forth effort to smooth the transition of teachers from college to the professional world. It is important for principals to remember that a teacher’s first year in the classroom is often challenging, lonely and difficult, and requires support and empathy from administrators (Menchaca, 2003). Administrators, therefore, should create an environment of support, regardless of whether a novice teacher’s early years of teaching are a time of constructive learning or a time of coping, adjustment, and/or survival (Feinman-Nemser, 2003).

Administrators can implement a variety of supportive approaches that could increase overall teacher job satisfaction and intent to persist. One example is to assign a mentor teacher to novice teachers just entering the profession. Mentors can serve as valuable resources for clarity about the day-to-day responsibilities a teacher faces and can model what successful instruction entails. Administrators should also provide novice teachers with professional development opportunities that are geared towards educating
and enlightening new teachers on the responsibilities of managing a classroom on a day-to-day basis. The researcher also recommends professional development opportunities for administrators. This is suggested with the intent of providing ideas, suggestions and/or resources that will better prepare school leaders to meet the needs of novice teachers as well as provide support that will ensure a higher rate of success among these teachers.

The accessibility of administrators also has been shown to increase novice teacher persistence. Regardless of years of experience, teachers appreciate consistent support and advice from their administrator(s). In fact, job satisfaction increases among teachers when they receive reliable and supportive feedback from their administrator (Mihans 2008). Furthermore, principals can increase the overall retention of teachers if they acknowledge their teachers’ accomplishments (Haar, 2007). Too often teachers believe that they only receive criticism from administrators and rarely receive commendations. Teachers, like students, need to receive positive feedback and receive recognition for their successes.

The lack of parental support is also cited as a determining factor in a teacher’s decision to leave the classroom (Elfers et al., 2006). However, what both teachers and parents should keep in mind though is that parent-teacher communication is an integral part of the educational process and ultimately impacts a student’s academic success (Stockard & Lehman, 2004; Witmer, 2005). Due to the fact that parental involvement is one of the guiding tenets of the No Child Left Behind Act (Texas Education Agency, 2005), and requires that each school and local educational agency have materials and training available to assist parents in improving their children’s achievement (U. S.
Department of Education, 2010), schools must make efforts to meet these mandates. Examples of such assistance include offering training opportunities that involve both teachers and parents, scheduling after-school programs and sessions that bring teachers and their students’ parents together for collaborative opportunities, and even offering incentives for attendance. Providing professional development opportunities that educate both teachers and parents on successful communication skills can also result in the strengthening of parental involvement, thus improving teacher retention rates.

The newly emerging issues regarding current economic factors also merit attention when determining a teacher’s probability of remaining in the classroom. Due to the fact that unemployment rates are high, people generally are opting to persist in their current profession, regardless of whether they are satisfied (“Take this Job”, 2010). Due to such findings from the general workforce, it is pertinent to determine whether or not teachers are choosing to persist within the classroom, due in part, to the current economy. The persistence of teachers who are not satisfied, but believe that they are compelled to remain in the profession because of limited opportunities elsewhere, could have a negative impact on overall student success. The researcher believes that the implementation of the previously recommended suggestions pertaining to the improvement of novice teacher outlook in regard to classroom management, administrative support and parental involvement could foster a stronger sense of job satisfaction with the hopes of retaining good teachers regardless of economic influences. Darling-Hammond (2003) determined that good teachers are more likely to remain in the classroom when they are appreciated and supported, are provided opportunities to learn
from their colleagues, and are provided with an environment that allows accomplished teaching to thrive.

Given the findings of this study, it is recommended that school district officials take these results and recommendations into account when addressing the hiring, training, and mentoring of novice teachers within their schools. The suggestions and findings are intended to enhance understanding and to educate administrators/policymakers regarding the needs of novice classroom teachers. In addition, the conclusions of this study can assist in the reinforcement of teacher quality and influence the confidence and proficiency of teaching staff, thus resulting in a more positive learning environment for students.

Recommendations for Future Research

Future researchers studying issues relevant to the topics addressed in this study could focus on the following studies in order to produce additional understanding of the issue of novice teacher retention:

1. Although the geographic region of focus offered the researcher an adequate response rate for analysis, it is recommended that future studies include a broader geographic region in order to enhance potential sample size, expand the reliability of results, and enhance the degree to which such results can be generalized to other geographic locales.

2. Schools that were classified as low performing were poorly represented in this study. It is recommended that future studies include a more representative sample of teachers from across school performance levels.
3. This study focused on teachers who were currently teaching; thus, the perspectives of teachers who ultimately chose to leave the profession were not included. It is recommended that future researchers gain access to teachers who exited the profession and gather their perspectives on the impact that the variables within this study had on their decision to leave the field of education.

4. Due to the currently limited amount of literature pertaining to teacher retention in relation to economic factors, it is recommended that further research be conducted. Even though the subscale did not perform as intended, results suggest that the economy does in fact potentially play a role in teacher retention. Refining the subscale and investigating this relationship further would be valuable.

5. Overall, the sample for this study was too small to disclose significant differences among some of the demographics factors, but differences, albeit not significant, did occur between the perspectives of traditionally prepared and alternatively prepared teachers. Further analysis of the variables analyzed within this study from the vantage point of the type of teacher preparation is suggested.

6. Future research should include investigation of novice teacher perspectives regarding parental involvement based on school level (elementary, middle, high). A larger sample size could potentially provide a more valuable understanding of the relationship and impact, if any, of the two factors, and
disclose whether differences in the means between high school and elementary/middle school teachers are actually significant.

7. Finally, it is suggested that any future researcher who implements the use of the study instrument address the lack of clarity in the item in the last subscale that addressed the impact of parent involvement on intent to persist.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to analyze demographic and school data, and data on the perspectives of teachers regarding classroom management, administrative support, parental involvement, current economic factors, and participant intentions relative to remaining in the classroom. Previous literature examined the impact of the above-mentioned factors on teacher attrition, yet not much literature was available that addressed the impact of classroom management, administrative support, parental involvement and economic factors on a teacher’s intent to persist.

The primary data for this study were obtained from 93 teachers, all within their first to fifth year of experience, who were teaching in school districts located along the coastal areas of the state of Mississippi. The study examined the differences in novice teacher perspectives regarding classroom management, administrative support, parental involvement, and economic factors depending upon school level (elementary, middle, high), school performance levels (Star, High Performing, Successful, Academic Watch, Low Performing, At Risk of Failing, Failing), and teacher preparation (traditional, alternative) program. The study further examined novice teacher perspectives regarding these factors and their relation to overall intent to persist.
Results of the analyses related to the hypotheses indicated that there were no significant differences in the perspectives of novice teachers regarding the impact of classroom management, administrative support, parental involvement, and economic factors depending on the school level or performance level of the school at which they were employed. There were also no significant differences in perceptions as a result of the type of teacher preparation program. This study did indicate that there were significant relationships among the perceptions of novice teachers regarding the factors of classroom management, administrative support, parental involvement, and current economic factors and their intent to persist in the classroom. It was determined that the combined variables impacted intent to persist and that the strongest predictors were administrative support and economic factors; the latter was a negative predictor of intent to persist.
APPENDIX A

IRB APPROVAL

THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD
118 College Drive #5147 | Hattiesburg, MS 39406-0001
Phone: 601.266.8829 | Fax: 601.266.4377 | www.usm.edu/irb

NOTICE OF COMMITTEE ACTION

The project has been reviewed by The University of Southern Mississippi Institutional Review Board in accordance with Federal Drug Administration regulations (21 CFR 26, 111), Department of Health and Human Services (45 CFR Part 46), and university guidelines to ensure adherence to the following criteria:

- The risks to subjects are minimized.
- The risks to subjects are reasonable in relation to the anticipated benefits.
- The selection of subjects is equitable.
- Informed consent is adequate and appropriately documented.
- Where appropriate, the research plan makes adequate provisions for monitoring the data collected to ensure the safety of the subjects.
- Where appropriate, there are adequate provisions to protect the privacy of subjects and to maintain the confidentiality of all data.
- Appropriate additional safeguards have been included to protect vulnerable subjects.
- Any unanticipated, serious, or continuing problems encountered regarding risks to subjects must be reported immediately, but not later than 10 days following the event. This should be reported to the IRB Office via the "Adverse Effect Report Form".
- If approved, the maximum period of approval is limited to twelve months. Projects that exceed this period must submit an application for renewal or continuation.

PROTOCOL NUMBER: 12060603
PROJECT TITLE: The Influence of Classroom Management, Administrative Support, Parental Involvement, and Economic Factors on the Retention of Novice Teachers
PROJECT TYPE: Dissertation
RESEARCHER/S: Katrina Moody Dwyer
COLLEGE/DIVISION: College of Education & Psychology
DEPARTMENT: Educational Leadership & School Counseling
FUNDING AGENCY: N/A
IRB COMMITTEE ACTION: Expedited Review Approval
PERIOD OF PROJECT APPROVAL: 06/28/2012 to 06/27/2013

Lawrence A. Hosman, Ph.D.
Institutional Review Board Chair
### APPENDIX B

**INSTRUMENT**

**Novice Teacher Perceptions:**
-The Impact of Selected Factors on the Intent to Persist

**PLEASE READ & COMPLETE ALL OF THE ITEMS WITHIN THIS SURVEY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal Demographics</th>
<th>Professional Demographics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. What is your gender?</strong></td>
<td><strong>2. What is your age?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Male ☐ Female</td>
<td>☐ 21-26 ☐ 27-32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ 33-38 ☐ 39+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3. What is your race?</strong></td>
<td><strong>4. Which teacher preparation program did you attend?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Black ☐ White ☐ Hispanic</td>
<td>☐ Traditional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Asian ☐ Native American</td>
<td>☐ Alternative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Other</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professional Demographics</th>
<th>School Characteristics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>5. What is your education level?</strong></td>
<td><strong>6. How many years have you taught (including the 2011-2012 school year)?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Bachelors ☐ Masters</td>
<td># of years taught rounded to nearest half: ________ (e.g. 1.5 years)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Specialist</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Doctorate (EdD, PhD)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Characteristics</th>
<th><strong>7. Which of the following best describes your school classification?</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>8. What is your school’s performance level?</strong></td>
<td>☐ Elementary School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ High Performing</td>
<td>☐ Middle School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Successful</td>
<td>☐ High School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Academic Watch</td>
<td>☐ Low Performing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ At Risk of Failing</td>
<td>☐ Failing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
On the following pages is a list of statements pertaining to Classroom Management, Administrative Support, Parental Involvement, Economic Factors, and Intent to Persist. Please read each statement and indicate its level of existence within your daily experiences as a teacher by checking any one of the six (6) columns immediately following each statement. Possible responses range from (1) “Strongly Disagree” to (6) “Strongly Agree”. Each of your selected responses represents a degree on the continuum.

**SECTION A: CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Please put an (X) below the response that best matches your opinion about the following statements:</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Slightly Disagree</th>
<th>Slightly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I am able to quickly and successfully control disruptive behavior in my classroom.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I have established classroom expectations and routines that allow daily instruction to run smoothly.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. I feel that I am able to develop relationships with my students that allow me to successfully accomplish the daily goals of instruction.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. I do not feel that the preservice training I received prior to becoming a classroom teacher prepared me to handle the daily issues one may encounter when managing a classroom.</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5. I often lose valuable instructional time due to classroom disruptions and behavioral issues.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. My students respect me as their classroom teacher.</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## SECTION B: ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

Please put an (X) below the response that best matches your opinion about the following statements:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Slightly Disagree</th>
<th>Slightly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7. My administrator(s) provides me with professional input, feedback, and suggestions on a consistent basis (i.e. evaluations, face to face meetings about my performance).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>8. My administrator(s) is available to answer questions and to clarify procedures that will simplify my experience as a teacher.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>9. My administrator(s) does not address and resolve disciplinary issues that arise both in my classroom and/or throughout the school.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>10. My administrator(s) has created a positive school climate that makes me feel valued, appreciated, and safe.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>11. My administrator(s) does not provide me with the resources necessary to provide instruction that would assist in student achievement.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>12. My administrator(s) puts forth the effort to make sure I am confident in my understanding of the responsibilities and expectations in my role as a classroom teacher.</td>
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<tr>
<td>13. My administrator involves me in important decisions made within the school.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### SECTION C: PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Please put an (X) below the response that best matches your opinion about the following statements:</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Slightly Disagree</th>
<th>Slightly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14. I receive support from my students’ parents.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>15. I believe that the majority of my students’ parents are actively involved and concerned with their child’s academic success.</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>16. I feel comfortable contacting parents pertaining to a variety of circumstances including their child’s behavior and/or academic performance.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>17. The majority of my students’ parents do not feel comfortable contacting me when they have questions or concerns.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. I have created an environment within my classroom that encourages parental involvement.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. I feel comfortable asking parents for assistance when needed.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. I believe that building a relationship with parents and maintaining their involvement in my classroom is necessary for student success.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SECTION D: ECONOMIC FACTORS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Please put an (X) below the response that best matches your opinion about the following statements:</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Slightly Disagree</th>
<th>Slightly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21. If I could find a higher paying job outside of the classroom, I would leave the profession immediately.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. The current economy and unemployment rates have not influenced my decision to remain in the classroom.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. I am more likely to tolerate frustrations I have in regards to my profession because I am just thankful to have a job in the current economy.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. I worry about my job security because of the economy and its effect on district budgets.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. I do not believe job security is more important than job satisfaction.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SECTION E: INTENT TO PERSIST

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Please put an (X) below the response that best matches your opinion about the following statements:</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Slightly Disagree</th>
<th>Slightly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>26. I do not intend on remaining in the classroom until I reach the eligibility for retirement.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. I plan on remaining in the classroom until I am able to find a better job opportunity.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. The support and feedback I receive from my administrator(s) has influenced my decision to continue teaching and ultimately remain in the classroom.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. The support and involvement I receive from parents impacts my decision to remain a classroom teacher.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30. My ability to manage my classroom and student behavior impacts my decision to continue teaching in the classroom.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX C

VALIDITY QUESTIONNAIRE

Novice Teacher Perceptions:
The Impact of Selected Factors on the Intent to Persist
Validity Questionnaire

Thank you for agreeing to provide your time, expertise and assistance in the development of this instrument that will be used to gather data for this study. Your input and feedback is extremely important, greatly appreciated, and will be used to make any necessary adjustments in order to more effectively meet the criteria and overall goal of this study.

The purpose of the instrument you are evaluating is to gather feedback from novice teachers (1-5 years of experience) pertaining to classroom management, parental involvement, administrative support, economic factors, and their intent to persist within the classroom. It is with hopes that the data collected through these surveys will provide valuable insight for possible adjustments to current approaches that may influence teachers, more specifically novice, to remain within the classroom.

Please take your time and critique the attached questionnaire by answering either “Yes” or “No” to the questions below, as well as providing feedback for your reasoning(s) behind any responses that receive a “No” on the lines that follow.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>If you selected No, please write why, and provide any feedback and/or suggestions that you feel would correct this aspect of the survey.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Has the survey been developed with the use of language that can be easily understood by the participants in this study?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the survey address suitable issues in the statements that will allow the researcher to obtain sufficient information regarding novice teacher perceptions of classroom management?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>If you selected No, please write why, and provide any feedback and/or suggestions that you feel would correct this aspect of the survey.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the survey address suitable issues in the statements that will allow the researcher to obtain sufficient information regarding novice teacher perceptions of <strong>administrative support</strong>?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the survey address suitable issues in the statements that will allow the researcher to obtain sufficient information regarding novice teacher perceptions of <strong>parental involvement</strong>?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the survey address suitable issues in the statements that will allow the researcher to obtain sufficient information regarding novice teacher perceptions of <strong>economic factors</strong>?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are there any particular items within the survey that you would modify?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Please specify the item number(s) with your response if you selected “No”.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you believe any of the survey items have the potential to come across as invasive and/or offensive to the participant?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Please specify the item number(s) with your response if you selected “No”.</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>If you selected Yes, please write why, and provide any feedback and/or suggestions that you feel would correct this aspect of the survey.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Are there any items within the survey that you believe should be excluded from the survey?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Please specify the item number(s) with your response if you selected “Yes”.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are there any survey items that you feel should be included that are <strong>not</strong> currently included on the questionnaire attached?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>If you selected “Yes” please write your suggested statement(s) below:</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Please feel free to provide any further suggestions or comments that you feel would strengthen the validity of this questionnaire in the following section:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Comments/Suggestions:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX D

LETTER TO THE SUPERINTENDENT

Date
Name of Superintendent
Name of School District
Address

RE: Permission to Conduct Research Study

Dear Superintendent ____________________,

My name is Katrina Moody, and I am currently enrolled in the doctoral program at The University of Southern Mississippi. In order to fulfill the requirements of my dissertation, I must conduct a survey that focuses on my topic of research. The ultimate goal of my survey is to gather and examine novice teachers’ perceptions of how classroom management, administrative support, parental involvement and economic factors selected factors ultimately affect their intent to persist within the classroom. The information I gather through my research will hopefully provide educational leaders, administrators, and fellow educators with insights into approaches and strategies that are effective in the retention of novice teachers.

The purpose of this letter is to kindly request your permission to gather necessary information that would allow me to contact a set population of educators within your district, conduct a short survey, then assemble the data needed to complete my dissertation. If you agree to allow me to conduct my survey, the information gathered will be compiled with the information provided by other novice teachers in other school districts along the Mississippi Gulf Coast. Please rest assured that your district and your district’s teachers will not be identified anywhere in my research and findings.

The participants in this study will consist of educators within your district who are within their first five years of teaching. This research will be conducted at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. Participants will be surveyed via postal mail. Surveys will be administered before completion of the first semester of the 2012-2013 academic school year. Please be assured that all staff responses will be confidential. The data will be reported in percentages and summary form. No district, school, or individual will be identified, and participation is voluntary.

Your approval to conduct this survey within your district will be greatly appreciated. Feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns at 228-257-7181 or katmoody80@gmail.com. My committee chair is Dr. Michael Ward, who can be contacted at mike.ward@usm.edu.

If you agree to my request, kindly sign below and return the signed form in the enclosed self-addressed envelope. Alternatively, you may submit a signed letter of permission on your district’s letterhead acknowledging your consent and permission for me to conduct this survey within your school district.
Sincerely,

Katrina Moody  
Doctoral Candidate, University of Southern Mississippi

Enclosures

Cc: Dr. Michael Ward, Committee Chair

Consent Form:

By signing and returning this form, I give Ms. Katrina Moody, a doctoral candidate at the University of Southern Mississippi, permission to conduct a research study in the __________ District. I acknowledge that Ms. Moody may meet with each school administrator and upon approval from the administrator, that Ms. Moody will deliver consent forms and questionnaires to selected teachers during the Fall of the 2012-2013 school year.

Approved by:

___________________________________  Superintendent’s Signature  Date

Please print your name and title above
Dear Participant,

I am currently a doctoral candidate at the University of Southern Mississippi. I am conducting a research study on the perceptions of novice teachers and the impact classroom management, administrative support, parental involvement, and economic factors have on intent to persist in the classroom. I am interested in your professional opinion in regards to whether the above variables have any influence on your intent to remain in the classroom. Please take a few moments of your time to complete the enclosed questionnaire. The survey should take no more than 15 minutes to complete. The questionnaire contains 30 questions. The first portion of the questionnaire seeks to gather basic personal and professional demographic information about you as well as information about your current school of employment. The remaining sections of the questionnaire request that you rate a variety of statements on a scale of 1 – 6. Your selections will reflect your opinions about classroom management, administrative support, parental involvement, economic factors, and intent to persist. Upon completion, aggregate information from all participants will be shared with my dissertation committee.

The data collected from the completed questionnaires will be compiled and analyzed. All data collected is anonymous. All information gathered will be kept completely confidential and reported only in aggregate. To ensure confidentiality of teachers, no one will be identified by name. Upon completion of this research study, I will shred all surveys. As the researcher, I am very appreciative of your participation. However, you have the option to decline to participate if you so wish. If you decide to withdraw from participation at any time there is no penalty or risk of negative consequence.

I will use the data you provide to update and strengthen the research bank on factors that currently affect novice teachers’ intent to persist. Should you have any questions please feel free to contact me: Katrina Moody Dwyer, email: katrina.moody@eagles.usm.edu; phone: 228-257-7181. This research is being conducted under the supervision of Dr. Mike Ward, University of Southern Mississippi, email: mike.ward@usm.edu; phone: 601-266-5832.

This research project has been reviewed and approved by the Human Subjects Protection Review Committee, which ensures that all research fits the federal guidelines for research involving human subjects. Any questions or concerns about the rights of a research participant should be directed to the Chair of the Institutional Review Board, The University of Southern Mississippi, 118 College Drive #5147, Hattiesburg, MS 39406-0001, (601) 266-6820.

Thank you for your participation.

Sincerely,

Katrina Moody Dwyer
Appendix F

INFORMED LETTER OF CONSENT

University of Southern Mississippi
118 College Drive #5147
Hattiesburg, MS 39406-0001
(601)266-6820

Consent to Participate in a Research Study

Date: August 13, 2012

Title of Study: The Influence of Classroom Management, Administrative Support, Parental Involvement and Economic Factors on the Retention of Novice Teachers

Research will be conducted by: Katrina Moody Dwyer

Phone Number: (228) 257-7181 Email Address: katrina.moody@eagles.usm.edu

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Mike Ward

What are some general things you should know about research studies?
Classroom teachers who are within their first to fifth year of experience are being asked to take part in a research study. Participating in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to take part, or you may withdraw your consent to be in the study, for any reason, without penalty.

Research studies are designed with the intent to obtain new knowledge. This new information may help people in the future. You may not receive any direct benefit from being in the research study. There also may be risks to being in research studies.

Details about this study are discussed below. It is important that you understand this information so that you can make an informed choice about being in this research study.

You will be given the first three pages of this consent form and the researcher will keep the fourth sheet, which contains your signature. You should ask the researcher named above, or staff member who is assisting them throughout this process, any questions you have about this study at any time.

What is the purpose of this study?
The purpose of this research study is to examine whether classroom management, administrative support, parental involvement, and economic factors have a role in the retention of novice teachers. The goal of this research is to compare novice teacher
feedback and determine whether the above factors are significantly related to a novice teacher’s intent to remain in the classroom.

**How many people will take part in this study?**
If you decide to be in this study, you will be one of approximately 450 participants in this research study.

**How long will your part in this study last?**
If you choose to participate, you will be asked to read and sign a consent form and will also receive a survey that will take you no longer than 15 minutes to complete. Your name or identity will not be asked for within the survey, nor will your personal information be reflected anywhere within this research. A self-addressed, stamped envelope will also be provided in order to easily return the completed survey to the researcher. A report of my findings will be made available to you upon request at the conclusion of this study by emailing me at katrina.moody@eagles.usm.edu.

**What will happen if you take part in the study?**
Novice teachers willing to participate in this research will be asked to sign a consent form and fill out a survey. The researcher will collect data from the survey. Throughout the process of analysis, the researcher will keep the survey in a locked box. The survey and consent form will be shredded upon completion of this project.

**What are the possible benefits from being in this study?**
Findings are also intended to provide potential assistance to school and state officials in creating and supporting a school work environment that encourages teachers, more specifically novice teachers, to persist in their current positions as classroom educators. Your answers to the survey items will contribute to study findings that school administrators can take into account when addressing the hiring, training, and mentoring of teachers, more specifically novice teachers, in their schools.

The results of this study could also potentially play a vital role in the provision of valuable insight that can be shared with persons involved in the educational system, including students, parents, teachers, administrators, educational professionals and policymakers. These insights could potentially bridge gaps in understanding about these policy issues, thus resulting in enlightenment of administrators/policymakers regarding the needs of novice classroom teachers.

**What are the possible risks or discomforts involved from being in this study?**
The risks that may be involved in this study are that the participant may not feel comfortable providing feedback pertaining to his/her personal classroom management abilities, opinions about his/her administrative support, views on parental involvement, and the impact of current economic factors on his/her intent to persist. These concerns may be allayed by the assurances of confidentiality for respondents that will be provided. Only the researcher and faculty advisors will view the participant responses. All responses will be kept secure and locked in the researcher’s home. Questionnaires and consent forms will be destroyed after one year.
How will your privacy be protected?
Participants will not indicate their identities on the questionnaire. They will not be identified in any report or publication about this study. Only the researcher and her university faculty advisors will have access to these questionnaires. Questionnaires will be kept secure and locked in the researcher’s home. Additionally, questionnaires and consent forms will be shredded after a year.

What if you have questions about this study?
You have the right to ask, and have answered, any questions you may have about this research. If you have questions, or concerns, you should contact the researcher listed on the first page of this form.

What if you have questions about your rights as a research participant?
This project has been reviewed by the Human Subjects Protection Review Committee, which ensures that research projects involving human subjects follow federal regulations. Any questions or concerns about rights as a research subject should be directed to the chair of the Institutional Review Board, The University of Southern Mississippi, 118 College Drive #5147, Hattiesburg, MS 39406-0001, (601) 266-6820.
Title of Study: The Influence of Classroom Management, Administrative Support, Parental Involvement and Economic Factors on the Retention of Novice Teachers

Principal Investigator: Katrina Moody Dwyer

Participant’s Agreement:

I have read the information provided above. I have asked all the questions I have at this time. I voluntarily agree to participate in this research study.

_________________________________________________  __________________
Signature of Research Participant                      Date

_________________________________________________
Printed Name of Research Participant
REFERENCES


