Teacher Perception of Their Initial Traditional or Alternative Teacher Training Program

Daphne Yolanda Lowe

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The University of Southern Mississippi

TEACHER PERCEPTION OF THEIR
INITIAL TRADITIONAL OR ALTERNATIVE
TEACHER TRAINING PROGRAM

by

Daphne Yolanda Lowe

Abstract of 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 2012
ABSTRACT

TEACHER PERCEPTION OF THEIR
INITIAL TRADITIONAL OR ALTERNATIVE
TEACHER TRAINING PROGRAM

by Daphne Yolanda Lowe

May 2012

This study was conducted to identify if there was a need for reform within initial traditional teacher and/or alternative route teacher training programs. The purpose of this study was to gather data about teachers’ perceptions of their initial teacher training program (traditional undergraduate or alternative route) as adequate training to prepare them to complete their actual teacher job tasks. The study compared the perceptions of teachers with varying years of teaching experience (one to two, three to four, and more than five) to identify if there was a difference and/or how years of teaching experience impacted teachers’ perceptions of their initial teacher training program. The study also sought to identify specific teacher job tasks which teachers do or do not feel adequately trained by their initial teacher training program to complete.

There was no statistical significance found within any of the variables for this study. However, there were some areas identified where teachers indicated feeling less prepared by their training program to complete certain teacher job tasks. Several study participants indicated not feeling prepared to plan instruction for students with specials needs (i.e. ESL, 504, At Risk, & Special Ed.). Study participants also reported not feeling prepared by their initial teacher training program to teach classes with large numbers of students and/or do not have adequate instructional resources.
These factors have a profound impact on education reform. Adequate teacher training is critical to the ability of a teacher to meet each student’s individualized needs. The current status of our economy creates additional issues which need to be addressed by education reform. Many school districts are eliminating teacher jobs to address budget issues. This concept creates larger class sizes as well as limits available instructional resources needed for effective instruction. This indicates that current teachers as well as future teachers need adequate training in these areas in order to provide effective differentiated instruction for their students and meet all student needs.
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TEACHER TRAINING PROGRAM

by

Daphne Yolanda Lowe

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

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Dean of the Graduate School

May 2012
DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my Heavenly Father in appreciation for all of the mountains he moved for me as well as all of the earth angels he placed in my life to provide love and support throughout this process. A special dedication of this work goes to my special gift from God, my daughter Destiny Lanae Ausmer. I will never forget all the times you would sit at the foot of my bed, stay up late checking on me, or go to library with me just so that we could still have some Mommy/Daughter time while I did my schoolwork. I love you.

I would also like to dedicate this work to the wonderful and generous family God has blessed me with: my loving parents, Edna and James Lowe, my sisters, Dana and Chante’, my nephew Devonte’, and my cousin Reggie. There is no way I would have completed this process without your love and understanding. I love you all and you are an invaluable part of who I am as a person and a child of God.
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Perhaps, in the beginning, a teacher is a person who originally made a decision that they wanted to help and impact the lives of children. Teachers probably understood that they must be trained in order to take on such a huge responsibility as providing academic knowledge that would contribute to the failure or success of a child’s future. They participated in a variety of teacher education training classes, classroom observations, field experiences, and state assessments to determine if they had the required professional knowledge to actually do the job of being a teacher. Some may not have attained their undergraduate degree in the education field but a desire to teach inspired participation in an alternative route to becoming a teacher. It is possible for one to assume that completion of the requirements to become a teacher would cause a person to perceive himself or herself as prepared for all the job tasks of being a teacher. How or when would this perception of being prepared by their initial teacher training programs (traditional undergraduate or alternative route) for this job as a teacher change when a person has actually joined the work force in the education field?

What is a teacher’s perception of being prepared to teach? What does perception mean? What does it mean to have a perception where you feel prepared to teach? The Random House Dictionary of English Language defines perception as a “single unified awareness derived from sensory processes while a stimulus is present” (Flexner 1987, p. 1437). Teacher perception is considered to be the awareness of the professional knowledge a teacher feels is needed to be successful in completing the many required job tasks (Corbell, Reiman, & Nietfeld 2008). A feeling of being prepared to do something
means that a person has the perception that he or she possesses the ability to complete a task. This is also known as self-efficacy.

How a person views and perceives their ability to do a job impacts their actual ability to effectively carry out the responsibilities of the job. Danielson (2007) stated, “A person could not teach what he or she did not know” (p. 44). When teachers are new to the profession, it is not unusual for them to be overwhelmed by the various aspects of teacher job tasks. Danielson (2007) further stated that as teachers remain in the profession, gaining and developing expertise, their performance becomes more polished. This supports the idea of researching teacher perception according to years of experience in the education field. Despite their initial perception of what they were prepared to do upon completing an initial teacher preparation program, time on the job should impact a teacher’s perception of what job tasks he or she actually were able to do, as well as should have been trained to do.

Principals are often faced with the task of motivating teachers who feel frustrated about whether they can meet all of their students’ needs. According to Rose (2010), insecurities arise as a result of many actual teacher job responsibilities which overwhelm teachers for a variety of reasons. There is a common disappointment from new teachers who had no idea about how many actual job tasks there were for teachers which may not have been part of their initial teacher training program. They were not aware how many of their students would live in situations which would interfere with their ability to teach them. Teachers are expected to ensure high levels of student achievement despite research findings about parental income continuing to be the strongest predictor of academic achievement (Rose 2010). In addition, many co-workers in the field of
education express that they experience a variety of frustrations from not having adequate training or support needed to perform many of the tasks they face on the job as teachers. While many new teacher induction programs offer support to teachers once they enter their first positions, the inadequacies they feel could still stem from their teacher education programs and the confidence, or lack thereof, to handle the complex situations present in today’s classrooms.

Educational reform is a major issue for our nation today. Teacher quality for public schools is a top priority for our nation (NCLB, 2001). Rose (2010) feels that current education reform practices are failing due to partially focusing on criticisms of recruitment, education, and evaluations of teachers instead of focusing on research-based solutions. This study will evaluate whether there is a need for reform within initial teacher training and alternative teacher training programs. This study will seek to identify specific areas teachers may or may not feel they have the adequate training needed to meet student needs and other teacher job responsibilities. The study has potential to identify ways to improve teacher training and support in order to improve instruction as well as student achievement.

Statement of the Problem

This study explored teachers’ perceptions regarding the adequacy of their initial and alternative teacher training programs in preparing them to perform the tasks they currently have as teachers. It compared perceptions of teachers with varying years of teaching experience to see if there is a significant difference as teachers gain more experience in their chosen profession.
General Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to evaluate teachers’ perceptions of their undergraduate initial teacher training or alternative teacher training as adequate preparation for the tasks they now face on their jobs as teachers. This research studied similarities and differences in teachers’ perceptions of their skills and how their initial training has prepared them for the job of teaching. The study compared perceptions of teachers with one to two years of teaching experience, three to four years of teaching experience, and with more than five years of teaching experience. The following are a list of variables which were analyzed as part of this study.

RQ1: Will there be an interaction between teacher perceptions of their initial traditional undergraduate or alternative teacher training program and years of teaching experience (one to two, three to four, or more than five) with regard to being adequately prepared to complete Planning and Preparation for Learning teacher job tasks?

RQ2: Will there be an interaction between teacher perceptions of their initial traditional undergraduate or alternative teacher training program and years of teaching experience (one to two, three to four, or more than five) with feeling adequately prepared to complete Delivery of Instruction teacher job tasks?

RQ3: Will there be an interaction between teacher perceptions of their initial traditional undergraduate or alternative teacher training program and years of teaching experience (one to two, three to four, or more than five) with feeling adequately prepared to complete Assessment, Monitoring, and Follow-up teacher job tasks?
RQ4: Will there be an interaction between teacher perceptions of their initial traditional undergraduate or alternative teacher training program and years of teaching experience (one to two, three to four, or more than five) with feeling adequately prepared to complete *Classroom Management* teacher job tasks?

RQ5: Will there be an interaction between teacher perceptions of their initial traditional undergraduate or alternative teacher training program and years of teaching experience (one to two, three to four, or more than five) with feeling adequately prepared to complete *Family and Community Outreach* teacher job tasks?

RQ6: Will there be an interaction between teacher perceptions of their initial traditional undergraduate or alternative teacher training program and years of teaching experience (one to two, three to four, or more than five) with feeling adequately prepared to complete *Professional Responsibilities* teacher job tasks?

**Rationale for Study**

Educational reform is a major issue for our nation today, and teacher quality for public schools is a top priority in these efforts. This study evaluated whether there is a need for reform within initial teacher training and alternative teacher training programs. This study sought to identify specific areas which teachers may or may not feel they have completed the necessary training to meet student needs and other job responsibilities. The study identified ways to improve teacher training and support in order to improve instruction which would result in increased student achievement.
Definition of Terms

Alternative teacher training - Teacher Training derived from alternative sources other than university undergraduate courses that lead the individual taking it towards teacher certification (self-developed).

Highly Qualified Teacher - Teachers who perform well “on multiple measures of subject matter competency” (U.S. Department of Education, 2004, p. 4)

Initial/Traditional teacher training - Traditional teacher training requiring coursework from college or university degrees in Education (self-developed)

Teaching experience - actual, first-hand experience of teaching in a classroom with real students entailing all the tasks of the teaching profession (self-developed)

Teachers’ perceptions - what teachers think and feel of something. In the case of this study, it is their own preparedness and competence as a teacher (self-developed)

Assumptions

It is assumed that current teachers from a quality teacher education program, whether it is from traditional undergraduate university-based learning or from alternative teacher preparation programs, will answer the items in the instrument for this study honestly. This is the only assumption for this study.

Delimitations

This study’s review of literature included constructs related to teacher preparation and perception of their teaching competencies; however, the methodology itself was limited to the perceptions of how teachers’ initial/traditional training or alternative training affects their performance as a teacher. The research targeted a random sample of Mississippi and/or Louisiana teachers who responded to a questionnaire specifically
designed by the author for this study to identify those trained the traditional way as well as those trained in alternative routes.

Support for the Study

Ineffective teachers are often blamed for graduating students’ lack of ability to be successful citizens of the United States of America. Society feels that quality teachers are the answer for future citizens having the ability to complete a high school education and attain/retain jobs. Teachers are expected to *Leave No Child Behind* when it comes to learning, completing high school, and creating life-long learners as future citizens of this nation. All teachers are expected to possess these abilities and be highly qualified with the completion of an initial teacher training program or an alternative teacher-training program. These ideals make it extremely important to identify whether teachers actually feel adequately trained and highly qualified to undertake tasks of this magnitude.

Louisiana State University has been conducting an on-going study called *Value Added Assessments of Teacher Preparation in Louisiana* since 2005 (Gansle, Noell, Knox, & Schafer 2010). The purpose of the study is to “examine the degree to which the educational attainment of students taught by recent graduates of specific teacher preparation programs either met, failed to meet, or exceeded expectations based on prior achievement and demographic factors as compared to experienced teachers” (p. 3). The most recent results of the study found “that alternative teacher preparation programs have more positive results than the undergraduate programs” (p. 23). The study also found that teachers who were not content-certified were less effective than content area certified teachers (Gansle et al., 2010). With the new National Core Standards for mathematics, middle school teachers will be expected to teach traditional high school curriculum,
algebra, which will require additional training to prepare these teachers with the content knowledge and skills necessary to deliver this curriculum (Reeves, 2011).

Torf and Sessions (2005) conducted a study on what principals perceive to be the cause of teacher ineffectiveness. This study sought to identify whether principals felt teacher ineffectiveness was caused more by lack of pedagogical or content knowledge. The results of this study revealed that principals believe that a teachers’ lack of pedagogical knowledge reflected that the teacher was ineffective more than the lack of content knowledge did.

Mowreer-Reynolds (2008) conducted a study to determine if the perception of students participating in teacher training programs were aligned with the actual preparations needed to be an exemplary teacher. This study identified the qualities the students felt exemplary teachers should possess. The study also investigated differences in perceptions between genders and if this factor had any influence on the students’ choice to be a teacher. This study found males to link exemplary professional teachers to knowledge of the subject and females only linked personality characteristics to exemplary professional teachers.

Significance of the Study

The current teacher shortage experienced in various locations in the country has called for the emergence of alternative teacher preparation programs. This study is especially significant in evaluating the effectiveness of such programs which have hastened the process of obtaining teacher certification with less coursework. These practices are significant due to the impact on the practice of hiring effective teachers. Its significance is also based on the realization that people from various backgrounds who
have a heart for teaching children but not the means to earn a university degree in Education are now given opportunities to follow their dream to be teachers via the alternative teacher preparation programs.

Another significant area of the study is learning that there are several factors that determine if a beginning teacher remains in her initial post or leaves the position altogether after a short span of time. Teachers may feel disillusioned when they begin their careers. The remuneration may not meet their expectations, student behaviors may be challenging, and the inability to participate in decision-making may leave them feeling useless. Aside from that, new teachers always seem to lack time for the multiple tasks they have to accomplish. This often leads to stress and burnout even during their first few years on the job. Consequently, nearly 50% of all teachers resign from their post within the first five years due to these aforementioned issues (Scherff, Ollie, & Rosencrans, 2006). All of these issues also impact school and district teacher hiring practices.

This implies that new teachers may feel overwhelmed with their initial teaching practice because they were not adequately prepared for it. Undergraduate training may have focused more on theoretical knowledge but did not provide enough psychological preparation regarding the expectations and realities of teaching. This study may contribute to the literature by identifying what teachers may perceive to be adequate or lacking in their teaching career preparation in order for them to perform their teaching tasks efficiently. In doing so, measures may be taken to improve teacher preparation programs so that future teachers may be more ready to face the challenges of teaching in the real world with real pupils, outside the four walls of their training classrooms.
Therefore, this study will be significant to higher educational programs which provide initial teacher program training as they prepare teachers and leaders for the educational workforce.

Nature of the Study

This study surveyed new teachers having less than five years of teaching experience as compared to teachers with more than five years of teaching experience. The researcher identified previously used exit surveys for undergraduate initial teacher training and alternative teacher training programs in addition to teacher evaluation instruments to design an instrument to gather data for this study. The researcher contacted a variety of randomly selected school districts and requested permission to have their teachers complete the survey for this study. The researcher also attended area teacher professional development sessions asking teachers in attendance to volunteer to complete the survey for this study.
CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

Being an effective teacher encompasses a wide spectrum of responsibilities – from designing an environment conducive to learning, to planning appropriate lessons for students and implementing them with effective educational strategies to being able to manage the class well and instilling discipline in the students, to involving parents and coordinating with others regarding the provision of quality education for the students (Schacter & Thum, 2005). It may take a Herculean effort to be able to manage all these skills at the same time, hence professional training with experience is required.

In New Zealand, the Framework of Professional Teaching Standards (NSW Institute of Teachers, 2004) documents in detail everything a teacher needs to do and strive for excellence in. It delineates expectations at different stages of a teacher’s professional experience from being a new teacher to a practicing one, to being an accomplished one all the way to being a leader in the field. It specifies three domains of teachers’ work as professional knowledge, professional practice, and professional commitment. Encompassing these domains are elements teachers need to adhere to such as knowledge of subject matter and how to teach it to their students; knowing how their students learn; planning assessing and reporting for effective learning; communicating effectively with their students; managing their classrooms to maintain safe and challenging learning environments; continually improving their professional expertise; and being a contributing member in society as an educator. Being able to balance all these tasks and being efficient at each one at that can be very challenging.
In the United States of America, as well as in all parts of the world, the need for high quality teachers is resounded throughout the country in hopes that the educational system will prepare children to be competitive in the future.

The Effective, High Quality Teacher

In order to know what to expect of effective and high quality teachers that teacher preparation programs aim to produce, it is worthwhile to know what an effective teacher is. It is like seeing the end that justifies the means. The following information represents a summary of current literature regarding the qualities and skills of highly qualified effective teachers.

An effective teacher is a good planner. One who anticipates everything and anything that can happen to her classroom. Thus, it is essential that they come up with a classroom management system to cover everything one needs to do and remember (Schacter & Thum, 2005).

The studies on what makes an effective teacher all point to instructors being adept in classroom management and discipline (Crosser, 2002). Additionally, a caring and supportive attitude that motivates students to learn is essential to success. Anticipating possible issues, and planning for these situations help teachers prevent untoward incidences and makes the class environment more conducive to learning (Lander, 2009).

Part of classroom management is the designing of a learning environment suitable for the students (Duncan, 2010). In a particular research, it was found out that when the quality of the physical environment declined, teacher restriction and control increased, the teacher’s behavior became less friendly, the students became less interested and involved, classroom rules increased, and conflict among children increased. It was
likewise observed that the learning environment influences, and directly contributes to, children’s behavior and levels of learning. The physical environment should reflect the goals and expectations of the teacher. It will also dictate somehow to the children how they will behave in the classroom (Brewer, 2001).

Classroom management involves not only the management of student behavior but everything that goes on in the class… from preparation for the class day, to what transpires during the day and even up to when the students leave, to the nitty gritty of the physical environment which must be conducive to maximize the learning of her students (Crosser, 2002). Of course, a teacher can only do this if she is adept in developing a program developmentally suited for the age and grade level of her students.

Classroom management does not begin and end in the classroom with the teacher teaching her class. It encompasses the totality of how a teacher prepares for her class – how she arranges her physical environment, how she plans her students’ activities and groupings, how she budgets the time for all the planned activities and discussions, how she prepares the teaching and learning materials, how she uses transitions to glide from one activity to the next, how she encourages cooperative learning among her students and how harmony and productivity is sustained in an ambience of active learning (Tedick, 2009). “An efficiently organized and managed classroom eliminates many potential behavior and learning problems and sets the stage for a productive year” (Shalaway, 1998, p. 12). Effective teaching on her part and fulfilling learning on her students’ are likely to take place in a well-managed classroom.

A teacher learns educational strategies in her training. She is equipped with the necessary skills to impart her lessons to her students. However, it is putting those skills
to work in reality with her class that tests her mettle as an effective teacher (Zeichner & Conklin, 2005). The Queensland Schools Reform Longitudinal Study (Lingard, Ladwig, Luke, Mills, Hayes, & Gore, 2001) has yielded a model of pedagogy that emphasizes the dimensions of intellectual quality, quality supportive learning environment and connectedness and significance to their lives and valuing of difference (NSW, 2004; Lingard, Hayes & Mills, 2003). Quality teaching is assured if all these dimensions are met and sustained within a class.

A teacher’s clear delivery of a lesson involves checking for understanding, giving simple examples to illustrate her point and suiting the difficulty level to her students. She is able to do this if she is fully aware of how much they already know about the subject matter and how they learn best. It follows that her assessment methods reflect her students’ true skills and capacities (Summers, Childs, & Corney, 2005). She catches and maintains their attention with effective teaching strategies she selects depending on what suits the class at a particular time. She also encourages her students to engage in higher order thinking to stretch out their mental capacities. Lingard, Hayes, and Mills (2003) explain that higher-order thinking occurs when students manipulate information and ideas in ways that transformed their meaning and implications. They carve their own knowledge from the combination of facts and ideas that they can put together, generalize, communicate to others, hypothesize, or arrive at some final decision or conclusion or interpretation. This is contrasted with lower-order thinking which simply involves receiving and regurgitating information. This manner reflects a simple transmission of knowledge or engagement in procedural routines. An effective teacher creates activities or designs environments that provide her students with opportunities to engage in higher-
order thinking (Lingard, Hayes, and Mills, 2003). She shares the reins of learning with her students and allows them as much as possible to experience learning hands-on. She believes they would find meaning in such experience. This pedagogy draws clear connections with students’ prior knowledge; and identifies, with contexts outside of the classroom, and with multiple ways of knowing or cultural perspectives” (NSW, 2004, p. 11). When students construct knowledge, they will refer to their own experiences and background to make it relevant and meaningful to them. Shalaway (1998) stated that the teacher’s role must change from primarily being a source of information, to someone who guides students through discovery and exploration.

Wisdom in grouping her students according to their abilities is a strength of an effective teacher. “Ability grouping refers to the process of teaching students in groups that are stratified by achievement, skill, or ability levels” (McCoach, O’Connell, & Levitt, 2006, p. 339). It is used as a pedagogical instrument to promote collaborative learning, active engagement with material, critical thinking and communication as a strategy. It also facilitates focused teaching which increases pupil achievement by reducing the range of ability within a particular group. Knowing this, a teacher uses groupings when she deems them necessary.

Effective teachers encourage students to carve the path of their own learning. She is there to whet their appetite for learning and nudge them to move towards pursuing knowledge. She also finds ways to keep their thirst for learning unquenchable so they develop into life-long learners.

When students are given the power to construct their own learning, it becomes more meaningful to them; hence, there is better retention. It takes a mature teacher to
sharing the reins of learning with her students, and eventually passing the responsibility to them. It shows that puts great trust in their ability to learn and confidence in herself that she has trained them well.

The legendary educator, John Dewey (1916) believes that quality education stems from how children are trained to think. Dewey claims that learning must be experienced by the learner if it is to be effectively retained. He does not agree with teaching students via lectures about things children have no direct experience with and reliance on mere textbooks. Dewey advocates active learning to stimulate a student’s thinking on his own. Teachers cannot expect to be the main dispensers of knowledge to their students, but should recognize and respect that children are capable of coming up with their own opinions, and conclusions and ideas.

Allowing students to explore their own ideas gives them more power in the acquisition of learning. With previous knowledge acquired, students can invent their own solutions and experiment with their own conjectures with the support and supervision of their teachers. This way, they can indulge in concrete experiences that focus on their interests. The process of searching for information, analysing data and reaching conclusions is considered more important than learning facts.

Effective teachers use authentic assessment strategies in evaluating their students’ learning and progress. Wiggins’ (1991) description of what authentic assessment should be is that it involves “engaging problems and questions of importance and substance in which students must use knowledge (and construct meaning) effectively and creatively (p. 39). In terms of implementation of such methods, students of any age or any educational level will benefit much from authentic approaches to assessment. The case
studies of schools that implemented authentic assessment methods discussed in Darling-Hammond, Ancess, & Falk (1995) works highlighted the use of different strategies for customizing instruction, deeply involving students with the subject matter and assessing the assessment support changes in the curriculum, teaching, and school organization. The basic premise of the vision of authentic achievement as proposed by Newmann, Secada, and Wehlage (1995) outlines the creation of more interesting yet challenging assessment tools for students. Teachers can encourage students to produce more intellectual work in the form of real world applications, and hence increase their performance. Darling-Hammond et al. (1993a) identified authentic assessment activities that effectively display students’ knowledge and skills as well as prove to be more interesting for students to engage in. Performance-based assessments such as science experiments, oral presentations, essays, video documentations of performances, etc. show evidence of students’ use of various strategies to solve problems rather than merely seeing the right answer asked for on a test (Darling-Hammond, Einbender, Frelow, & Ley-King 1993b).

Although teachers are expected to know what to teach children in general, they also need to be able to adjust to individual needs of their students, as not all students learn the same way at the same pace. Trafton (1975) suggests that individualization must include “acceptance of each child as an individual worthy of adult respect,” and that to this should be added “an acceptance of the child’s ideas, a provision of opportunities for pupil input in developing and selecting learning experiences, a concern for the quality of the child’s intellectual development, and a willingness to take time to know the child as an individual” (p. 39).
Baglieri and Knopf (2004) advise that teachers need to create lessons based on their students’ needs rather than what graded or standard measures dictate where they should be. Appropriate objectives in planning what students should learn must be selected and teachers should be clear about their goals and standards and consistently validate with the students if the goals are being achieved (McTighe & Brown, 2005). On the other hand, students themselves need to understand the goals set for them and see them as personally meaningful and relevant so they strive hard to reach them (McTighe & Brown, 2005). Because the students’ individually is given importance, students may find it easier for them to learn the concepts and skills being learned. Strengths are emphasized while weaknesses are being harnessed. Identifying the weaknesses is also important to come up with a coping strategy until the concept is fully mastered. As Dunn (2000) claimed, “Given responsive environments, students attain statistically higher achievement and aptitude test scores in matched, rather than mismatched treatments” (p. 63). With this assurance, students can attain the high standards set.

Ellis, Ellis, Huemann, and Stolarik (2007) described the differentiated instruction method to be able to reach a wide diversity of learners. They teach the employment of strategies such as cooperative learning, multiple intelligence-based lessons, and self-chosen assignments for students with differentiated work (Ellis et al., 2007). Although the activity level increases both laterally, in terms of the number of ongoing activities as well as vertically, in terms of level of difficulty, teachers need to be more open and comfortable in allowing their learners to simultaneously work on different assignments, tasks and levels of content in the various lessons provided (VanTassel-Baska & Stambaugh, 2005). In a differentiated classroom that meets the needs of diverse students,
students express their learning through small group activities, learning centers,
independent studies, tiered activities, compacting, learning contracts, personalized
agendas and choice boards (McTighe & Brown, 2005). Teachers need to be discerning as
to the choice of methods that encourage their students to learn as much as possible
(Baglieri & Knopf, 2004). They need to evaluate if certain accommodations indeed help
students in exhibiting what they can or cannot do (Edgemon, Jablonski, & Lloyd, 2006).
Such reflection entails ongoing assessment to ably guide them if the methods they use are
effective (Brimijoin, 2005).

The effective teacher can discern which learning strategy would be most
appropriate on a case-to-case basis. Imbedded in her are hidden agendas for making her
students reach their optimum learning potentials and in effect, the development of a
healthy self-esteem (Clotfelter, Ladd, & Vigdor, 2006). She is aware that she is just an
instrument in assisting the students to gain knowledge, and not the source of knowledge
herself.

In view of the above, teachers should be able to employ strategies appropriate to
their learners’ needs, interests and learning styles. The Multiple Intelligence theory
proposed by Howard Gardner in the eighties involves all students with varying
personalities, learning preferences and styles to actively participate in learning and to
achieve success in spite of their differences (Gardner, 2005). Precisely, students are
treated as individuals and their talents and interests are taken into account. Hoerr (2000)
agree in saying that “An MI approach means developing curriculum and using instruction
that taps into students’ interests and talents. Students are given options, different ways to
learn, and they share responsibility in their learning” (Hoerr, 2000, p. 12). Ideally, it
creates a stimulating learning environment that is conducive to optimal learning and full development of human potential. It takes a sensitive teacher to recognize where the particular intelligences of her students lie and design activities that would tap into them to push their learning even further (Campbell & Plevyak, 2008). In effect, when students do activities that are in their area of intelligence, they become excited in their work and display pride in their tasks (Hickey, 2004). Each individual has not just one but two or more developed intelligences while the rest blend into low or medium abilities (Lash, 2004). Gardner’s eight intelligences namely Verbal/Linguistic, Logical mathematical, Musical, Visual/Spatial, Body-kinesthetic, Interpersonal, Intrapersonal and Naturalist intelligences may be incorporated in learning activities through the use of toys and educational materials, learning centers that focus on particular intelligences as work stations (Rettig, 2005). Nolan (2003) contends that when teachers consider students’ needs when planning the lessons and activities, it optimizes the learning of the whole class. It is the teacher’s job to nurture and help the children develop their own intelligences. This does not mean that teachers need to prepare eight separate activities to address each intelligence (Moran, Kornhaber, & Gardner, 2006). Activities may be integrated to allow students to connect with their strengths. Textbooks must be used only as guidelines and the focus should be on providing varied opportunities for learning.

In a teacher-centered classroom where rules and routines as well as individual drilling are emphasized, students do not have much latitude to meet their needs for autonomy or social belonging within the context of learning (Hannula, 2006). However, in more student-centered classes where teamwork and meaning making are stressed, then they have many opportunities to meet various needs such as autonomy and social
interactions (Hannula, 2006). Shaftel, Pass, and Schnabel (2005) agree that students are more motivated to learn even difficult through instructional games and simulations rather than traditional classroom instruction. Games have been found to result in improved content retention over time, possibly because of the opportunity for more participation. Trial and error is always encouraged, making them more confident in taking risks (Shaftel et al., 2005).

In a study conducted by Douglas, Burton, and Reese-Durham (2006), the more traditional Direct Instruction (DI) teaching method was compared to Multiple Intelligence (MI) teaching to see which one is more effective in student achievement in Math. Direct instruction uses drill and practice, teacher-directed lectures, notes on the overhead and on the board, practice problems from workbooks and teacher-developed worksheets. For multiple intelligence teaching, students engaged in activities such as completing logic problems, composing rhymes to remember mathematical concepts, building or structuring a model, inventing a board game related to the lesson and performing a class presentation with the use of at least one of the intelligences. Results show that students exposed to MI exhibited a considerable increase in post-test scores as compared to those who were exposed to DI methods. Furner, Yahya, and Duffy (2005) have identified best practices in teaching math in middle school using MI-based strategies. They suggest using real and concrete objects to help understand abstract mathematical abstracts better. This would tap the visually and kinesthetically intelligent learners' area of learning preference. Math problems should also be related to students’ prior knowledge and background so they are able to relate better to it, hence foster greater understanding.
menus to teach multiplication and division help in achieving the goal of generalizing skills learned in class to their practical lives (Furner, Yahya & Duffy, 2005).

For students whose intelligences prefer seeing and hearing math problems instead of being limited to reading it in print, Furner et al. (2005) suggest drawing the problem, or thinking aloud in solving the problem. Furner et al. (2005) also suggest drawing interdisciplinary connections when learning math. For instance, in studying the differences between metric system and the Standard English system in measurement, teachers can simultaneously teach map skills from social studies lessons and letting the children convert distances from one system to another such as miles to kilometers. Furner et al. (2005) conclude that the more opportunities students are able to connect new learning with existing knowledge, the better the chances of increasing generalization potentials. Overall, Furner et al. (2005) recommend the use of auditory, visual and kinesthetic teaching approaches to reach more students rather than being constrained to traditional direct-instruction methods that use paper and pencil drill and practice forms of instruction.

Campbell and Plevyak (2008) suggest the use of logs and journals, graphic organizers, observational checklists, video samples, rubrics, portfolios, impersonations, dramatizations, creating concept songs and raps, linking music and rhythm with concepts, explaining to or teaching another, autobiographical reporting, and hands-on labs/demonstrations as authentic assessment materials/procedures. Such variety of learning activities and experiences allows students to learn in the mode they learn best, as dictated by their predominant intelligence. The aforementioned assessment measures
account for various learning styles rather than expecting all the students to have the same preferences in learning (Lash, 2004)

MI classrooms encourage collaboration among the students (Moran, Kornhaber & Gardner, 2006). Different groupings may be formed to bring together students with compatible profiles (exhibiting the same patterns of strengths and weaknesses) to work together to solidify and build on their strengths as well as students with complementary profiles (in which one student’s weak areas are another student's strengths) can work together to compensate for one another (Moran et al., 2006).

Teachers must be discerning enough how to use motivation. Shalaway (1998) explains that motivational processes are nurtured by drives and needs within ourselves (internal motivation), and sometimes outside forces direct them (external motivation). Schools give out external motivation in the form of grades and awards. These usually spur a competitive spirit instead of a cooperative one. Students have a tendency to rely on such external motivators, as they are concrete and observable by others. These may be very effective in eliciting desirable student behavior, however, when overused; it can be used as a tool for manipulation (for both student and teacher). Rewards are most damaging to interest when the task is already intrinsically motivating (Kohn, 1999). What teachers need to develop in their students eventually is internal motivation. Students, who are internally motivated to learn, approach learning tasks seriously, do them carefully and expect to benefit from them.

Positive relationships between teachers and students are characterized by open communication and setting high expectations for both parties. Teachers communicate their expectations of their students not only verbally but also non-verbally through
gestures, facial expressions, etc. (Clotfelter, et al., 2006). Teachers need to be careful with their actions towards their students, as if they are perceived to have low expectations of their students; it is likely that the student expectations will become self-fulfilling prophecies (Shalaway, 1998). The same goes for students whose teachers have high expectations of them.

Teachers are considered lifelong learners, and are expected to model such quality to inspire their students. Judith Little (1982) recommends teachers to collaborate with each other to come up with more effective instruction. They should engage in frequent, continuous, and increasing concrete and precise conferences on their teaching practice and be able to reflect if these practices are working to encourage success in their students. They should be open to feedback and allow frequent observation of their teaching performance. Together, they should plan, design, research, evaluate, and prepare teaching materials. They should also support and coach each other on other practices of teaching.

The foregoing is a thorough discussion of exemplary teacher characteristics and skills expected of high quality teachers that teacher preparation programs are expected to produce. It is apparent that skill requirements of teachers are overwhelmingly plenty and competence in each area would take teacher years to master. The following discussion chronicles a teacher’s development in her career.

Stages of Teacher Development

Studies on the development of teachers throughout their teaching careers have yielded models in the stages of teacher development. Among these are the models of Katz (1972) and Fuller (1969).
Katz Model

Katz (1972) identified four developmental stages of in-service teachers namely Survival, Consolidation, Renewal, and Maturity. These stages correspond to the length of teaching experience; however, each stage is not bound to a particular number of years. Stroot, et al. (1998) discussed the Katz model as follows:

1. **Survival Stage:** This refers to the beginning years of a teacher’s career when they question their own competence and desire to teach. Suddenly they are faced with the reality of the theories they have learned from their training and ask themselves questions such as “Can I really do this work day after day?” Survivors are focused on themselves and their own needs that they have yet to see and understand their own students’ needs. They have difficulty establishing clear rules and routines in the classroom and are challenged in managing student behavior. Survivors are more reactive than preventive when it comes to conflict resolution and tend to blame others when things go wrong (Stroot et al., 1998).

The teaching style predominant in Survivors is the teacher-directed method, which offers little interaction with or contribution from students. Control of the lesson is with the teacher, and the survivor tries her best to stick with her lesson plan no matter what. She goes through the lesson as if it is a script that cannot be changed despite opposing student reactions to it. For the survivor, a more student-centered approach is more difficult since power and control is shared with the students and she is afraid to show incompetence in case her students will come up with something she has no idea of.

In terms of growth, survival teachers need specific suggestions to be done in certain situations they are experiencing at the moment. Culling knowledge from their
training or listening to the advice of a colleague will not work unless it is directly related to their concerns at that time (Stroot et al., 1998).

According to the Public Agenda and the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality’s survey, first-year teachers admit that their teacher preparation lacked in two areas namely dealing with a culturally diverse class and accommodating students with special needs. Except for those two areas, they generally reported satisfaction in how they were prepared for the realities of teaching (Preparation Gap for First-Year Teachers, 2008). The survey also reported that teachers experienced more familiarity in handling cases that involve children’s cognitive, emotional, and psychological development and classroom management and discipline as learned from their teacher preparation programs and appreciate its usefulness in the classroom (Preparation Gap for First-Year Teachers, 2008).

Teacher’s awareness of each child’s learning style in his or her class make it easier to think of teaching strategies that will surely make an impact on the students. Understanding learners as unique individuals with different learning styles and intelligences would require many considerations. Foremost is the teacher’s understanding and knowledge of each child’s strengths and weaknesses in class. Constructing a learner’s profile must be done first with the help of the student themselves (Silver, Strong, & Perini, 2000).

Learner diversity is becoming predominant in schools as embracing diversity and inclusion is encouraged. Booth and Ainscow (2000) summarize what inclusion in education entails. It values all students and staff equally, no matter what their skill and ability levels are as well as their family and cultural backgrounds. It increases the
participation of students in classrooms and reduces their exclusion from the cultures curricula and communities of local schools policies and practices in schools. Inclusion also reduces the barriers to the learning and participation and this is not restricted to students with special education needs.

Another kind of diversity is cultural. Teachers need to be equipped with skills in accommodating and adjusting to the needs of children from various cultures. Global education is defined as “education that develops the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that are the basis for decision making and participation in a world characterized by cultural pluralism inter-connectedness and international economic competition” (Merryfield, 1995, p. 1). In view of this, on a much more specific level, culturally relevant teaching must be learned by teachers. It takes into consideration the cultural background of the students at all times. It also keeps in mind cultural aspects in all interactions with students on both personal and educational levels (Edwards & Kuhlman, 2007). Students’ cultures, languages, and experiences need to be acknowledged, valued, and used as important sources of their education because they deserve the best that society can give them.

2. Consolidation Stage: By around the second year of teaching, the self-absorption of the survival stage has lessened and the teacher has begun to focus more on teaching instruction and students’ individual needs. Children with unique problems and special needs are given more attention and the teacher is concerned with issues such as “How can I deal with a child with a specific problem?” (Stroot et al., 1998).

Teachers in the consolidation stage may still be struggling in their teaching practice but are now more open to seek opportunities for growth and development. They
are eager to share their feelings, ideas, and feedback with other teachers in the same stage of development and require a wider range of resources to use in meeting specific needs of their students (Stroot et al., 1998).

3. Renewal Stage: Having gained more competence from their teaching practice, teachers in this stage may feel bored with the same patterns and routines they have been implementing in their beginning years. Although these patterns of teaching may have been proven to be effective, teachers in the renewal stage actively seek new ideas to provide variety in their teaching.

Teachers in this stage have mastered some management strategies that they either have learned from their training or have explored on their own. Even if they have gained enough competence already, they are willing to learn new methods to improve their performance in their jobs. They ask questions such as “What are some new materials, techniques, approaches, ideas, etc. that I can try in my classroom?” (Stroot et al., 1998).

4. Maturity: By this stage, teachers have mastered several teaching strategies that work with their classes. They sustain their interest in learning new ideas and resources, but they now become more reflective, asking questions of themselves and their teaching focusing on deeper issues, perspectives, and beliefs about teaching and children in terms of leaving an impact on their lives. They are concerned with questions like “How will schools change society?” or “What is my role to assist change?” (Stroot et al., 1998).

Fuller Model

Fuller’s Model on the Stages of Teacher Development (Fuller, 1969, p. 222; Fuller & Brown, 1975, p. 37) explains that teachers’ development undergo three phases
of concerns namely concerns about self-survival, concerns about the tasks of teaching and concerns about their impact on their students.

Mars and Pigged (1994) explain the Fuller model in detail.

1. **Concerns about self-survival phase**: During teachers’ pre-service teacher preparation, Fuller describes future teachers as being more concerned about their own survival as students rather than being concerned about teaching and understanding the nature of their future students. As they move on to their later pre-service training and into their first year as an in-service teacher, their concerns about self-survival in the profession becomes stronger as they question their own performance in the tasks of teaching (Marso & Pigge, 1994).

2. **Concerns about the tasks of teaching phase**: Even with teachers who were rated as outstanding, their concerns about the task of teaching begin as relatively low when they begin training but increase as they begin their actual teaching practice. This may commence due to the realization that there are multiple tasks to be done as a teacher and that being overly concerned with self survival may just take up too much of their time and energy (Marso & Pigge, 1994).

3. **Concerns about making an impact**: Later in the teachers’ in-service training and experiences, the mature teachers in Katz’ stage of Maturity, is assumed to have overcome the issues and concerns of the self-survival stage and the tasks of teaching stage that they now begin to address their concerns in establishing and maintaining meaningful and significant impact on their students. They become concerned with leaving a legacy in their teaching (Marso & Pigge, 1994).
The Pre-service Teachers’ Stages of Concern survey by (Rogan et al., 1992; Borich, 1988) was based on Fuller’s Model. Rogan et al. (1992) added the following findings on the instrument as they checked for its validity and reliability:

1. There exist qualitative differences between teachers who find their courses relevant, such as the older teachers who have prior experience working with children) and those who do not.

2. The stages of concerns by Fuller (1969) that pre-service students go through were still observed even after they have completed the survey of pre-service preparation. This implies that such teachers were then in the self-stage.

3. Cronbach’s coefficients showed that instrument demonstrated high reliability.

4. Pre-service teachers were not categorized based on their scores on the task and impact dimensions of the scale but a distinction was made among and between groups based on scores on the self-dimension.

There may be environmental or contextual events that may influence the concerns of the pre-service teachers while completing the survey.

**Teachers’ Perceptions According To Stage Development**

Throughout the various stages of teacher development, teachers hold changing perceptions of their own competencies. This implies how teaching experience becomes a factor in the development and strengthening of teachers’ confidence in their own teaching. Burden (1981) extracted a chronological analysis of teacher perceptions throughout their teaching careers in a thoroughly conducted focus group interview with teachers having a range of teaching experiences. The revelations are as follows:
In the first year of teaching, they were yet unaware of the complexity of their job as teachers. Having limited knowledge and skills, they resort to teaching what they know best from their teacher preparation, the subject matter instead of concentrating on teaching the child. Consistent with the stages of development of Katz (1972) and Fuller (1969), the first-year teachers were more concerned about themselves in relation to their professional responsibilities. Specifically, they were concerned about their level of adequacy in maintaining classroom control, teaching the subject matter and improving their basic teacher skills such as lesson planning, grading and assessment, organizing and budgeting units to be taught and the materials and resources to be used (Burden, 1981).

Many teachers perceive the first year of teaching as a trial period. They evaluate their future plans based on the quality of experiences they have in their early teaching years.

Burden’s (1981) focus group members revealed that in their first year, they perceived themselves as having limited knowledge of teaching activities and of the teaching environment. They also conformed to an image they held of teachers. They had limited professional insight and perception and their curriculum and instruction were limited to subject-centered approaches instead of being able to integrate knowledge from different disciplines. They suffered from feelings of uncertainty, confusion, and insecurity regarding their teaching competencies. They were also not willing to experiment with new teaching methods (Burden, 1981).

The teachers in the focus group also agreed that in their second, third and fourth teaching years, they gained more confidence in themselves as they moved out of their concerns for survival. Knowing how to deal with children better came with understanding their wide range of needs and these teachers sought more and better
teaching techniques that agreed with the children’s learning styles. Being more open and genuine with their students, they were able to express more of themselves in their teaching. Specifically, they perceived themselves as having an increased knowledge of teaching activities and the teaching environment. They were slowly letting go of the image of a teacher they originally had. Their curriculum and instruction design were now geared more towards the child as a person. Confidence, security, and maturity came with their experiences as a teacher and in those years, they became more open to experimenting with new teaching techniques (Burden, 1981).

The teachers in their fifth year of teaching and beyond epitomizes Katz’ (1972) teachers in the Maturity stage. They perceived themselves as more in command of their teaching activities and the teaching environment. They already mastered which strategies work for them but are still on the lookout for new horizons in terms of their teaching methodology. Being more perceptive, they recognized children’s changing and complex needs and adopted a more student-centered philosophy. They have totally abandoned the image of the teacher they originally were very faithful to embody. These mature teachers perceived themselves as having enough knowledge of teaching activities and of the teaching environment. They continue to develop a more professional insight and perspective of teaching and are open to more opportunities for professional and personal growth (Burden, 1981).

Darling-Hammond, Chung, & Frelow, (2002) also interviewed a number of teachers regarding their perception of their own teaching competencies and found that teachers prepared through the traditional way of earning an Education degree felt better able and prepared to face the challenges of teaching than their colleagues who were
trained in an alternative route. It was then concluded that a sense of preparedness positively correlated with self-efficacy and decisions to remain in the teaching profession. This now brings up a very important and controversial topic which is the main concern of this paper.

Pathways of Teacher Preparation

Traditionally, teacher preparation required going through an Education degree with the requisite coursework and student teaching experience and being state-certified as a professional teacher before one can commence a career as a teacher. Nowadays, the lack of teachers to field in various posts throughout the country necessitated the creation of alternative routes to certification such as California’s Intern Program (Mitchell & Romano, 2010). In this state, close to one third of all new teachers joined the teaching profession through the intern-based alternative certification route, echoing what 49 other states offer.

Opposing camps have been created with regards to pathways of teacher preparation programs. Advocates of alternative certification claim that alternative, non-degree programs are superior to traditional teacher preparation degrees and stand for a better approach to filling the country’s classrooms by breaking down barriers that keep qualified individuals from entering the profession because of their lack of an education degree (Feistritzer, 2007; Haberman, 2004; Alternative Routes to Teaching, 2001; Chin, Young & Floyd, 2004a; U.S. Department of Education, 2004). Feistritzer (Alternative Routes to Teaching, 2001) report that “People coming in to teaching through alternative routes tend to be older, people of color, more men, have academic degrees other than education, and have experiences in other occupations” (p. 3). Dai, Sindelar, Denslow,
Dewey, Rosenberg (2007) identify specific alternative certification programs that attract distinct populations such as Teach for America which welcome recent graduates from non-teaching degrees, Pathways to Teaching, which attracts paraprofessionals, Troops to Teachers which encourage military retirees and other alternative route programs that embrace racial or ethnic minorities into the profession. Each population brings with them their own strengths as well as shortcomings to the programs (Dai, et al., 2007). These individuals may not afford unpaid student teaching especially if they have family and home ownership responsibilities. However, they have the drive and qualities that teaching demands. Proponents criticize university teacher preparation as not offering enough practical content and prospective teachers need more field-based training. Haberman (2004) argues, “The best way to learn to teach is by actually teaching and having access to a mentor, other teachers, and online resources” (p. 3). Mitchell and Romero (2010) observe that alternative pathways to teacher certification vary in structure, duration, intensity, curriculum, participant characteristics, and the targeted market. They may be operated by universities, school districts, county offices of education and a variety of private entrepreneurial enterprises. Mitchell and Romero (2010) conclude that an alternative certification program is the quicker and less expensive pathway to a teaching career that provides superior and more practical training to future teachers of this nation.

On the other hand, educators who have great faith in traditional university degrees as the best pathway for teachers believe that alternative certification is a diluted version of a university teacher preparation program and entrusts teachers who are ill-prepared and under-qualified to lead America’s classrooms (Darling-Hammond et al., 2002; Darling-
Hammond, Holtzman, Gatlin, & Heilig, 2005; Darling-Hammond & Youngs, 2002; Lasko-Kerr & Berliner, 2003; Public Advocates, 2007; Rosenhall, 2007; Rubin, 2007). Obviously, the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE) posts a strong stand against alternative teacher education programs questioning its efficacy and point out that superior teachers with background training in handling complex, multicultural, fast-paced 21st century classrooms are what are needed instead of alternative-trained individuals who come without skills and rely on learning on the job (AACTE, 2009b). This organization urges resistance to policies that welcome alternative certification as a solution to teacher shortage problems because according to them, it circumvents high standards of preparation just so it attempts to resolve the problem of teacher shortage (AACTE, 2009a).

Darling-Hammond (2006), a strong advocate of traditional teacher preparation through university education degrees, argues that for teacher training to be effective, tight coherence and integration across the courses offered in teacher preparation programs and linking course work with practical experience are necessary. It should also provide substantial, intensely supervised clinical work that makes use of teaching philosophy and strategies that link theory and practice. A final component necessary in teacher preparation programs is close working relationships with schools serving diverse learners effectively to serve as good models in high quality teaching. She claims that all these components are present in traditional teacher preparation programs and alternative teacher preparation programs are lacking such elements, making it less efficient routes to training future teachers (Mitchell & Romano, 2010).
Understanding How Adults Learn

While it is essential to know about various pathways of teacher preparation for prospective teachers, it is also important to understand how these adults learn, as they undergo Andragogy or adult education, which is differentiated from Pedagogy, which is childhood education. Generally, education is defined as “an activity undertaken or initiated by one or more agents that is designed to effect changes in the knowledge, skill, and attitudes of individuals, groups, or communities. The term emphasizes the educator or teacher trainer is, “the agent of change who presents stimuli and reinforcement for learning and designs activities to induce change” (Knowles, Holton, & Swanson, 2007, p. 13). This definition gives a more communal flavor to the definition of learning, as it indicates that the learner adapts to the knowledge, skill, and attitudes of the group he belongs to.

Change is evident in learning. The agent of change is the educator or teacher, who is responsible in stimulating learning to effect that change in his learner. The more person-centered thinkers like Carl Rogers, Abraham Maslow, and Malcolm Knowles share a humanistic view of education, and are specifically concerned with adults who are taking their second chance at it.

In the humanistic view, adult learners are assumed to be motivated to learn, as they are more conscious of its benefits. They experience needs and interests that learning satisfies. Their orientation to learning is practical and centered on their own lives. Adults value experience as the richest resource of learning, which is why they have no hesitations learning something while they are engaged in a new experience. “Nearly all
adult education is voluntary. Educational activities *must* meet the needs of adult learners, in order to survive” (Ellias & Merriam, 1980, p. 135).

The motivation to learn is affected by the reinforcements to learning namely intrinsic motivation or the inner drive to learn which leads to personal fulfillment; extrinsic motivation, which consists of rewards such as high grades or a prize for performing well; social reinforcement, an example of which is praise and approval from significant persons in an individual's life; and achievement, or the attaining of the learning goal. Having interplay of the four kinds of reinforcement is the most effective way to motivate a learner to pursue more knowledge and acquire more skills (Stoll, Fink, & Earl, 2003).

Adult learners have a deep need to direct their own learning, possessing a pride and learning style that suits their own personalities. Individual differences increase as people mature. Accepting these assumptions of how adults learn, Carl Rogers (1969), a humanistic psychologist further details the process of humanistic learning. He claims that the learner is personally involved in a holistic way. His or her feelings and cognitive aspects are deep into the learning experience. Learning continues to come from within even if there is an external stimulus because of possessed sense of discovery. Learning creates a difference in behavior, attitudes and personality of the learner (Rogers, 1969). This is consistent with the definition of learning presented earlier. The learner knows if his learning meets his needs and leads him towards what he wants to find out. Meaning is the essence of learning. When learning takes place, meaning is seen as part of the learning experience. Ellias and Merriman (1980) concur, “The truly humanistic teacher
respects and utilizes the experiences and potentialities of students” (p. 125). He gets his cues from his students in order for his class to be more productive.

An adult instructor, dealing with adult students, can hardly ignore the wealth and variety of individual experiences as a foundation for facilitating learning” (Ellias & Merriman, 1980, p. 125). This implies that the adult educator should always consider that adult learners bring with them their own worlds of past experiences, knowledge and skills, along with personalities they have formed all throughout their lives. These should not be threatening to an adult educator’s competence and knowledge, but rather, he or she must take the opportunity to maximize the learners’ backgrounds to introduce further and deeper learning (Ryan, 2009).

Focusing on the person and how he perceives the learning experience is the heart of the humanistic view of adult education. More than the concepts or skills he acquires through the activities designed around how he learns, “the emphasis of the humanistic educator, however, is not upon the works of the past and the values these possess, but on the freedom and dignity of the individual person that is highlighted in this tradition” (Ellias & Merriman, 1980, p. 109).

Being an adult learner, such as a potential teacher taking up teacher preparation classes, entails engaging in higher-order skills. A person engages in certain habits of thinking when faced with a certain problem. Costa and Kallick (2007) define a problem as any stimulus, question, task, phenomenon, or discrepancy for which an explanation is not known immediately. That means, a certain amount of knowledge should be on hand to help him out or else, such knowledge must be available to him soon to be able to solve his problem. Costa and Kallick (2007) term certain behaviors or dispositions for such
problem-solving as “habits of mind”. A habit of mind is being aware that one does not have answers to questions but maintains a positive disposition. The individual behaves intelligently even if he is clueless on what to do or what the answer is. When a person draws on his own habits of mind, he gains results, which are more powerful, of higher quality and greater significance than if he does not use such habits.

Wright (2007) came up with a personal knowledge management plan for adult learners consisting of four interrelated dimensions - analytical, information, social and learning. The competencies under the Analytical dimension of Knowledge management are the abilities to interpret and make sense of problems encountered, envision solutions, apply techniques and models to understand and address problems, create new options to redefine issues and contextualize system elements and complexity of problems. This information dimensions include competencies such as knowing how to source high quality information and assessing its value as useful to the individual or not. It also includes organizing information and making it accessible for future use, synthesizing information gathered and communicating it to others effectively (Wright, 2007). In sum, it comprises how one finds information and makes it useful in his life. It also includes organizing information and making it accessible for future use, synthesizing information gathered and communicating it to others effectively (Wright, 2007). In sum, it comprises how one finds information and makes it useful in his life.

Social dimension of knowledge management include finding people who can help an individual address problems and collaborate with him in searching for information and/or solutions. Developing and maintaining trust within certain networks formed in the
pursuit of knowledge is essential. To do so, one needs to develop skills in asking the right questions as well as sharing knowledge with others (Wright, 2007).

Knowledge management is always linked to a learning dimension. This includes having the ability to sense patterns in things and situations, reflect on information and decisions, develop new knowledge, improve oneself, and extend support to others by sharing knowledge (Wright, 2007).

Recent research has expanded the perspective on adult learning. Merriam (2008) contends that there is now a shift in understanding adult learning from the individual learner’s perspective to one considering the learner’s context. Such linkage of the learning process to one’s learning context has made understanding of adult learning richer and more holistic.

Economic and Practical Analysis of Alternative Teacher Preparation Programs

Dai et al. (2007) have managed to economically analyze the need to formulate alternative teacher certification programs. The No Child Left Behind (NCLB, 2001) act encouraged this solution to the problem of teacher shortages by attracting people who could not or chose not to take the traditional formal education path to teaching.

High-poverty urban and rural schools are the most in need of teachers since turnover far exceeds that in wealthier schools (Ingersoll, 2001). Smith and Ingersoll (2004) identify that if poor pre-service training was the culprit, it could be alleviated if not eliminated by good induction and mentoring programs. Ingersoll (2001; 2003) contend that although new teachers produced by universities and colleges may be able to meet the demands of schools, attrition remains high due to unfavorable working conditions.
Still, the annual supply of new teachers should be able to address the issue of shortages, but the more important concern is designing teacher preparation programs aimed at particular populations of teacher candidates.

Alternative teacher certification candidates who do not have an undergrad training in education but have experience working with children and schools have job-specific human capital. Dai et al. (2007) argue that the more job-specific human capital an individual possesses during training, the more possibility they have to succeed in their future teaching careers. Another advantage is “location-specific human capital” which means a candidate resides within the location of the community where the school is. This is especially significant in hard-to-staff schools (Dai et al., 2007).

Candidates with strong human capital become more productive in their jobs. In the case of teaching, these individuals have shown more teacher effectiveness after the first few years due to the further accumulation of specific human capital (Hanushek, Kain & Rivkin, 1998). To better support these new teachers with high human capital, it is essential to provide well-planned induction programs to not only ease them into the challenge of classroom teaching but also to provide them with enough opportunities to master teaching skills (Dai et al., 2007).

Gimbert, Cristol, & Seneb (2007) have found studies that conclude that alternative teacher preparation programs yield highly qualified teachers who can relieve immediate teacher shortages in core academic subjects such as mathematics, science, special education and English as a second language (Chin et al. 2004a; Gimbert, Cristol, Wallace & Seneb, 2005). Studies have also supported the conclusion that teacher characteristics of teachers from alternative routes reflect that they are more disposed to
teach in high-need urban schools due to the teachers’ life and background experiences. They can relate better to the students due to their wide and varied backgrounds (Chin, Young & Floyd, 2004b, 2004c). Similarly, these teachers are more willing to work with urban students and expected more from students of color (Fox, 1984; Haberman, 1990, 1999). Alternative programs also admitted more teachers from minority groups than their traditional teacher preparation counterparts. Such teachers with diverse educational and ethnic backgrounds are more easily posted in hard-to-staff school systems (Chin et al, 2004a; Gimbert et al., 2005). Lastly, most of the teachers who graduated from alternative preparation programs have career-switched from a different area of expertise to education (Koneci et al., 2002).

Finally, alternative teacher preparation programs must be organized to predict and maximize cost effectiveness. Attrition of new teachers trained in this system should be kept low, as cost effectiveness is reflected when these teachers remain in their teaching careers. Again, Dai, et al. (2007) advocate induction and mentorship to substantially contribute to these teachers’ skills as they eventually gain more human capital value through the years.

School-University Partnerships in Professional Development Schools

Despite the realities of the existence of opposing camps in teacher preparation programs, some compromise has been met with school-university partnerships in preparing programs for professional development schools (Gimbert, et al., 2007). In Virginia, a school system-university’s nontraditional teacher preparation partnership was organized and funded by the U.S. Department of Education’s Transition to Teaching (TTT) 5-year grant. This is in attempt to meet the need for highly qualified teachers as
called for by the NCLB act (2001) in the subjects of Math and Science in schools that are known to be difficult to staff. Like other alternative route programs, it targets varied populations of individuals who have a desire to teach but do not have an Educational university degree.

Holmes Group (1986) describe the mechanics of TTT as such: it is a partnership between a high-need local educational agency and a local university or school for higher learning that aims to recruit and prepare highly qualified teachers trained in alternative teacher preparation programs offered by the partnership to obtain their teaching license from the Virginia Licensure Regulations for School Personnel (Virginia Department of Education, 1998). Then, upon acceptance in the high need school, the new teachers are provided with follow-up support with a mentor and aided teaching experience for the first three years. This is presumed to be enough to develop them into highly effective teachers in the long run (Gimbert et al., 2007). Haberman (1991) identifies the five standards of excellence for alternative certification programs that the TTT met as follows:

- “a highly selective approach for the participants’ acceptance was applied [to this Transition To Teaching program];
- the program recruited the best faculty to teach the candidates;
- training to implement meaningful curriculum content was afforded to these prospective teachers;
- effective teaching methods that focus on pedagogy were included in the training; and
- evaluation of the program’s effectiveness, or otherwise, was conducted”

(Gimbert et al., 2007, p. 255).
The TTT is described by Gimbert et al (2005) as an intensive training program with the following content:

- curriculum and instruction
- course content related to the Virginia Standards of Learning
- differentiation of instruction
- classroom behavior management
- human growth and development

The above content approximates the content in traditional university training.

Teachers attending university-based alternative teacher preparation courses may report to specific areas in the university campus and they may be taught by university faculty. Some courses may be accessed online. In addition to course instructors, supervisors who come to observe the “interns” in the classroom are also provided to see the application of what has been learned in the course (Mitchell & Romero, 2010).

Impact of Teacher Preparation on Students

In Ferguson, Clark, & Stewart (2002) celebrated study on achievement gap it was reported that when students were asked about the primary reasons that motivate them to work really hard in school, the lower-achieving students identified teacher encouragement as their motivator. Having a dedicated teacher who inspires and motivates them to learn and maintains positive interactions with them helps students to achieve more (Harris & Sass, 2008). Students value teacher encouragement and motivation so much that it is greatly influential in somehow closing achievement gaps between the high and the low achievers.
When teachers are able to deal with students in a manner perceived by the student as positive, the students feel more at ease approaching teachers for help. The perceived approachability motivates the student to go to school regularly and may result in a greater desire to learn (Cervantes, 2007).

While evidence seems to indicate that a positive relationship encourages students to perform at higher levels in the classroom, a study by Fowler, Banks, Anhalt, Der, and Kalis (2008) indicated that poor student-teacher relationships are associated with low academic performance. In that study, students who shared openly indicated a strong disfavor toward teachers who often gave them busy work without explaining the material (Fowler et al., 2008). Some teachers were reported to curse their students, causing students to feel uncomfortable in the classroom. Experiences of this nature diminished the students’ motivation to complete assignments (Cervantes, 2007). Beginning teachers must learn nonverbal behavior that sends appropriate messages and creates positive teacher-student relationships (Wubbels & Brekelmans, 2005). These teachers learn that the more they disagree with their students on their perceptions of each other’s verbal and nonverbal behavior, the more their students view them as uncertain, dissatisfied with the relationship, and always admonishing them. These perceptions lead to counterproductive behaviors with respect to the promotion of cognitive and affective student outcomes (Wubbels & Brekelmans, 2005).

However, when the factor of teachers’ training background is added to the equation, there seems to be a deeper concern other than the teachers’ ability to motivate students. More than personal characteristics, professional qualification of teachers is identified as a force that may directly affect student achievement. Boyd, Grossman,
Lankford, Loeb, & Wyckoff, (2006) conducted a study on the effect of teacher training background on student achievement. Specifically, he questioned if students taught by teachers trained in the alternative preparation programs with reduced coursework requirements and limited professional teaching experiences differ in achievement from those taught by teachers trained in the traditional university undergrad training. Findings revealed that there are no significant differences in achievement in elementary Mathematics and English/Language Arts of the students especially when the non-traditionally trained teachers were already in their third year of teaching.

In middle school mathematics, students of a certain alternative training pathway, Teaching Fellows, outperformed students of teachers who went through an Education degree when their teachers were in their 2nd and 3rd years of teaching. Despite this impressive finding, all teachers who have been through alternative training programs in New York City including the NYC Fellows, Teach for America and other similar programs, are required to complete full certification requirements within their first three years of teaching (Gimbert et al., 2007).

In another comparative study by Goldhaber and Brewer (2000), they compared students’ performance in 12th grade mathematics and science and teacher certification. The relationships found in the study revealed that students of teachers holding a degree in Mathematics or certification specialized in Mathematics achieved better than their counterparts taught by teachers without specialized preparation in the subject matter. When the teacher held a professional or full state certification, her students scored higher than students with teachers certified in another subject or held private school certification. Another relationship found was that students taught by teachers with
bachelor’s or master’s degrees in mathematics outperformed students taught by teachers who did not have the same high qualifications (Ellis et al., 2007). In science, students taught by non-certified Science teachers and did not possess academic credentials in the science field scored lower. Finally, no significant differences in terms of measurement of student achievement growth were found between both Math and Science test scores for students taught by teachers with traditional training and teachers trained in alternative certification programs.

The state of Louisiana is a leading proponent in building longitudinal data systems that aim to study and compare the impact of their new teachers on student development (Duncan, 2010). This state will use information yielded by this data system to identify and evaluate effective and ineffective teacher training programs and university-based teacher education programs. This is such a monumental thing for Louisiana since it is the first and only state that has made advances in tracking down the effectiveness of its various teacher preparation programs on a long-term basis.

The literature casts more controversial information on the differences in the impact of traditional and alternative teacher training and much research is necessary in yielding more conclusive and generalized data.

In sum, Boyd et al. (2006) conclude that studies on the impact of teacher preparation, whether traditional or alternative on student performance have come up with the following findings:

1. Teachers coming from alternative or non-traditional teacher preparation have increased, and have changed the composition of teacher profiles specifically in high-poverty urban schools where most of them are needed.
2. Non-traditional pathways to teaching certification have been found to offer solid academic training and teacher preparation as evidenced by their graduates’ good performance in teacher certification exams.

3. The effect on student achievement of teacher preparation may be studied with students’ test-score data.

4. Robust research is called for to investigate further the effects of teacher preparation programs on teacher quality since studies on this area are sparse. Research will help in structuring teacher preparation programs better, be they traditional or alternative.

Teacher Education Reform

Ellison & Jazzar (2007) and King (2006) recognize that one of the most significant concerns in the American educational system is having highly qualified teachers in every classroom. This stems from the No Child left Behind (2001) legislation, which pushes for teacher education reform expecting improvements in the preparation, training and recruiting teachers excellent enough to affect improved student success. With funds from the NCLB legislation, school districts have the support and flexibility necessary to improve educational achievement through such initiatives as providing excellent training for teachers based on methodical research (Bush, 2001). In return, states will be held accountable for improving the quality of their educators (Bush, 2001).

Duncan (2010) argues that states, districts and the federal government are to blame for the persistence of ineffective teacher preparation programs. Most states have become complacent in approving proposed teacher education programs and licensing
requirements and exams. These licensure examinations supposedly measure the teachers’ basic teaching skills and their knowledge of subject matter content. However, these exams are useless without real-world assessment of classroom readiness. Likewise, Duncan (2010) claim that local mentoring programs for new teachers are poorly funded and unprofessionally organized at the district level.

Levine (2006), a former president of Teachers College, Columbia University lamented on the state of education in the United States:

The task before us is to redesign teacher education for a new era—to produce a greater number of high quality teachers with the skills and knowledge necessary to raise student achievement to the highest levels in history. Unfortunately, educators and policy makers disagree fundamentally about how to accomplish the task at hand. There are conflicting and competing beliefs on issues as basic as when and where teachers should be educated, who should educate teachers and what education is most effective in preparing teachers. These differences undermine successful teacher education reform. (Levine, 2006, p. 12)

In addition, Levine (2006) offers some guidance in what teacher education programs should be able to do for its teacher participants. What excellent teacher education programs can and should do is prepare teachers for the realities of today’s classrooms. They should educate teachers for a world in which the only measure of success is student achievement. They should educate teachers for subject matter mastery, pedagogical consequence and understanding of the learning and development of the children they teach (p. 104). Dai et al. (2007) report that better teacher preparation programs significantly reduce the risk of losing teachers on their first years of teaching.
Regardless of the nature of preparation routes taken by teachers, it is compulsory to adhere to rigorous standards in order to produce promising teachers.

Hess (2001) and Walsh (2001) determine that highly capable potential teachers are turned off by teacher preparation programs that lack rigor in its courses. These researchers agree that an individual’s verbal ability and mastery of content rather than pedagogical training are better predictors of how good a teacher will be. Thus, well-constructed teacher training programs that produce highly qualified, high quality teachers who elicit positive effects on their students’ academic performance are called for (Humphrey & Wechsler, 2007).

Supporting Teacher Development

In answering the call for teacher education reform, several school districts have adopted ways and means to support their new teachers with induction programs with mentoring. One example is the North Carolina Beginning Teachers Support Program that starts with a two week teacher-preparation seminar including classroom management, lesson planning, a synopsis of examinations, assessments, identifying student disabilities, classroom organization, instructional feedback that reflects on the lessons taught, and a host of other essential matters (North Carolina General Assembly, 2007).

Induction programs, primarily in North Carolina, have intentions to fulfill requirements of the NCLB Act 2001 by providing skills that will help retain newcomers. According to the State Board of Education, Charlotte-Mecklenburg schools coordinate induction activities that give a framework to carry out teacher licensure programs. In the induction program, exemplary mentors meet on a weekly basis with first and second year teachers. The mentees and mentors are matched according to subject expertise, and meet
for two hours before, during, or following class. This project has shown dramatic changes when implemented and “only 5% of participants in the project have left the teaching profession after 14 years” (North Carolina General Assembly. 2007, p. 12).

New teachers who are in Katz’s (1972) and in Fuller’s (1969) initial stage of survival may be suffering from decrease in confidence when fielded in an actual classroom and their attrition is greatest especially if no basic induction program is provided to support them. Gimbert et al. (2007) advocate that induction benefits all new teachers regardless of the kind of teacher preparation program they have undergone.

*Mentoring*

The Education Commission of the States (ECS, 1999) defines teacher mentoring as:

[A] formalized relationship between a beginning teacher and a master teacher (mentor) that provides support and assesses teaching skills. Duties of the mentor may include advising about instructional content and strategies, demonstrating classroom instruction, observing the beginning teacher's instruction, consulting about lesson plans and objectives, advising about school/district resources and student and parent relations, and informing the new teacher about the expectations of the school, the district, and the state. (p. I)

Mentoring is acknowledged as an important component in education that can resolve attrition problems of beginning teachers. Absence of mentoring meant absence of guidance from a more experienced educator making the new teacher feel inadequate to perform her job as teacher.
Fresh graduates of Education degrees or alternative teacher preparation programs are usually raring to get their hands on actual classrooms to apply everything they have learned. Mathias (2005) proposed that these newly qualified teachers may be more ready to do so have universities and alternative teacher programs included a mentorship programs from the time these teachers were still acquiring their degree. Mentors could have exposed these young future teachers early in the practice by actually immersing them in the classroom environment with their able supervision. However, what some universities do is sending new lecturers on teacher development courses to share their experiences with the Education students. Mathias argues that this has only a marginal impact on the future teachers’ intrinsic values and culture in relation to teaching.

Gold (1996) contends that organized mentoring programs greatly help newly graduated teachers and make them more effective in the transition from being a student to being a professional. This information has convinced the government to authorize grants to fund teacher mentoring programs to local educational agencies (Jones & Pauley, 2003).

Hay (1995) differentiates learning that comes in three levels in a mentoring relationship. The first level is traditional learning, which is the usual coaching and teaching about how to do things properly. An example is a teacher giving extra time to tutor a student on a particularly difficult concept. The next level is transitional learning which is about how things may be done differently. Learners make transitions that require them to be deeply aware of their goals and objectives and what to do in order to achieve them by trying out a different approach (Duncan, 2010). In every step of the way, they need to reflect if they are on the right track. The deepest level of learning is
transformational learning, which is about learning to learn. The student has already developed skills of deep awareness and analysis of his motives and actions, and the teacher collaborates with him in increasing his openness to learning. The process of learning is emphasized more than skills and techniques.

Deep learning is something that more experienced learners become aware of. It entails “having a grasp of the structure of a discipline, seeing how things are related, using the ideas in novel situations and evaluating, even challenging the knowledge claims embedded in the discipline” (Stoll et. al., 2003). This is far different from rote learning most children are exposed to – memorizing facts, formulas, etc., which is more of surface learning that goes with an unreflective attitude. Deep learning is the result of activities that create sense. These activities are made up of conscious attention, organizing and reorganizing ideas. It also encourages the assimilating or accommodating of new ideas and the constant reshuffling and reorganizing of such in an effort to connect ideas to coherent patterns.

Millinger (2004) has come up with a useful and meaningful acronym to describe the conditions where effective mentorship takes place. It is COPE, short for Co-development and Collaboration, Observation and Feedback, Policies and Systems, and Encouragement and Support.

Co-development & Collaboration

Mentees or new teachers may feel overwhelmed with all the new things they need to learn and do, so they would need their mentors to guide them in certain things. Team teaching with their mentor is one alternative, which encourages new teachers to experiment with various educational strategies without fear of serious consequences.
They get to see how their more experienced mentors organize their classes and pick up lessons they can use for their own practice. On the other hand, veteran teachers get the opportunity to carefully reexamine their practice which may have become automatic already for them, and find some things that do not work anymore with the current batch of students.

**Observation and Feedback**

It can be daunting for a new teacher to conduct a lesson while being meticulously observed by a veteran teacher. A mentor can instead invite the mentee to observe in her class. Beforehand, the mentor may assign the mentee something specific to observe in her class such as how she throws questions to the students, or how she moves around the classroom while delivering her lesson. Afterwards, they convene and give feedback on what has been observed. The mentee gets to learn that observation is research in the classroom, which can help a teacher improve on some weaknesses. When it is their turn to be observed, they will have more understanding in the value of other people’s observation and feedback of their teaching.

**Policies and Systems**

New teachers can be at a loss with policies or very simple school rules such as where to let the children line up during special events. It can save a teacher a great deal of time to learn systems endorsed by the school if mentors already brief them about it.

**Encouragement and Support**

Sharing one’s moments of frustrations and disappointments and later replaced by moments of joy in one’s teaching experiences gives much encouragement to mentees to go on especially when their mettle is challenged. Mentors showing they have been in
such a situation and have come out of it well become inspiring models to struggling new teachers.

Mentors recruited to guide new teachers must have the necessary qualifications and experience to draw their mentoring from. Veteran teachers are usually encouraged to be mentors, as it allows them an opportunity to espouse their teaching philosophy, promote collaboration, and being exposed to current educational trends and issues (Jones & Pauley, 2003). Mentors help foster personal and professional growth of their mentees by encouraging them to join professional organizations, reading educational journals, books and computer networks.

Mentoring commences with the introduction phase when rapport between the mentor and the new teacher or mentee foster the relationship through the sharing of ideas, personal philosophies, and other personal information. Next, comes a discussion and clarification of the purpose, desired outcomes, and expected roles of both parties as well as the framework of the mentoring process. When this is cleared up, the pair goes into a unity phase when they partner up in the preparation of classroom experiences and activities. They collaborate on materials and classroom layout preparation; discuss instructional environment and classroom management and other school issues. Such close interaction builds a stronger mentor-mentee relationship comprised of trust, honesty, respect and high levels of communication that lead them to go into the next phase (Jones & Pauley, 2003).

The application phase is when the mentees try out their wings with the mentors propping them up. This is when the mentees face actual students, try out the teaching strategies they have learned with them, develop their confidence in classroom teaching
while learning to make quick decisions on their feet. The mentors serve as assistants while they observe their mentees and give their feedback later. The final phase is critical reflection of one’s practice. This is a continuous process that must be sustained all throughout their professional growth. Both mentor and mentee need to be objective, respectful, encouraging, and honest in their critical reflections if their goal is to truly improve (Jones & Pauley, 2003).

Reflective Teaching

Engaging in self-reflection is another characteristic of effective teachers, as it offers insight and improvement in both personal and professional undertakings (Van Petegem, Aelterman, Van Keer, & Rosseel 2008). Lourdusamy and Khine (2001) wrote that teachers often reflect on a lesson they have just delivered but rarely evaluate the interpersonal behavior they manifest with their students. Teachers often fail to realize that interpersonal relationships with students are valued as much as, if not more than, the delivery of a well-planned lesson. Arends (2001) contended that “effective teaching requires careful and reflective thought about what a teacher is doing and the effect of his or her action on students’ social and academic learning” (p. 18).

According to Osterman (1990), “reflection is the essential part of the learning process because it results in making sense of or extracting meaning from the experience”. Reflective teaching can be both beneficial and disastrous. On the positive side, it promotes professional growth and development when the reflection succeeds in leading the teacher to greater self-awareness, a wider perspective in understanding problems and gaining and developing new knowledge (Osterman, 1990). On the downside, it is a time-consuming process that may be painful for the teacher because it involves questioning of
one’s motivations and philosophy. The teacher should be open to an examination of her own beliefs, values and feelings (Curtis & Carter, 2008).

Wade claims that reflection is essential for good practice as it proven that we remember 80% of what we have learnt through real life experiences and through reflection (Wade, 1997, p. 95). McPherson as cited in Wade (1997, p. 96) identifies reflection to help students with problem solving skills and develop a mind-set to be able to create change. Therefore it seems reflective practice is an important valuable tool for teachers, who are required to infuse not only the curriculum but also a vast amount of knowledge among students (Ellison & Jazzar, 2007).

In the past the teacher’s role was about sharing knowledge in one particular way. In the 1970’s, teaching was simply about making students acquire knowledge and be more attentive in their work. The role of the teacher was simply to observe students instead of interacting and participating themselves in the classroom (Tedick, 2009).

There seemed to be no consideration about the reflection of the pupil’s learning experience, leaving a lot of misconceptions on how knowledge and information were received by the students, as taught and guided by their teachers (Curtis & Cater, 2008). It was though at the time the pupils were not learning due to their social, cultural and environmental circumstances (Dewey, 2007, p.128). However through acknowledging and admitting that there were flaws in the education system and a need for a more reflective approach in the classroom, a number of teaching methods and models started to develop (Van Mann, 1999, p. 35). An emphasis on the importance of reflection on the part of teachers was raised. Dewey (1916) cited in Van Mann (1999, p. 34) stressed the need in teachers for some basic traits and characters such as sincerity, involvement and
responsibility to be developed and strengthened. This opened floodgates to making several challenges in teaching methods and models. Dewey’s action plan for the need of a more reflective approach may be considered as the beginning of the movement for reflective practice (Van Mann, 1999, p. 34). Thus, the idea of teaching has become a kind of double way flow i.e. that teaching is learning too, led a transformation in the pedagogy of teaching. There seemed to be a shift in focus, the teaching profession began to change as there was a realisation that teaching involved reflection and is not simply lecturing (Lounghran 1996, p. 6).
CHAPTER III  
METHODOLOGY

This study evaluated teachers’ perceptions of their undergraduate initial teacher training or alternative teacher training as adequate preparation for the tasks they now face on their jobs as teachers. Specifically, this research studied similarities and differences in teachers’ perception of their skills and how their training has prepared them for the job of teaching. It compared perceptions of teachers with one to two years of teaching experience, three to four years of teaching experience, and teachers with more than five years of teaching experience. The following research questions were addressed in this study:

RQ1: Will there be an interaction between teacher perceptions of their initial traditional undergraduate or alternative teacher training program and years of teaching experience (one to two, three to four, or more than five) with feeling adequately prepared to complete Planning and Preparation for Learning teacher job tasks.

RQ2: Will there be an interaction between teacher perceptions of their initial traditional undergraduate or alternative teacher training program and years of teaching experience (one to two, three to four, or more than five) with feeling adequately prepared to complete Delivery of Instruction teacher job tasks.

RQ3: Will there be an interaction between teacher perceptions of their initial traditional undergraduate or alternative teacher training program and years of teaching experience (one to two, three to four, or more than five) with feeling
adequately prepared to complete *Assessment, Monitoring, and Follow-up* teacher job tasks.

RQ4: Will there be an interaction between teacher perceptions of their initial traditional undergraduate or alternative teacher training program and years of teaching experience (one to two, three to four, or more than five) with feeling adequately prepared to complete *Classroom Management* teacher job tasks.

RQ5: Will there be an interaction between teacher perceptions of their initial traditional undergraduate or alternative teacher training program and years of teaching experience (one to two, three to four, or more than five) with feeling adequately prepared to complete *Family and Community Outreach* teacher job tasks.

RQ6: Will there be an interaction between teacher perceptions of their initial traditional undergraduate or alternative teacher training program and years of teaching experience (one to two, three to four, or more than five) with feeling adequately prepared to complete *Professional Responsibilities* teacher job tasks.

In exploring teachers’ perceptions of the adequacy of their preparation for teaching, the use of questionnaires as a means of collecting data from teachers with various years of teaching experience was selected for this particular research. Getting first-hand information from the teachers themselves was essential. Campbell, McNamara, & Gilroy (2004) described questionnaires as “a very versatile data-gathering method; they are cheap, easy to administer, whether it be to three people or 300, and can be used to gather a great variety of data of both quantitative and qualitative nature” (p. 146). Cohen, Manion, and Morrison, (2000) also praised the use of questionnaires for
their efficiency. Surveys and questionnaires allow the researcher to collect a significant amount of information in one attempt, rather than conducting interviews over a period of weeks. Gillham (2000) wrote that questionnaires make efficient use of the respondent’s time, because the survey participant can complete the questionnaire at a time that is suitable, and the survey process does not require the researcher and respondent to match free periods of time to conduct the research. Cohen et al. (2000) and Gillham (2000) emphasized the usefulness of questionnaires for ensuring participant anonymity, which may be requested in this study because of the sensitive and controversial nature of the material being investigated. If the respondents know they will remain anonymous, they may be willing to write about issues and opinions more openly than they would in a face-to-face situation. It could be argued then that questionnaires are more likely than interviews to generate truthful answers, as there is no personal contact with the interviewer.

However, a disadvantage of using questionnaires is that the only data collected is a variety of tick boxes and brief responses, which means the data tends to have more breadth than depth (Oppenheim, 1992). This outcome results from the lack of an interviewer to prompt for further information or more detail in the answers. The questionnaire or survey cannot interpret questions for participants who may be unclear about what is being asked, so each participant has to decipher what he or she are being asked independently. Participants may resort to their own subjective understanding of the questions (Oppenheim, 1992).
Instrument

The instrument used in this study is based on six domains of teacher job tasks identified within the literature review. The instrument was developed to survey teacher perception of feeling adequately prepared by their initial teacher training program to complete actual job tasks from each of the six domains. The instrument was developed using a combination of initial teacher training program (traditional undergraduate and alternative) exit surveys and various teacher job evaluation instruments. A variety of undergraduate and alternative teacher training program exit surveys were utilized to identify what teacher job tasks a potential teacher should feel prepared to complete as a result of participation in either of the initial teacher training programs. Several district level teacher evaluation instruments were used to develop the study survey to identify and compare what teachers should be prepared to do with the actual on the job teacher tasks they are expected to complete.

The instrument was examined by a panel of three experts to evaluate the face and content validity of the instrument. Panel Expert A is an elementary school teacher who participated in a traditional undergraduate initial teacher training program with eight years of teaching experience. Panel Expert B is a teacher who participated in an alternative initial teacher training program after completing their undergraduate degree in Human Resources with two years of teaching experience. Panel Expert C is a middle school principal with 13 years of experience in education. Revisions were made to the instrument for this study according to the responses on the validity questionnaire by the panel of experts. A pilot test of the instrument was conducted with 15 summer school
teachers to identify blank/misunderstood items as well as Cronbach’s alpha for internal consistency.

Table 1

*Pilot Study Results Table*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher Job Task Domains</th>
<th>Cronbach’s alpha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Planning &amp; Preparation for Learning</td>
<td>.954</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delivery of Instruction</td>
<td>.964</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment, Monitoring, and Follow-up</td>
<td>.899</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Classroom Management</em></td>
<td>.903</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Family and Community Outreach</em></td>
<td>.960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Professional Responsibilities</em></td>
<td>.916</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Procedure

The researcher contacted a variety of Mississippi and/or Louisiana school districts and request permission to have their teachers complete the survey for this study. One superintendent from Louisiana and one administrator from Mississippi sent in the agreement application to all their teachers to participate in this study. Two hundred fifty questionnaires were disseminated in the hopes of at least 125 to be returned and fully completed. The teachers indicated the kind of teacher preparation program they have undergone and how many years of teaching they already have by checking the appropriate choice. It was explained that there is a space for remarks for each section in case they want to elaborate on their responses.
Upon collection of the questionnaires, the researcher entered the data into SPSS for analysis. The responses were analyzed with the appropriate statistical method and qualitative analysis accordingly.
CHAPTER IV
RESULTS

Introduction

Data for this study was collected in September of 2011. There was one administrator in Mississippi and one superintendent in Louisiana who sent an agreement response to the researcher to allow their teachers to participate in this study. A two-way ANOVA was used to analyze the data responses to the survey designed for this study. The following are the results of the statistical analysis gathered from the data collected for this study.

Demographics

There were 250 surveys distributed between the schools in Mississippi and Louisiana. Of the surveys distributed, 42% (104) were returned to the researcher. Five of the returned surveys were not used in the study because they were incomplete. There were a total of 99 completed surveys returned for this study.

In the study, 65% of the surveys were completed by teachers whose initial teacher training came from traditional undergraduate teacher training programs. Teachers trained in alternative teacher training programs completed 35% of the surveys for this study. Within both the categories of traditional undergraduate teacher training programs and alternative teacher training programs were three more subgroups according to years of teaching experience. There were teachers to complete the survey for this study with 1 to 2 years of teaching experience (7% traditional, 8% alternative), 3 to 4 years of teaching experience (4% traditional, 5% alternative), and more than five years of teaching experience (53% traditional, 22% alternative). Teachers with more than five
years of teaching experience completed 75% of the total number of completed surveys for this study.

Table 2

*Frequency and Percentage Distribution for Teacher Participation*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training Program</th>
<th>Years of Experience</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Traditional</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 to 2 years</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 to 4 years</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5+ years</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative</td>
<td>1 to 2 years</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 to 4 years</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5+ years</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1 to 2 years</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 to 4 years</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5+ years</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The results of this study consist of data collected to answer the following research questions:

RQ1: Will there be an interaction between teacher perceptions of their initial traditional undergraduate or alternative teacher training program and years of teaching experience (one to two, three to four, or more than five) with regard to being adequately prepared to complete *Planning and Preparation for Learning* teacher job tasks.

RQ2: Will there be an interaction between teacher perceptions of their initial traditional undergraduate or alternative teacher training program and years of teaching experience (one to two, three to four, or more than five) with feeling adequately prepared to complete *Delivery of Instruction* teacher job tasks.

RQ3: Will there be an interaction between teacher perceptions of their initial traditional undergraduate or alternative teacher training program and years of teaching experience (one to two, three to four, or more than five) with feeling adequately prepared to complete *Assessment, Monitoring, and Follow-up* teacher job tasks.

RQ4: Will there be an interaction between teacher perceptions of their initial traditional undergraduate or alternative teacher training program and years of teaching experience (one to two, three to four, or more than five) with feeling adequately prepared to complete *Classroom Management* teacher job tasks.

RQ5: Will there be an interaction between teacher perceptions of their initial traditional undergraduate or alternative teacher training program and years of teaching experience (one to two, three to four, or more than five) with feeling
adequately prepared to complete *Family and Community Outreach* teacher job tasks.

RQ6: Will there be an interaction between teacher perceptions of their initial traditional undergraduate or alternative teacher training program and years of teaching experience (one to two, three to four, or more than five) with feeling adequately prepared to complete *Professional Responsibilities* teacher job tasks.

**Descriptive Statistics**

The independent variables for this study were teacher perception of the initial traditional undergraduate teacher training program or the post undergraduate alternative teacher training program they participated in to become a teacher. There were six dependent variables used to measure teacher perception of feeling prepared by their training program to *Planning and Preparation for Learning, Deliver Instruction, Assess, Monitor, & Follow Up, Manage a Classroom, Provide Family & Community Outreach,* and *manage the other Professional Duties* of a Teacher. The following are the statistical results of the data collected in this study for each of these subsets.

The two-way ANOVA conducted to analyze teacher perception of feeling prepared by their traditional or alternative initial teacher training program to Plan for Learning yielded the following results for research question:

RQ1: Will there be an interaction between teacher perceptions of their initial traditional undergraduate or alternative teacher training program and years of teaching experience (one to two, three to four, or more than five) with regard to being adequately prepared to complete *Planning and Preparation for Learning* teacher job tasks.
The results for traditional training program verses alternative training program were (F (1, 93) =1.561, p=.215). The results for years of teaching experience were (F (2, 93) =.420, p=.658). The results for the interaction between the two teacher training programs and years of teaching experience were (F (2, 93) =.247, p=.781). These results were not found to be significant. Teachers trained in a traditional undergraduate program with 1 to 2 years of experience and 3 to 4 years of teaching experience were found to have the lowest perception (M=3.60) of being prepared by their program to Plan for Learning. Teachers trained in an alternative teacher training program with 1 to 2 years of teaching experience were found to have the highest perception (M=4.28) of feeling prepared by their program to prepare them to Plan for Learning.

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics for Planning and Preparation of Learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training Program</th>
<th>Year of Experience</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
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</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 to 4</td>
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Table 3 (continued).

<table>
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<th>5+</th>
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</thead>
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</tr>
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<td>5+</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>35</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Total</th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
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<td>3 to 4</td>
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<td>1.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5+</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree; 5 = Strongly Agree
The two-way ANOVA conducted to analyze teacher perception of feeling prepared by their traditional or alternative initial teacher training program for *Delivery of Instruction* yielded the following results for research question:

RQ2: Will there be an interaction between teacher perceptions of their initial traditional undergraduate or alternative teacher training program and years of teaching experience (one to two, three to four, or more than five) with feeling adequately prepared to complete *Delivery of Instruction* teacher job tasks.

The results for traditional training program verses alternative training program were \( F (1, 93) = .021, p = .855 \). The results for years of teaching experience were \( F (2, 93) = .930, p = .398 \). The results for the interaction between the two teacher training program and years of teaching experience were \( F (2, 93) = .952, p = .390 \). These results were not found to be significant. Teachers trained in an alternative teacher training program with 3 to 4 years of experience were found to have the lowest perception \( M=3.4 \) of being prepared by their program for Delivery of Instruction. Teachers trained in an alternative teacher training program with 1 to 2 years of teaching experience were found to have the highest perception \( M=4.4 \) of feeling prepared by their program to prepare them for Delivery of Instruction.
Table 4
Descriptive Statistics for Delivery of Instruction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training Program</th>
<th>Year of Experience</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>1.0</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional</td>
<td>Total</td>
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<td>.97</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 to 2</td>
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<td></td>
<td>5+</td>
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<td>22</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alternative</td>
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<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 to 2</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>.64</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 to 4</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>.89</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>.98</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree; 5 = Strongly Agree
The two-way ANOVA conducted to analyze teacher perception of feeling prepared by their traditional or alternative initial teacher training program for *Assessment, Monitoring, and Follow-up* yielded the following results for research question:

RQ3: Will there be an interaction between teacher perceptions of their initial traditional undergraduate or alternative teacher training program and years of teaching experience (one to two, three to four, or more than five) with feeling adequately prepared to complete *Assessment, Monitoring, and Follow-up* teacher job tasks.

The results for traditional training program verses alternative training program were ($F (1, 93) = .086, p=.770$). The results for years of teaching experience were ($F (2, 93) =.876, p=.420$). The results for the interaction between the two teacher training program and years of teaching experience were ($F (2, 93) =1.474, p=.234$). These results were not found to be significant. Teachers trained in an alternative teacher training program with 3 to 4 years of experience were found to have the lowest perception ($M=3.1$) of being prepared by their program for *Assessment, Monitoring, and Follow-up*. Teachers trained in an alternative teacher training program with 1 to 2 years of teaching experience were found to have the highest perception ($M=4.3$) of feeling prepared by their program to prepare them for *Assessment, Monitoring, and Follow-up*. 
Table 5

Descriptive Statistics for Assessment, Monitoring, and Follow-up

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training Program</th>
<th>Year of Experience</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Traditional</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 to 2</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>.95</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 to 4</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>.76</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5+</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Alternative</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 to 2</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>.32</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 to 2</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 to 4</td>
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<td>.86</td>
<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree; 5 = Strongly Agree
The two-way ANOVA conducted to analyze teacher perception of feeling prepared by their traditional or alternative initial teacher training program for *Classroom Management* yielded the following results for research question:

**RQ4:** Will there be an interaction between teacher perceptions of their initial traditional undergraduate or alternative teacher training program and years of teaching experience (one to two, three to four, or more than five) with feeling adequately prepared to complete *Classroom Management* teacher job tasks.

The results for traditional training program verses alternative training program were \((F (1, 93) = .042, p=.837)\). The results for years of teaching experience were \((F (2, 93) =1.195, p=.307)\). The results for the interaction between the two teacher training program and years of teaching experience were \((F (2, 93) =.606, p=.548)\). These results were not found to be significant. Teachers trained in an alternative teacher training program with 3 to 4 years of experience were found to have the lowest perception \((M=3.7)\) of being prepared by their program for *Classroom Management*. Teachers trained in an alternative teacher training program with 1 to 2 years of teaching experience were found to have the highest perception \((M= 4.4)\) of feeling prepared by their program to prepare them for *Classroom Management*.  


Table 6  
Descriptive Statistics for *Classroom Management*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training Program</th>
<th>Year of Experience</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Traditional</td>
<td>1 to 2</td>
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<td>.45</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 to 4</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>.97</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative</td>
<td>1 to 2</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>.67</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 to 4</td>
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<td>.76</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5+</td>
<td>3.9</td>
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<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>.93</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1 to 2</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>.58</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 to 4</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>.77</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5+</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>.95</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. Scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree; 5 = Strongly Agree*
The two-way ANOVA conducted to analyze teacher perception of feeling prepared by their traditional or alternative initial teacher training program for *Family and Community Outreach* yielded the following results for research question:

RQ5: Will there be an interaction between teacher perceptions of their initial traditional undergraduate or alternative teacher training program and years of teaching experience (one to two, three to four, or more than five) with feeling adequately prepared to complete *Family and Community Outreach* teacher job tasks.

The results for traditional training program verses alternative training program were (F (1, 93) = .172, p=.679). The results for years of teaching experience were (F (2, 93) =1.360, p=.262). The results for the interaction between the two teacher training program and years of teaching experience were (F (2, 93) =.361, p= .698). These results were not found to be significant. Teachers trained in a traditional undergraduate teacher training program with five or more years of experience were found to have the lowest perception (M=3.6) of being prepared by their program for *Family and Community Outreach*. Teachers trained in an alternative teacher training program with 1 to 2 years of teaching experience were found to have the highest perception (M = 4.5) of feeling prepared by their program to prepare them for *Family and Community Outreach*. 
Table 7  
Descriptive Statistics for *Family and Community Outreach*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training Program</th>
<th>Year of Experience</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Traditional</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 to 2</td>
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<td>.52</td>
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<td>.55</td>
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<td>1.1</td>
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<td>1.1</td>
<td>64</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alternative</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 to 2</td>
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<td>.61</td>
<td>8</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 to 2</td>
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<td>4.3</td>
<td>.61</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>5+</td>
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<td>3.7</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>75</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. Scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree; 5 = Strongly Agree*
The two-way ANOVA conducted to analyze teacher perception of feeling prepared by their traditional or alternative initial teacher training program for Professional Responsibilities yielded the following results for research question:

RQ6: Will there be an interaction between teacher perceptions of their initial traditional undergraduate or alternative teacher training program and years of teaching experience (one to two, three to four, or more than five) with feeling adequately prepared to complete Professional Responsibilities teacher job tasks.

The results for traditional training program verses alternative training program were (F (1, 93) = .052, p=.821). The results for years of teaching experience were (F (2, 93) =.043, p=.958). The results for the interaction between the two teacher training program and years of teaching experience were (F (2, 93) =.697, p= .501). These results were not found to be significant. Teachers trained in an alternative teacher training program with 3 to 4 years of experience were found to have the lowest perception (M=3.3) of being prepared by their program for Professional Responsibilities. Teachers trained in an alternative teacher training program with 5 or more years of teaching experience were found to have the highest perception (M= 3.88) of feeling prepared by their program to prepare them for Professional Responsibilities.
Table 8

Descriptive Statistics for *Professional Responsibilities*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training Program</th>
<th>Year of Experience</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Traditional</td>
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<td>.89</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 to 4</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative</td>
<td>1 to 2</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 to 4</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5+</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. Scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree; 5 = Strongly Agree*
CHAPTER V
DISCUSSION

Summary

The purpose of this study was to gather data about teachers’ perceptions of their initial teacher training program (traditional undergraduate or alternative route) as adequate training to prepare them to complete actually teacher job tasks. The study compared the perceptions of teachers with varying years of teaching experience (one to two, three to four, and more than five) to identify if there was a difference and/or how years of teaching experience impacted teachers’ perceptions of their initial teacher training program. The study identified the similarities and differences of teachers’ perceptions of being prepared to complete teacher job tasks in six areas:

- Planning and Preparation for Learning
- Delivery of Instruction
- Assessment, Monitoring, and Follow-up
- Classroom Management
- Family and Community Outreach
- Professional Responsibilities

This study was also conducted to identify if there was a need for reform within initial traditional teacher and/or alternative route teacher training programs. The study sought to identify specific teacher job tasks which teachers did not feel adequately trained by their initial teacher training program to complete. This study was conducted to identify the possible needs future teachers will have in order to adequately meet the needs of their future students.
Conclusions and Discussion

RQ1: Will there be an interaction between teacher perceptions of their initial traditional undergraduate or alternative teacher training program and years of teaching experience (one to two, three to four, or more than five) with regard to being adequately prepared to complete *Planning and Preparation for Learning* teacher job tasks.

The results for this research question were not found to be statistically significant. The data did however reveal that most study participants felt neither strongly unprepared nor strongly prepared by either teacher training program to complete teacher job tasks in the area of *Planning and Preparation for Learning*. Teachers with one to two years of teaching experience, trained in an alternative route teacher training program were found to have the highest perception of all groups with regards to feeling adequately prepared by their program to complete teacher job tasks in this area. Teachers with three to four years of teaching experience, trained in a traditional undergraduate teacher training program were found to have the lowest perception of all groups with regards to feeling adequately prepared by their program to complete teacher job tasks in this area. Teachers with five or more years of teaching experience, trained in alternative route programs were found to feel more prepared than teachers with the same years of experience trained in traditional teacher training programs in the area of *Planning and Preparation for Learning*.

RQ2: Will there be an interaction between teacher perceptions of their initial traditional undergraduate or alternative teacher training program and years of
teaching experience (one to two, three to four, or more than five) with feeling adequately prepared to complete Delivery of Instruction teacher job tasks.

The results for this research question were also found not to be statistically significant. The data revealed that most study participants felt slightly more than prepared by either teacher training program to complete teacher job tasks in the area of Delivery of Instruction. Teachers with one to two years of teaching experience, trained in an alternative route teacher training program were found to have the highest perception of all groups with regards to feeling adequately prepared by their program to complete teacher job tasks in this area. In contrast, teachers with three to four years of teaching experience, trained in alternative route programs were found to have the lowest perception of all groups with regards to feeling adequately prepared by their program to complete teacher job tasks in this area. Teachers with five or more years of teaching experience, trained in alternative route programs were found to feel more prepared than teachers with the same years of experience trained in traditional undergraduate teacher training programs in the area of Delivery of Instruction.

RQ3: Will there be an interaction between teacher perceptions of their initial traditional undergraduate or alternative teacher training program and years of teaching experience (one to two, three to four, or more than five) with feeling adequately prepared to complete Assessment, Monitoring, and Follow-up teacher job tasks.

The data for this research question was not found to be statistically significant. These results also revealed that most study participants felt neither strongly unprepared nor strongly prepared by either teacher training program to complete teacher job tasks in
the area of *Assessment, Monitoring, and Follow-up*. Teachers with one to two years of teaching experience, trained in an alternative route teacher training program were found to have the highest perception of all groups with regards to feeling adequately prepared by their program to complete teacher job tasks in this area. Teachers with three to four years of teaching experience, trained in an alternative route teacher training program were found to have the lowest perception of all groups with regards to feeling adequately prepared by their program to complete teacher job tasks in this area. Teachers with five or more years of teaching experience, trained in alternative route programs were found to feel more prepared than teachers with the same years of experience trained in traditional undergraduate teacher training programs in the area of *Assessment, Monitoring, and Follow-up*.

RQ4: Will there be an interaction between teacher perceptions of their initial traditional undergraduate or alternative teacher training program and years of teaching experience (one to two, three to four, or more than five) with feeling adequately prepared to complete *Classroom Management* teacher job tasks.

The results for this research question were not found to be statistically significant. The data revealed that most study participants felt slightly more than prepared by either teacher training program to complete teacher job tasks in the area of *Classroom Management*. Teachers with one to two years of teaching experience, trained in an alternative route teacher training program were found to have the highest perception of all groups with regards to feeling adequately prepared by their program to complete teacher job tasks in this area. Teachers with three to four years of teaching experience, trained in an alternative route teacher training program were found to have the lowest
perception of all groups with regards to feeling adequately prepared by their program to complete teacher job tasks in this area. Teachers with five or more years of teaching experience, trained in alternative route programs were found to feel more prepared than teachers with the same years of experience trained in traditional teacher training programs in the area of Classroom Management.

RQ5: Will there be an interaction between teacher perceptions of their initial traditional undergraduate or alternative teacher training program and years of teaching experience (one to two, three to four, or more than five) with feeling adequately prepared to complete Family and Community Outreach teacher job tasks.

The results for this research question were not found to be statistically significant. The data revealed that most study participants felt slightly more than prepared by either teacher training program to complete teacher job tasks in the area of Family and Community Outreach. Teachers with one to two years of teaching experience, trained in an alternative route teacher training program were found to have the highest perception of all groups with regards to feeling adequately prepared by their program to complete teacher job tasks in this area. Teachers with five or more years of teaching experience, trained in a traditional undergraduate teacher training program were found to have the lowest perception of all groups with regards to feeling adequately prepared by their program to complete teacher job tasks in this area. Teachers with three to four years of teaching experience trained in traditional undergraduate teacher training programs felt more prepared than teachers with same years of experience trained in alternative route programs in the area of Family and Community Outreach.
RQ6: Will there be an interaction between teacher perceptions of their initial traditional undergraduate or alternative teacher training program and years of teaching experience (one to two, three to four, or more than five) with feeling adequately prepared to complete Professional Responsibilities teacher job tasks.

The results for this research question were not found to be statistically significant. The data for this area revealed that most study participants felt neither strongly unprepared nor strongly prepared by either teacher training program to complete teacher job tasks in the area of Professional Responsibilities. Teachers with five or more years of teaching experience, trained in an alternative route teacher training program were found to have the highest perception of all groups with regards to feeling adequately prepared by their program to complete teacher job tasks in this area. Teachers with three to four years of teaching experience, trained in an alternative route teacher training program were found to have the lowest perception of all groups with regards to feeling adequately prepared by their program to complete teacher job tasks in this area. Teachers one to two years of teaching experience, trained in alternative route programs were found to feel more prepared than teachers with the same years of experience trained in traditional teacher training programs in the area of Professional Responsibilities.

Previous research found students with teachers trained in alternative route teacher programs had more positive results on state achievement assessments than students with teachers trained in trained in traditional undergraduate programs (Garcia, 2011). This current study supports this literature. Participants in this study trained in alternative route programs found to have a higher perception of feeling adequately prepared by their teacher training to complete teacher job tasks than study participants trained in traditional
undergraduate programs. As Danielson stated in 2007, “A person cannot teach what he or she does not know” (p. 44). This study supports the theory that a teacher who feels more prepared or trained (has self efficacy) to do their job, will have better job performance than teachers who do not feel as prepared or trained to complete actual teacher job tasks.

The current study found most teachers trained in alternative route programs with one to two years of teaching experience to have the highest level of all groups with a perception of being adequately prepared by their training program to complete teacher job tasks. These results could be explained by previous literature, which states that in the first year of actual teaching, teachers are not yet aware of the complexity of their jobs as teachers (Burden, 1981). This literature could also explain why the current study found alternative route teachers with three to four years of teaching experience to have the lowest perception of all groups with perception of feeling adequately prepared by their training program. This is a direct opposite of teachers trained in the same type of program with one to two years of teaching experience. The current study gives the impression that being on the job three to four years as a teacher makes one feel much less prepared by their alternative route program to complete teacher job tasks than they may have felt in the initial two years of their teaching career. These results indicate that being a teacher for a longer period of time lowers a teacher’s perception of feeling adequately prepared by their teacher training program to complete teacher job tasks. One teacher stated “I did not realize how unprepared I was to do my job as a teacher.” A second teacher stated “I did not realize how much more on the job training I have benefited from, more so than my initial teacher training.”
As stated in chapter 1, this study sought to identify areas teachers may or may not feel they have adequate training needed to complete specific teacher job tasks. According to the Public Agenda and the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Qualities survey, first year teacher preparation laced in two areas, namely dealing with culturally diverse classes and accommodating students with special needs. Except for those two areas, they generally reported satisfaction in how they were prepared for the realities of teaching (Preparation Gap for First-Year Teachers, 2008). Qualitative as well as some of the quantitative data for this current study indicated that many teachers do not feel they were adequately trained by their initial teacher training program to plan individualized instruction for students with special needs. This was found to be one of the specific survey items that many of the current study participants rated as feeling unprepared by either teacher training program to complete. This perception seemed to be the same for new teachers as well as teachers with five or more years of teaching experience.

Limitations

There was no statistical significance found for any of the research questions for this study. There are several participant population factors, which may have contributed to the lack of statistical significance for this study. The researcher originally hoped to find a somewhat even balance between the number of participants from each sub-group (traditional or alternative route trained, one to two years, three to four years, or five or more years). There was a dramatic difference between the expected population of participants and the actual population, which participated in the study.
There were a total of ninety-nine participants to complete the surveys for this study. This study compared groups of teachers who had the same years of experience (one to two, three to four, or five or more) according to their initial teacher training program (traditional undergraduate or alternative route). The majority of the participants for this study (75%) had five or more years of teaching experience. Most (65%) of these participants were trained in a traditional undergraduate teacher training program. There was a great shortage of study participants trained in an alternative teacher training program. There was an even greater shortage of participants in this study with three to four years of teaching experience (9%) trained in either program. There were only four study participants for this group, which were trained in alternative route programs, and five study participants trained in traditional undergraduate programs. It is very likely these shortages of sub-group participant factors heavily contributed to the lack of statistical significance found for this study.

The researcher is concerned that this shortage of participants placed direct limitations on the results for this study. Whereas, teachers trained alternative route programs with one to two years of teaching experience were found to have the highest level of all groups with the perception of being prepared by their initial training program, teachers with three to four years of teaching experience trained in the same type of program were found to have the lowest level of all groups with the perception of being prepared by their initial training program. This is a dramatic difference in perception of the same initial training program (alternative route) where the on change was having three to four years of teaching experience instead of having one to two years of teaching experience. The researcher would like to find out if these study results would be the
same if there were more study participants available with three to four years of teaching experience.

The final limitation for this study was the instrument itself. Some of the participant ratings indicate that the teachers may not have actually read the entire instrument. Some participants gave all high ratings of fours and fives. A second area of concern with the instrument is that the participants may have felt that if they did not give a high rating, they would feel like they were somehow admitting to not currently having the needed skills to complete specific teacher job tasks. It is possible that some participants did not make the distinction between being prepared by their program to effectively complete teacher job tasks and actually now have the ability to effectively complete teacher job tasks.

Recommendations for Policy or Practice

Despite the overall lack of statistical significance in the results for this study, there were some identified areas where teachers indicated being less prepared by their training program to complete teacher job tasks. Several study participants indicated not feeling prepared to plan instruction for students with specials needs (ESL, 504, At Risk, & Special Ed.) To be specific, several participants indicated not feeling prepared to complete the following teacher job tasks:

- Read and understand Individual Education Plans (IEP) and provide appropriate accommodations for individual students in the classroom.
- Read and understand 504 plans and provide appropriate individualized instruction for these students.
• Effectively manage the variety of non-instructional duties, which are part of teacher job tasks.

This indicates that future teachers need more training in these areas regardless of the initial teacher training program they choose, in order to provide effective differentiated instruction for their students and meet all student needs.

Study participants also reported not feeling prepared by their initial teacher training program to teach classes with large numbers of students and/or do not have adequate instructional resources. This is another area future teachers will need to be better trained to address. This factor is impacted by the current status of the economy. Many school systems are eliminating teacher jobs to address budget issues. This creates larger class sizes as well as limits available instructional resources needed for effective instruction.

The results for this study are also critical for current teachers, administrators, school districts, and state boards of education. Administrators should assess building level teacher needs in order to seek and/or provide professional development which will help teachers in the areas of need identified in this study. School districts should plan and provide district level professional development for administrators and teachers, which will enhance teacher job performance in the areas of concern identified in this study. Federal and state boards of education should conduct research to identify best practices for planning and providing professional development for teachers, administrators, and school districts, which will enhance teacher job performance in the areas of concern identified in this study in order to help educators meet student needs.
These practices will all ultimately improve teacher job performance as well as improve student achievement.

**Recommendations for Future Research**

Due to the lack of participants with three to four years of teaching experience in the study, the researcher recommends future research, which targets teachers with three to four years of teaching experience. This is a time period where many teachers actually leave the field of teaching. Future research targeting these teachers would help to identify what professional knowledge or training is needed to help teachers survive or feel more prepared to complete their teacher job tasks. How do initial teacher training programs contribute to this shortage of teachers with three to four years of teaching experience?

The researcher would also like to recommend observations, the use of student achievement data, and grades of students with teachers having three to four years of teaching experience. This will allow a more objective picture of how well their initial teacher training program has prepared them to effectively complete their teacher job tasks. Surveys may not be the most objective instrument to use, since stating not being prepared could also be associated with not feeling one has the ability to complete a task. It is also possible that teachers who do not feel prepared to do teacher job tasks are more likely to choose not to complete a survey, which ask questions of this nature and opt to not participate in the study.
APPENDIX A

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL LETTER

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: 11072102
PROJECT TITLE: Teacher Perception of Their Traditional or Alternative Initial Teacher Training Programs
PROJECT TYPE: Dissertation
RESEARCHER/S: Daphne Lowe
COLLEGE/DIVISION: College of Education & Psychology
DEPARTMENT: Educational Administration & School Psychology
FUNDING AGENCY: N/A
IRB COMMITTEE ACTION: Exempt Approval
PERIOD OF PROJECT APPROVAL: 08/30/2011 to 08/29/2012

Lawrence A. Hosman, Ph.D.            8-3-2011
Institutional Review Board Chair

Date
APPENDIX B

TEACHER PERCEPTION OF THEIR INITIAL TEACHER TRAINING SURVEY

Validity Questionnaire

The following lists of questions pertain to the survey you have been asked to review. Your input on the questions from this survey is very important to the overall process of my dissertation. I would like to thank you for volunteering to participate by assisting me with the development of this survey. Your time and consideration is invaluable.

Please rate the attached survey based on the following information.

1. Does the survey contain language that can be understood by teachers who have completed a teacher training program?

__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________

2. Does the survey address specific and appropriate issues in the statements, as it relates to perception of feeling prepared by an initial teacher training program to complete actual teacher job tasks?

__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________

3. Do you find any of the questions offensive or obtrusive?

__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________

4. Are there any questions or statements that you feel should be excluded from the survey? If so, why?

__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________

5. Do you have any statements or questions you feel should be added to the survey?

__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________

Do you have any other questions or comments pertaining to this survey?

__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
APPENDIX C

PARTICIPATION IN THE STUDY PERMISSION FORM

Dear Administrator/Principal:

My name is Daphne Lowe. I am writing to request permission to send surveys to teachers in your school/district. I am currently a doctoral candidate at the University of Southern Mississippi under the guidance of Dr. Rosie McAbee, Ph.D. For this dissertation, I will be collecting information on teachers’ perceptions regarding the adequacy of their initial teacher education training programs in preparing them to perform the tasks they currently face on their jobs as teachers. Upon completion, this information will be shared with my dissertation committee. To ensure confidentiality of teachers, no one will be identified by name including the school district, the location of the district, or the name of the school. I plan to begin collecting this data in August 2011 and complete by September 2011. All surveys will be destroyed by shredder upon completion of this study.

As part of this study, I will be asking teachers to complete a survey to gather information about attitudes of their initial teacher education training program. While there are no inherent risks for participating in this study, I do need to inform you of the purpose and expected outcomes. I am hoping this research will raise awareness about the possibility of needed ways to improve teacher training and support in order to improve instruction as well as student achievement.

In order to complete this study, I need your teachers’ active voluntary participation in completing the survey and returning it to me at your earliest convenience. There is no penalty for opting not to complete the survey for this study. Please feel free to contact me at daphnel0120@gmail.com if you have any questions about this survey or study.

Please sign below to state if you will allow me to send the surveys for this study to the teachers in your school or district:

(circle) principal or supervisor/

(supterintendent), of ____________________________ (school or district) will allow Daphne Lowe to send the surveys for the study described above to the teachers of our school/district.

Signature ____________________________ Date 8/19/11

Position ____________________________

School or District Name ____________________________

This study will be 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 Dr, Hattiesburg, MS 39406-0001, (601) 266-6820.

Learning to Last a Lifetime®
Dear Administrator/Principal:

My name is Daphne Lowe. I am writing to request permission to send surveys to teachers in your school/district. I am currently a doctoral candidate at the University of Southern Mississippi under the guidance of Dr. Rose McNeese, Ph.D. For this dissertation, I will be collecting information on teachers’ perceptions regarding the adequacy of their initial teacher training programs in preparing them to perform the tasks they currently face in their jobs as teachers. Upon completion, this information will be shared with my dissertation committee. To ensure confidentiality of teachers, no one will be identified by name including the school district, the location of the district, or the name of the school. I plan to begin collecting this data in August 2011 and be completed by September 2011. All surveys will be destroyed by shredder upon completion of this study.

As part of this study, I will be asking teachers to complete a survey to gather information about attitudes of their initial teacher education training program. While there are no inherent risks for participating in this study, I do need to inform you of the purpose and expected outcomes. I am hoping this research will raise awareness about the possibility of needed ways to improve teacher training and support in order to improve instruction as well as student achievement.

In order to complete this study, I need your teachers’ active voluntary participation in completing the survey and returning it to me at your earliest convenience. There is no penalty for opting not to complete the survey for this study. Please feel free to contact me at Daphnелоe620@email.com if you have any questions about this survey or study.

Please sign below to state if you will allow me to send the surveys for this study to the teachers in your school or district:

I, _______________ (principal/superintendent), of ____________________________ (school or district) will allow Daphne Lowe to send the surveys for the study described above to the teachers of our school/district.

Signature ___________________________ Date: Aug 22, 2011
Position Principal
School or District Name ____________________________________________

This study will be 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.

"Education First, Every Student, Every Chance, Every Day"
APPENDIX D

STUDY INSTRUMENT

Perception of Your Initial Teacher Training Survey

Please check the level which indicates the number of years you have completed as a teacher.

_____ One to two years of teaching experience
_____ Three to four years of teaching experience
_____ Five or more years of teaching experience

Do you have an undergraduate bachelor’s degree in education? (Circle) YES or NO

Do you have an undergraduate bachelor’s degree in a field other than education? (Circle) YES or NO
If so, what was your major of your undergraduate bachelor’s degree?

Please reflect on your initial teacher training program. This will be the education classes and/or training which was required of you before you could become a teacher:

Please respond to the following items using the five point scale. Selecting 5 indicates that you strongly agree, and selecting 1 indicates that you strongly disagree.

I feel, as a direct result of the initial teacher training program I completed, I am prepared to:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. Planning and Preparation for Learning</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plan appropriate instruction according to student intellectual, physical, social, and emotional level. (differentiation)</td>
<td>◊◊◊◊◊</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan instruction which effectively utilizes technology.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make decisions about teaching based on classroom evidence.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan instruction for a diverse population of students.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan individualized instruction for students with special needs. (Ex. ESL, At Risk, 504, Sped.)</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comments:____________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________

Please reflect on your initial teacher training program. This will be the education classes and/or training which was required of you before you could become a teacher:
Please respond to the following items using the five point scale. Selecting 5 indicates that you strongly agree, and selecting 1 indicates that you strongly disagree.

I feel, as a result of the initial teacher training program I completed, I am prepared to:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>B. Delivery of Instruction</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Execute engaging instructional lessons with students.</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilize students’ interest and motivations with delivery of instruction.</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify when and how to adjust teaching strategies so all students have a chance to understand and learn.</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seek and use student feedback to improve instruction.</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teach problem solving, conceptual understanding, and other aspects of higher order thinking.</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employ a variety of teaching strategies.</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teach classes that may have large numbers of students and/or do not have adequate instructional resources.</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To motivate all students to participate in academic tasks.</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide instruction for student with diverse backgrounds. (Ex. Different ability levels, different socio economic backgrounds, different cultural backgrounds, sexual orientations)</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comments: _____________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>C. Assessment, Monitoring &amp; Follow-up</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Design and conduct diagnostic assessments of students’ knowledge and skills in order to plan and adjust instruction.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make decisions about teaching based on student data.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide high quality academic feedback for students.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepare students to perform well on high stakes testing assessments.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitor and chart student progress.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diagnose and correct student learning issues.</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comments: _____________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________
Please reflect on your initial teacher training program. This will be the education classes and/or training which was required of you before you could become a teacher:

Please respond to the following items using the five point scale. Selecting 5 indicates that you strongly agree, and selecting 1 indicates that you strongly disagree.

I feel, as a result of the initial teacher training program I completed, I am prepared to:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>D. Classroom Management</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organize and manage a class which is an encouraging learning environment that is inviting, respectful, supportive, inclusive, and flexible for learning activities.</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understand how personal, family, and community conditions affect student behavior.</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manage student behavior for effective learning.</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Address learning needs of students who struggle with behavioral issues.</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop a strong positive rapport with students.</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comments: ____________________________
________________________________________________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>E. Family and Community Outreach</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Understand how personal, family and community conditions affect learning.</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop a positive rapport with parents and members of school community.</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide effective communication with parents and members of school community.</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Include parents and the school community in the educational process.</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comments: ______________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>F. Professional Responsibilities</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Understand the legal rights and responsibilities of both students and teachers.</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
<td>◊</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintain high ethical teacher professional standards when dealing with students, parents, and colleagues.</td>
<td>◊</td>
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<td>Read and understand Individual Education Plans (IEP) and provide appropriate accommodations for individual students in classroom.</td>
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<td>Read and understand 504 plans and provide appropriate individualize instruction.</td>
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<td>Effectively manage the variety of non-instructional duties of a teacher.</td>
<td>◊ ◊ ◊ ◊ ◊</td>
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Comments: ______________________________________________________________
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