Classroom Management Styles: The Differences Among Traditionally-Licensed Teachers Who Were Formally Paraprofessionals and Alternatively-Licensed Teachers

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CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT STYLES: THE DIFFERENCES AMONG TRADITIONALLY-LICENSED TEACHERS WHO WERE FORMALLY PARAPROFESSIONALS AND ALTERNATIVELY-LICENSED TEACHERS

by

Caterria Beasley Payton

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

May 2012
ABSTRACT

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT STYLES: THE DIFFERENCES AMONG TRADITIONALLY-LICENSED TEACHERS WHO WERE FORMALLY PARAPROFESSIONALS AND ALTERNATIVELY-LICENSED TEACHERS

by Caterria Beasley Payton

May 2012

The purpose of this study was to determine if there was a difference in the attitudes and beliefs of traditionally certified teachers who were previously assistant teachers and alternatively certified teachers regarding classroom management. The instrument used in the study was the Attitudes and Beliefs on Classroom Control Inventory – Revised and Revisited (ABCC-R) (Martin, Yin, & Mayall, 2008). The sample included 171 participants. Seventy seven of those participants were traditionally certified teachers who were previously assistant teachers, and 94 alternatively certified teachers from four school districts across the state.

The study focused on two dimensions of classroom management: Instructional Management, tasks having to do with instruction and delivery (Martin, Yin, & Mayall, 2008) and People Management which pertains to teachers’ beliefs about students and what teachers do to develop student-teacher relationships (Martin, Yin, & Mayall, 2008).

No significant difference was found between traditional certified teacher who were previously assistant teachers and alternatively certified teachers. Therefore, the overall finding of this study is that both groups were similar in their attitudes and beliefs toward classroom management.
The University of Southern Mississippi

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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 Education

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT .......................................................................................................................... ii

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ................................................................................................. iii

LIST OF TABLES ................................................................................................................. vi

CHAPTER

I. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY......................................................................................... 1

   Statement of the Problem
   Hypotheses
   Definition of Terms
   Delimitations
   Assumptions
   Justification
   Summary

II. LITERATURE REVIEW......................................................................................... 10

   Teacher Shortages
   Trends in Teacher Certification
   Teacher Certification and Student Achievement
   History of Alternative Certification
   Teacher Preparation and Training
   Arguments for and Against Alternative Certification
   History of Paraprofessionals in Education
   Paraprofessional Training and Standards
   Paraprofessional Recruitment
   Teacher Attitudes and Beliefs Regarding Classroom Management
   Self-Efficacy
   Related Studies
   Theoretical Framework
   Summary

III. METHODOLOGY ................................................................................................. 47

   Introduction
   Research Design
   Participants
   Instrumentation
   Procedures
Data Analysis

IV. ANALYSIS OF DATA .......................................................... 52
   Introduction
   Descriptives
   Statistics

V. SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS ............ 60
   Introduction
   Conclusion and Discussion
   Recommendations for Policy and Practice
   Limitations
   Recommendations for Future Research
   Summary

APPENDIXES ..................................................................................... 71

REFERENCES .................................................................................... 79
LIST OF TABLES

Table
1. Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Sample by Gender ...................... 53
2. Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Sample by Age .......................... 54
3. Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Sample by Teaching Experience ...... 55
4. Descriptive Statistics of Sample for Instructional Management and People Management ............................................................... 56
5. Table of Means for Question Numbers 4, 5, and 9 ..................................... 59
CHAPTER I

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Statement of the Problem

The U.S. Department of Education (2004) predicts that due to teacher shortages caused by high enrollment growth, teacher retirements and attrition, and efforts to reduce student-teacher ratios, in the next decade we will need more than 2 million new teachers. States across the country are faced with the huge difficulties of recruiting and retaining quality teachers, especially in areas of high demand. Many rely heavily on teachers certified through alternative means. Alternative educator licensure began in the mid-1980’s and has since been the topic of much controversy and debate. According to the website of the southeastern state where the study took place, there are four (4) alternate route programs that lead to teacher certification:

I. Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT)
   1. Bachelors degree (Non-Education) from a regionally/ nationally accredited institute of higher learning
   2. Praxis I PPST (Reading, Writing, Math)
   3. Praxis II, Special Area Test
   4. Six (6) pre-teaching graduate hours in tests and measurements and classroom management from an approved MAT program

II. MS Alternate Path to Quality Teachers (MAPQT)
   1. Bachelors degree from a regionally/ nationally accredited institute of higher learning
2. Overall GPA of 2.0 if graduated more than seven (7) years prior or overall GPA of 2.5 or subject area GPA of 2.75 if graduated less than seven (7) years prior

3. Praxis I PPST (Reading, Writing, Math)

4. Praxis II, Special Area Test

5. 90 hour MAPQT training program consisting of effective teaching strategies, state curriculum frameworks, planning and instruction, and survival skills in the classroom

III. Teach Mississippi Institute (TMI)

1. Bachelors degree (noneducation) from a regionally/ nationally accredited institute of higher learning

2. Praxis I PPST (Reading, Writing, Math)

3. Praxis II, Special Area Test

4. Eight (8) week training session consisting of teaching strategies, classroom management, state curriculum requirements, instructional methods, and tests and measurements

IV. American Board Certification for Teacher Excellence (ABCTE)

1. Bachelors degree from a regionally/ nationally accredited institute of higher learning

2. *Passport to Teaching* Subject Area Examination

3. Completion of *Individual Study Profile*
4. One-year teaching internship with mentoring by a National Board Certified Teacher or a MDE trained mentor certified in the same subject area

5. Must complete one of the following:
   - MAPQT - 3-week summer training
   - MDE - 8-week online training
   - MAT - 6 hours of initial graduate university courses

Questions have been raised about whether or not this form of teacher certification is what is best for America’s students. There are many studies that compare alternatively certified teachers to traditionally certified teachers using various factors. These studies have resulted in an array of different conclusions. However, the possible solution for finding and keeping teachers may already be in the classroom – paraprofessionals.

Paraprofessionals play huge roles in almost every school in the country, yet there is very little research on the contributions they make to the education of our students. The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001 (2002) increased the federal educational requirements for paraprofessionals who work in classrooms requiring paraprofessionals to have

1. At least two years of higher education, which is equivalent to at least 48 semester hours from an accredited higher education institution, or
2. Obtained an associate (or higher) degree, or
3. Met a rigorous standard of quality and be able to demonstrate, though a formal state or local assessment, knowledge of and the ability to assist in instructing reading, writing and mathematics.
The Education Commission of the States (2005) listed Mississippi as one of 12 states whose requirements for paraprofessionals exceeded federal regulations.

Paraprofessionals in Mississippi must:

1. Have a high school diploma or GED equivalent.

2. Score at or above the 60th percentile on the Stanford Achievement Test, California Achievement Test, Mini-Battery of Achievement, or the Iowa Test of Basic Skills of reading and the 60th percentile of language arts.
   i. On the mathematics portion of the test given, the applicant must score at the 50th percentile.
   ii. Applicants must score at the 10th grade level on the Test of Adult Basic Education.

3. Applicants must demonstrate oral language reading proficiency.

4. Written proficiency must be demonstrated.

In addition Title I paraprofessionals in Mississippi must meet the following federal requirements:

i. Complete at least 2 years of study at an institution of higher education; or

ii. Obtain an associate’s (or higher) degree; or

iii. Meet a rigorous standard of quality and can demonstrate, through a formal State or local academic assessment:

1st. Knowledge of, and the ability to assist in instructing, reading, writing, and mathematics; or

2nd. Knowledge of, and the ability to assist in instructing, reading
readiness, writing readiness, and mathematics readiness, as appropriate.

(Education Commission of the States, 2005)

While some paraprofessionals are attempting to fulfill basic requirements, many may decide to return to school to obtain teaching degrees. In her Southern Regional Education Board article, Smith (2003) listed five reasons why paraprofessionals are excellent candidates for future educators:

1. Paraprofessionals who become teachers may have higher retention rates.
2. Paraprofessionals may be able to help in area with critical shortages.
3. Many paraprofessionals are already rooted in the community.
4. Paraprofessionals may diversify the pool of teacher candidates. (p. 5)

Berry, Hoke, and Hirsch (2004) explained that mastery of classroom management is a necessary component of effective teaching. As a result, teachers are often evaluated based on their ability to manage the classroom. Teacher practices and classroom management hugely affect students’ behavior and school performance (Berry, Hoke, & Hirsch, 2004). Likewise, teachers’ attitudes and beliefs are vital components of their practice (Nespor, 1987). The purpose of this study is to compare teachers who were previously assistant teachers and teachers who were certified through alternate route to determine if there are significant differences in these teachers’ attitudes and perceptions of their own classroom management styles. The questions guiding this research are:

1. Is there a difference in teachers’ perceptions of their own classroom management between alternatively certified teachers and teachers who were formally assistant teachers as identified by the instructional management dimension of classroom management?
2. Is there a difference in teachers’ perceptions of their own classroom management between alternatively certified teachers and teachers who were formally assistant teachers as identified by the people management dimension of classroom management?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses will be tested:

H₁: There are no statistically significant differences between alternatively certified teachers and teachers who were previously assistant teachers in the instructional management dimension of classroom management.

H₂: There are no statistically significant differences between alternatively certified teachers and teachers who were previously assistant teachers in the behavior management dimension of classroom management in the classroom.

Definition of Terms

The following terms are defined for use in this study:

*ABCC-R Inventory* – “An instrument designed to measure teachers’ perceptions of their approaches to classroom management control” (Martin, Zenong, & Baldwin, 2008, p. 2)

*Alternatively licensed/certified teachers* – Teachers who hold degrees in fields other than education but have been granted licensure based on the completion of alternative standards (Descamps & Klingstedt, 2001).

*Classroom Management* – Provisions and procedures necessary to establish and maintain an environment in which learning can occur (Duke, 1987).
**Interactionist** – Individuals who focus on what the individual does to modify the external environment, as well as what the environment does to shape the individual in an effort. Interactionists strive to find solutions satisfactory to both teacher and students (Unal & Unal, 2009).

**Interventionist** - emphasize what the outer environment, which includes people and objects, does to the human organism to cause it to develop in a particular way (Unal & Unal, 2009).

**Instructional Management Dimension** – “A category in the ABCC-R Inventory which includes tasks having to do with classroom instruction such as monitoring seatwork, organizing routines, and distributing material” (Martin, Yin, & Mayall, 2008, p. 4).

**Noninterventionist** - presupposes the child has an inner drive that needs to find its expression in the real world (Unal & Unal, 2009).

**Paraprofessional** – A person who works as an assistant to teachers and whose duties are performed in the classroom (White, 2004).

**People Management Dimension** – “Pertains to what teachers believe about students as persons and what teachers do to develop student-teacher relationships” (Martin, Yin, & Mayall, 2008, p. 4).

**Professional Development** - Staff development or training, refers to the experiences staff members encounter as they build knowledge and skills (McBrein & Brandt, 1997).

**Teacher Beliefs** – Personal constructs that provide an understanding of a teacher’s practice (Nespor, 1987).
Teacher Attrition – A reduction or decrease in number of teachers. (Ingersoll, 1997).

Traditionally licensed/certified teachers – Teachers who have completed a state accredited teacher education program and have met the licensure requirements of named state (Descamps & Klingstedt, 2001).

Delimitations

1. Subjects in this study were delimited to those teachers in select public elementary schools across the state.

2. Responses were limited to those respondents agreeing to participate in the study and this limitation may in some way skew the data toward one group or another.

Assumptions

1. The participants completed the survey honestly.

2. The number of respondents were equally distributed throughout the two groups for each of the hypotheses.

Justification

This study contributed to the education field by possibly offering an alternative to alternate route teachers who are often not equipped with the qualities needed to become effective teachers. It is needed because as more and more research against alternative certification surfaces, school districts will be searching for other means of recruiting teachers (Barry, 2001). Although there are many studies that compare alternatively licensed teachers to traditionally licensed teachers in various ways, there is very little research on teachers who were previously assistant teachers and their possible
Attracting teachers to the teaching profession through alternative certification is a growing trend across the nations. School districts are in need of teachers to address teacher shortages, especially in areas of critical needs. There has been much controversy over the preparedness and effectiveness of alternatively certified teachers. An alternative to alternative certified teachers is the paraprofessional. Para professionals work in the classroom alongside the teacher to provide quality instruction for students. There is little or no research comparing alternatively certified teachers to traditionally certified teachers. This study adds to the literature in that area.
CHAPTER II
LITERATURE REVIEW
Teacher Shortages

The U.S. Department of Education (2004) predicts that due to teacher shortages caused by high enrollment growth, teacher retirements and attrition, and efforts to reduce student-teacher ratios, in the next decade we will need more than 2 million new teachers. States across the country are faced with the huge difficulties of recruiting and retaining quality teachers. Inner-city communities and rural areas are encountering the utmost difficulties in recruiting high-quality educators (Budig, 2006). According to the National Center for Education Statistics (2007), because of the baby boom, enrollment in elementary and secondary schools increased rapidly during the 1950’s and 1960’s. Total enrollment decreased every year from 1971 to 1984 and began increasing again in 1985. Student enrollment reached record levels in the mid 1990s and has continued to rise expeditiously since then. Enrollment in U.S. schools has grown from 29.9 million in 1990 to about 50 million in 2008. The National Center for Education Statistics (2007) also predicted an 8 percent increase in public school enrollment between 2006 and 2018.

Contributing to the population increases, school districts across the United States are currently experiencing a huge influx of immigrants. The United States Bureau of the Census (2000) reported that the number of legal immigrants residing in the United States grew from 287,494 in 1990 to 727,510 in 1999. This is not including the uncertain number of undocumented immigrants who enroll in U.S. schools each year. As the student population increases, the demand for highly qualified classroom teachers increases as well.
Another major cause of teacher shortages is teacher attrition, teachers leaving the teaching profession. In a 1997 study, Ingersoll found that the teacher shortage in the United States is not caused by too few people entering the field of education, but because of new teachers dropping out of the field. It is predicted that nearly half of the new K-12 teachers will leave the profession within five years (Budig, 2006). Data from National Center for Education Statistics’ Teacher Follow-Up Survey (1995) suggest that after just five years, between 40-50% percent of all beginning teachers have left the profession. According to the National Center for Education Statistics of teachers who left the profession after one year about 42% stated that they left for family or personal reasons, around 39% said they left to pursue another job or career, about 30% claimed to have left because of job dissatisfaction, and around 19% reported that they left as a result of a school staffing action. Similarly, Bracey (2002), reported that of all of the teachers who leave the profession, 27% retire, 45% report personal reasons for leaving, 12% leave because a school staffing action, and 24% leave to find another occupation.

Teacher characteristics (e.g. age, gender) and teacher qualifications are also factors that contribute to teacher attrition (McLeskey & Billingsley, 2008). McLeskey and Billingsley (2008) added that uncertified teachers are more likely to exit the profession than their certified counterparts. In his review of the 1978 meta-analysis by Glass and Smith (1978), Robinson (1990) found that several hundred researchers have explored the relationship between class size and student achievement. Most of the studies revealed classes with fewer than 20 students resulted in higher levels of student achievement in reading and mathematics. With the high standards as stated in the No Child Left Behind Act (2001), School Districts Across the country have increased efforts
to reduce student teacher ratio in order to offer teachers the chance to devote more time to individual student needs and to boost student achievement. Although, there are huge benefits to class size reduction, this practice has a considerable impact on the availability of qualified teachers and results in an increased demand for teachers.

Liu, Rosenstein, Swan, and Khalil (2008) interviewed administrators in six urban districts. They sought to understand the nature and extent of their problems with recruiting and retaining high quality mathematics teachers. It was concluded that supply was tight, demand was high, and competition with other districts was stiff. These challenges made recruiting and retaining math teachers more difficult. As a result, administrators were forced to make complicated compromises because of insufficient quantity and quality of teacher candidates. Teacher shortage issues are not unique to the area of mathematics instruction.

Two areas that are hugely affected by teacher shortages are special education and areas with high minority populations. According to the U.S. Department of Education, in 2002-2003, 49,307 or 12.38% of special education teachers were not certified. Likewise, in 1999-2000, students in high-minority and high-poverty public schools were more often taught English, science, and math by out of field teachers than their peers in low-poverty and low-minority public schools (NCES, 2007). These two critical areas often require the most qualified teachers.

States across the nation have developed more intensive recruitment practices in response to teacher shortages. In 2000, 41 states introduced a total of 450 bills addressing the area of teacher recruitment says Hirsh (2001). Almost half the states have implemented loan forgiveness programs. Many states are offering bonuses for teachers
who agree to work in areas with critical shortages (Southeast Center for Teaching Quality, 2002). Despite these efforts the teacher shortages still plague districts across the nation. As a result, school districts are depending more and more on teachers who are certified through non-traditional means.

Trends in Teacher Certification

Establishing certification procedures to provide some form of control on those who were becoming teachers was an important step in the growth of the teaching profession (Adams & Garrett, 1969). This controlled admission, known today as teacher certification, is a process by which the state evaluates the credentials of prospective teachers to ensure that they meet the professional standards set by the state education agency. Certification confirms the quality of teachers' proficiency in subject area, educational methodology, instruction, and impending ability to effectively manage a classroom (Roth & Mastain, 1984).

Angus (2001) noted that prior to 1860, schooling was considered to be a duty of the family and the church. During this time, schools were voluntary and most were not supported by government funding. New teachers were only required to persuade the local ministers and commissioners of their moral character to obtain certification. Town officials were responsible for establishing, supervising, and funding local schools using taxes and charges for tuition (Lucas, 1997).

In the early nineteenth century, following the movement toward separation of church and state, the distinction between public and private schools came into existence (Jorgenson, 1987). It was during this time the common school movement, a belief that the
government should provide schooling to all citizens, began. Thus, responsibility for certification moved from religious to civil authorities in local communities.

Subject matter and pedagogical familiarity began to be assessed through written tests (Angus, 2001). Pennsylvania became the first state to require prospective teachers to pass an examination measuring reading, writing, and mathematical skills in 1834. By 1867, most states added U.S. history, geography, spelling, and grammar to the tests on which future teachers were required to prove proficiency. Also, Horace Mann, known as the *Father of Education*, and other reformers lead an initiative to bring local school systems under one main authority in an effort to achieve uniformity among towns across a state (Gutek, 1970).

In her speech at the white House conference for Preparing Tomorrow's teachers, Dianne Ravitch (2002) noted that by the mid-nineteenth century, different states implemented different requirements for teacher certification. Some states financed private institutions to prepare teachers for teaching, and others offered short courses in educational methods. Many western states offered both academic and professional courses to prepare future teachers and administrators. In rural areas, local school boards organized teacher institutes, where teachers could refresh themselves on academic and informative studies. Some larger school districts structured teacher training programs led by novice teachers.

Ravitch (2002) reported that teacher certification in the late nineteenth century was varied from district to district and state to state. The beginning of twentieth century brought about a change to such irregularities. During this era, experts and professionals sought to build a teaching profession which had its own preparation curriculum and
technical language. Small schools of pedagogy developed into schools of education. These institutes paved the way for a variety of educational specializations, such as school administration, educational psychology, educational sociology, and curriculum (Ravitch, 2002). According to Angus (2001):

While in the nineteenth century the leadership of the education profession included college presidents and faculty from a wide range of disciplines, in the twentieth century leadership was narrowed to faculty in the education schools and to city and county superintendents, state education officials, officers in state associations, and U.S. Bureau of Education staffers who often were graduates of their programs. (p. 12)

State governments began to dictate how teachers would obtain certification. Teacher colleges were created; admission requirements were increased; specialized certificates were developed; and local control of teacher certification became a rarity (Angus 2001). Instead, Angus (2001) reported that state departments of education began to set the standards for prospective teachers.

A major teacher shortage occurred during and after World War II (Angus, 2001). This shortage resulted in the development of emergency certificates; however, high standards for teacher candidates remained. Four-year colleges became popular, and superintendents of large school districts, leaders in major research universities, and state departments of education determined educational policy (Angus, 2001).

Angus (2001) also reported that in 1986, through two reports, one developed by the Holmes Group and the other presented by the Carnegie Task Force on Teaching as a Profession, researchers suggested eliminating undergraduate teacher education programs,
requiring that teacher candidates choose specific subject matter majors, and mandating master’s degrees for entry level positions. This idea opened the doors to alternative certification. According to Angus (2001), advocates for alternative certification often support researchers in liberal arts departments of colleges and universities that considered mastery of subject matter as the true basis for teacher certification. In 2001, 48 states and two-thirds of the teaching institutions across the country offered some type of alternative licensing programs (Barry, 2001).

Teacher Certification and Student Achievement

There is much debate over whether teaching ability is a function of natural talents requiring little preparation or a skill that requires multiple forms of knowledge that must be taught. Researchers’ opinions differ on the amount and kind of preparations teachers need in order to be effective in the classroom. Since the evolution of teaching, teacher preparation programs have ranged from those requiring no former teacher preparation to those involving intense forms of preparation and staff development. Researchers on both sides of the teacher preparation debate agree that educational systems must be held accountable for producing quality teachers (Ducharme & Ducharme, 1998).

Owings, Kaplan, Nunnery, Marzano, Myran, and Blackburn (2005) noted, “although many (alternate route) teachers are entering America’s K-12 classrooms, research does not yet clearly confirm that students are gaining as much or more from these teaching professionals as from traditionally prepared teachers” (p. 6). According to Goldhaber and Brewer (1996), fully certified teachers have a more positive, statistically significant impact on student test scores than teachers uncertified in their subject areas. In addition, Darling-Hammond and Cobb (1996) concluded that Texas school districts with
higher percentages of licensed teachers perform significantly better on state achievement tests. Laczko-Kerr and Berliner (2002) conducted a study comparing the performance of fully certified teachers to that of teachers who had not fulfilled all the requirements for standard certification, including emergency and provisional teachers. It was found that in both years studied, the students of certified teachers had higher scores than the students of under-certified teachers. Hall (1964) evaluated the relation of student achievement to the certification level of teachers. He used 17 fully certified teachers and 21 teachers possessing temporary and probationary certificates to compare student gain scores on the Stanford Achievement Test (SAT) for teachers of third grade through fifth grade. In this study, Hall found that the fully certified teachers more effective teachers than those with probationary certificates.

In 1985, Hawk, Coble, and Swanson compared the mathematics achievement of students taught by non-certified or temporary/probationary teachers to fully certified math teachers. In this his study, the researchers found that students made statistically significant gains in mathematics when instructed by fully-certified teachers (Hawk et al.). According to Laczko-Kerr and Berliner (2002), students in classrooms of non-certified or probationary teachers had one-fifth less growth than they would have if instructed by fully certified teachers. It was concluded that teachers prepared within the university setting “are of higher quality than those prepared without an approved program of preparation” (Laczko-Kerr & Berliner 2002, 39). Also, in a 2004 study of the application process for National Boards for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS), Goldhaber and Anthony (2003) discovered that the increase in achievement levels of elementary
students were greater for students instructed by NBPTS certified teachers than students taught teachers without such certification.

Three recent studies also revealed significant differences in the achievement levels of students taught by certified and non-certified teachers. In *Prepared to Teach: Teacher Preparation and Student Achievement*, Greenberg, Rhodes, and Stancavage (2004) explored the relationship between teacher qualifications and student achievement in math. Using data from the 2000 National Assessment of Education Progress exam, the authors compared math achievement scores of students of certified teachers to those of non-certified teachers. It was found that students with certified teachers had higher math scores than students without certified teachers.

In addition, in its review of 92 studies on topics including alternatively certified teachers compared to traditionally certified teachers, the Education Commission of the States (2003) found *limited support* for the claim that alternative routes to certification produce teachers who are as effective as teachers who are traditionally certified. The commission further concluded that alternatively certified teachers more often begin their careers in education experiencing more hardships than traditionally certified teachers. These additional hardships may affect teacher effectiveness and, as a result, affect student achievement.

In a study by Montrosse (2009), analysis revealed that difference in teacher certification effects exist across disciplines. Special education high school English I students taught by a teacher with traditional special education certification outperformed similar students taught by teachers with alternative certification. Likewise, special education high school students taught by a traditionally certified teacher performed at
higher levels in Algebra I and biology than their peers taught by alternatively certified teachers. Also, in *The Effect of Teacher Certification on Middle Grades Achievement in an Urban District*, Neild, Farley-Ripple, and Byrnes (2009) examined the impact of types of teacher certification on student achievement gains in math and science. The authors found that students taught by teachers who hold general elementary or secondary certification outscored students taught by uncertified teachers (Neild et al, 2009).

**History of Alternative Certification**

Descamps and Klingstedt (2001) defined alternative certification as a process whereby an individual may be given an initial certificate to teach, without completing a college program in teacher education. These nontraditional routes to teaching that are designed reduce the time and cost of acquiring teaching credentials through a narrowing of curriculum and intensive on the job supervision (Sandlin, Young, & Karge, 1993). Feistritzer (2000) stated that these programs are designed to entice people from different professions and life experiences to enter into teaching in an effort to increase the diversity and quality of prospective teachers.

McKibbin and Ray (1994) suggested that such programs began in the mid-1980’s in response to anticipated teacher shortages. Many state education departments and school districts were pressed to develop ways of placing certified teachers in classrooms. These nontraditional alternative certification programs were viable options in areas where there were shortages of teachers (National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future 1996). McKibbin and Ray (1994) stated that the purpose of developing alternative certification programs was not for replacement of the traditional certification programs,
but for alternative routes to expand the collection of qualified teachers with individuals who might not otherwise enter the education field.

According to Humphrey and Wechsler (2007), alternative teacher certification has gradually become a more accepted strategy for addressing both teacher quality and teacher shortages. Many states use alternative certification as a major recruiting strategy. As a result, these states have a significant number of teachers who have not obtained full state certification (Laczko-Kerr and Berliner 2002). An estimated 200,000 people across the nation have been certified to teach through alternative certification (Feistritzer et al., 2004). Through the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB, 2002), the Bush administration developed policies to increase the teaching force through alternative certification. These policies required teachers certified through alternative routes to be considered *highly qualified*. Their training must include structured support in addition to sustained, rigorous, and instruction centered professional development before and during the teaching experiences.

Alternative certification programs differ from state to state. According to *Education Week's Quality Counts 2005: No Small Change*, 32 states and the District of Columbia require all alternative certification candidates to demonstrate competency in subject-matter expertise either by taking coursework or passing a test, before being allowed to teach. In addition 15 states and the District of Columbia fund and/or control alternative-route programs that require a student teaching or fieldwork component, while 43 states and the District of Columbia provide mentoring support through their alternative certification program. In their 1989 study of nine alternative certification programs, Darling-Hammond, Hudson, and Kirby found numerous variations: (1) some programs
incorporated guided field experiences while others did not; (2) the duration of programs were from 16 weeks to over two years; (3) the number of course credits range from nine to 45; and (4) alternative certification programs typically required a much shorter pre-teaching training than the traditional certification programs.

Teacher Preparation and Training

There are many differences between the preparation experiences of traditionally and alternatively certified teachers (Zientek, 2007). The variations depend on students’ backgrounds and the manner in which experience their programs and school placements. According to Humphrey and Wechsler (2007):

Program components espoused by program directors, course catalogs, or other media provide a general sense of the goals of, and the ideal training offered by, a program, but in practice may not accurately reflect the learning opportunities participants experience. Both the participant characteristics and the school context may undermine even the best-designed program features. Individuals learn from both the formal and the informal contexts of their schools. In most programs, this learning exists beyond the control of the alternative certification program. (p. 521)

Although some researchers assert that teacher training does not affect student achievement, Darling-Hammond, Berry, and Theorson (2001) found that alternatively certified teachers who have stronger educational backgrounds and whose training most closely resemble traditional teacher certification have better student outcomes than others. Results from similar studies have indicated that teacher preparation and
certification are more strongly correlated to student achievement in reading and mathematics than in other subjects (Darling-Hammond, 2000).

Teacher preparedness is a huge factor in teacher quality and retention. Traditionally-certified teachers reported feeling better prepared than alternatively certified teachers to communicate, plan, and implement effective instructional strategies (Zientek, 2007). Classroom experience, support in the first year, and program components were equally important to both traditionally and alternatively certified teachers; however, instruction on teaching standards was particularly important to alternatively certified teachers (Zientek, 2007). Zientek (2007) also reported that both traditional teacher preparation and alternative teacher preparation programs appear be successful with teachers with prior classroom experience, such as observations, teachers assistant opportunities, and other field based experiences.

Demographic variables, such as age and gender, were not found to be significant when measuring teachers' perceptions of the quality and effectiveness of their teacher education program (Zientek, 2007). Conversely, Zientek (2007) found that age, prior experience, and length of time in a previous career were significant factors in alternatively certified teachers’ perceptions of their overall preparedness. A majority of alternatively certified teachers reported that they believed teacher education programs to be valuable, but they also felt that such programs failed to meet their every day classroom demands, specifically classroom management (Zientek, 2007).

Comparing content area preparation and qualifications of teachers entering the profession through the traditional routes to certification and alternative certification routes is difficult because there is very little consistency in the structure of different
programs Boyd, Goldhaber, Lankford, & Wyckoff, 2007). The most common similarity is that all states require all traditional certification candidates to complete an approved teacher preparation program and candidates for alternative certification to pass one or more certification exams (National Center for Education Information, 2005). In her survey of fourth and eighth grade teachers in six states Darling-Hammond (2000) matched that data with their classes who took the National Assessment of Educational Progress tests. Data reflected that teacher preparation and course work strongly correlates with achievement in reading and mathematics. This suggests that teacher certification and licensure make an important difference when it comes to student achievement.

Forty-six states and the District of Columbia have at least one alternative certification program and all require the candidate to hold at least a bachelor’s degree (Boyd, et al, 2007). However, the bachelor’s degree is not required to be in the area in which the candidate is seeking certification (National Center for Education Information, 2005). For example, a candidate could hold a bachelors degree in accounting and earn teacher certification in science. Although teacher quality is important factor in improving K-12 education, Ingersoll (2003) reports that most alternative certification teachers hold only basic qualifications, and many are teaching in areas that do not match their educational background or area of expertise.

Some alternative certification programs are web-based where the candidate can teach after acceptance into the program and the completion of a brief computer module (Humphrey, Wechsler, & Hough 2008). Others rely greatly on professional teaching-knowledge and subject-area assessments which must be passed before entering the classroom (American Board for Certification of Teacher Excellence, 2008).
Content knowledge is another point of differentiation between traditionally certified and alternatively certified teachers (Darling-Hammond, 2009). It was noted that both traditionally certified and alternatively teachers' content preparation, as measured by coursework in the subject field, positively affected student achievement (Monk, 1994). Walsh and Tracy (2005) state that, “a strong preparation in a secondary teacher's intended subject area adds significant value” (p. 9). Nagy and Wang (2007) studied 142 alternative route teachers entering high schools in New Jersey; 61% reported teaching outside their previous occupation or degrees.

Teacher training in pedagogy and experience of teaching practices is a critical component of teacher preparation (Boe, Shin, & Cook, 2007). Effective teachers recognize the importance of teacher having knowledge of the subject to be taught, knowledge of effective strategies in the particular area, and how to apply knowledge of child development to motivate and engage students (National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, 2010). Adams and Krockover (1997) found that many alternatively certified teachers lack proper teacher preparation prior to entering the classroom. In a quantitative study on the preparation, support, and retention of teachers, Nagy and Wang (2007) found that content knowledge alone was not enough to prepare teachers to effectively teach the subject matter or to effectively manage the classroom environment. They continued that 59% of alternatively certified teachers had not received any instruction in how to work with students with disabilities.

Arguments for and Against Alternative Certification

Since the beginning of alternative certification programs, researchers have expressed mixed beliefs when it comes to the effectiveness of alternatively certified
teachers. Many researchers believe that alternative certification programs draw new
groups of college graduates, particularly those from diverse backgrounds, to the teaching
profession (deBettencourt & Howard, 2004; Pipho, 2000; Rosenberg & Rock, 1994;
Zeichner & Schulte, 2001). According to Ducharme and Ducharme (1998), quality
alternative certification programs are not only helping with teacher shortages, but are
producing quality teachers who know how students learn and are effective in their roles
as teachers. Critics, however, frown on the fact that a disproportionate percentage of the
non-certified teachers teach in schools with large numbers of economically disadvantaged
and minority students (Fuller 2004). Shen (1997) found that not only were high
percentages of alternatively certified teachers teaching in urban settings or in schools
where the majority of the students were from minority populations, many of those
teachers were teaching out of subject area.

Also, there are arguments as to whether alternative certification helps or
contributes to the problem of teacher attrition. Some research reveals that teachers who
were licensed through alternative certification have a higher attrition rate than
traditionally certified teachers. According to Guyton, Fox and Sisk (1991) traditionally
prepared teachers were more optimistic about remaining in the teaching profession, and 5
out of 23 alternatively certified teachers had dropped out of the program before the end of
the year. Likewise, Laczko-Kerr and Bediner (2002) concluded that alternatively certified
teachers leave teaching at significantly higher rates because they are often not adequately
prepared and are more likely to be placed in difficult teaching situations. In addition,
Barry (2001) reported that the attrition rate of alternatively certified teachers nearly
doubled the attrition rate of traditionally certified teachers.
Shen (1997) studied the differences between traditionally and alternatively certified teachers and their plans to remain in teaching. The most significant differences were found in the number of participants in each group who reported that they would teach until they were eligible for retirement. Fewer alternatively-certified teachers than traditionally certified teachers indicated that they would teach until eligible for retirement. Shen (1997) concluded that these findings question alternatively-certified teachers' plan to view teaching as a lifetime profession. Peske, Liu, Johnson, Kauffman, and Kardos (2001) contended that although much research supports the fact that alternatively certified teachers have higher attrition rates, some candidates who pursue short-term careers in teaching are committed to being quality teachers although they do not intend to remain in the profession for the long-term. Thus, alternative routes to certification have allowed students to benefit from these short-term, high-quality contributions to the profession (Peske et al., 2001).

A small number of researchers have found that some alternative licensure programs may produce competent graduates who are likely to remain in teaching (deBettencourt & Howard, 2004). Natriello and Zuwalt (1993) reported that teachers in alternative certification programs were more likely to prefer to teach and to continue teaching in urban areas. Houston and Marshall (1993) identified no differences in alternatively certified and traditionally certified teachers in terms of their job satisfaction or their intentions to be teaching during the next five years.

The creation of alternative certification programs has lead to the questions about the quality of teacher training through alternative programs that are much shorter and may be less rigorous. Some researchers believe that alternate route candidates often do
not have the attitudes and dispositions that are required for effective teaching, and they lack the commitment of teaching beyond a few years in an effort to become highly effective teachers (Nakai & Turley, 2003). Ashton (1996) found that teachers “with regular state certification receive higher supervisor ratings and have higher student achievement than teachers who do not meet certification standards” (p. 21). According to Darling-Hammond and Cobb (1996), “Fully prepared and qualified teachers are generally more highly rated and more successful with students than teachers without full preparation” (p. 41). Furthermore, teachers who participated in traditional preservice preparation before beginning their teaching careers were more advanced than alternate route teachers in every area of teaching including classroom management (Darling-Hammond & Cobb, 1996). In addition, Whiting and Klotz (2000) reported that although we acknowledge that something has to happen as far as producing competent teachers for our schools, we must argue that alternative certification cannot become a Band-Aid for education, resulting in people, who are trained in a content area yet have no pedagogical experience, being thrust into educational environments in our schools where they must begin to haphazardly attempt to transfer knowledge of certain subjects to groups of students. (p. 34)

However, Klagholz (2000) reported that candidates for alternative certification develop teaching skills in the same way as traditional candidates if they enter teaching with the support of a mentor.

There is also a concern that alternatively certified teachers require more assistance during their first years of teaching. Beginning teachers who participated in traditional preservice preparation before beginning their teaching careers were more advanced than
alternate route teachers in every area of teaching, including classroom management (Darling-Hammond & Cobb, 1996). Shen (1997) reported that teachers who are certified through alternative certification have more problems learning to teach than those who are certified through traditional teacher education programs. Darling-Hammond and Berry (1999) argued that alternatively certified teachers cost the system more than 35 percent more than their better trained counterparts, as they require more induction and training and are less than half as likely to remain in the teaching field.

According to Veenman (1984) the three main areas of concerns for new teachers are (a) classroom discipline; (b) motivating students; and (c) dealing with individual student differences. Likewise, Wayman, Foster, Mantle-Bromley, and Wilson (2003) found that the highest concerns for alternatively licensed teachers were discipline and adapting instruction. These tasks were even more laborious for alternatively certified teachers. Inexperienced teachers find it difficult to keep students engaged, minimizing transition time, and enforcing rules (Bey, 1992).

Descamps and Klingstedt (2001) raised several questions about the readiness of alternative certification candidates.

1. Are alternative certification candidates prepared to teach?
2. Is on-the-job training appropriate and effective?
3. How will alternatively certified teachers solve learning problems?
4. What classroom management style is promoted by alternative certification?
5. Is the alternative certification recommendation process valid? (pp. 258-260)

Descamps and Klingstedt (2001) shared, "One characteristic of professionals is an ability to make intelligent decisions regarding the practice of their profession" (p. 259). These
researchers also pointed out that since persons licensed through alternative certification skip the professional education component, they often do not develop the standards and foundation for decision making that are needed to solve the massive amount of problems that will arise in their classrooms throughout their careers.

History of Paraprofessionals in Education

Paraprofessionals, formally known as teacher’s aides, teacher assistants, or teacher helpers, are individuals who perform a variety of roles in the classroom under the supervision of the classroom teacher. Such individuals have worked in schools since the 1940’s. Initially, their duties were limited to clerical, housekeeping, and monitoring duties to allow classroom teachers to spend more time for planning and lesson implementation (Moody, 1967). However, in 1953 the Ford Foundation funded a study which caused the role of the paraprofessional to change from clerical to classroom (Milner, 1998). In this study, paraprofessionals were asked to provide additional support to students and teachers in overcrowded classrooms. As academic gains in these groups of students increased, support for this new concept developed, and similar programs emerged.

According to Pickett, Likins, and Wallace (2003), there were more than 150,000 paraprofessionals in classrooms across the United States in 2003. In 2007, however, researchers estimated that 600,000 paraprofessionals were working in classrooms across our nation (Giangreco, 2007). This rise in numbers can be attributed to the passing of PL 94-142, the Education for all Handicapped Children Act. This decision, now known as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) (Milner, 1998), gave birth to a federal policy requiring that children with special needs receive education
in their least restrictive environment. This required the inclusion of students with special needs in regular classrooms most of the day rather than in special education classrooms. As a result paraprofessionals were needed to assist the classroom teachers with managing the classrooms and providing individualized instruction as needed. Thus, the role of the paraprofessional changed from that of a classroom helper to providing direct support and instruction to students under the leadership of classroom teachers (Ashbury & Morgan, 2001).

Today, paraprofessionals serve as an essential component within the school setting (Young, 2006). They serve in many different capacities in schools across the country including library assistants, computer lab assistants, and interpreters for English language learners. However, most paraprofessionals worked with educators to assist with classroom management and provided instructional support for academic subjects. Many paraprofessionals worked with students with disabilities and students who come from economically and educationally disadvantaged backgrounds (Young, 2006). Well trained paraprofessionals are essential components in the instructional process who reduce teacher responsibilities, serve to decrease the impact of teacher shortages, and aid in the management of larger class size enrollment (Hawkins, 2008).

As the role of the paraprofessional changed, so did the need to increase qualifications of these instructional aides. According to NCLB (2002), all paraprofessionals hired after January 2, 2003, funded by Title I or who provide instructional support in a Title I school-wide programs were required to have successfully taken a formal state or local assessment on the knowledge of and the ability to assist in the instruction of reading, writing, and mathematics; completed at least two years of
study (60 hours) at an institution of higher education; or have obtained an associate’s (or higher) degree. Paraprofessionals employed prior to this date had until January 8, 2006 to complete these requirements (NCLB, 2002).

Paraprofessional Training and Standards

Training requirements for paraprofessionals vary by state (Giangreco, 2007). Seventeen states have established credentialing or licensure procedures for paraprofessionals (Education Commission of the States, 2006). According to D'Aquanni (1997) an appropriately trained paraprofessional can play an important role in increasing student achievement when working along side an effective teacher in the classroom. Prior to NCLB’s highly qualified requirements, training and supervision of paraprofessionals was the responsibility of the classroom teacher (Milner, 1998).

Fletcher-Campbell (1992) stated that despite not receiving any formal training, many paraprofessionals have undeveloped qualities and expertise that could be an important resource in the classroom. D'Aquanni's research revealed that most paraprofessionals viewed "on-the-job training" as an effective method to provide instruction due to there ability to observe and model teacher behavior and practices. However, D'Aquanni noted, "unfortunately paraprofessionals rarely were given the time to ask questions or expand upon this knowledge due to the absence or lack of planning time" (1997, p. 364).

Young (2006) found that 90.5 % of the paraprofessionals surveyed believe that their day to day experiences in the classroom provided beneficial on-the-job training. However, 71.6% of paraprofessionals reported that the topic specific training provided in school an district professional development sessions was necessary to prepare them for
their role in the classroom. Conversely, D’Aquanni (1997) cited limited training opportunities provided to paraprofessionals. Milner (1998) found that adequate training for paraprofessionals was critical for their success in the classroom.

Many professional organizations have advocated for the development of comprehensive standards for paraprofessionals. The American Federation of Teachers (AFT) described paraprofessional standards as "set criteria for basic skills required for entry into the profession" and the "appropriate pre- and in-service training to identify advanced skills for permanent certification" (AFT, 2008, p. 5). Considering that the most important duty paraprofessionals is to enhance the learning experience for students by performing administrative and instructional duties to balance and support the instructional plans and educational goals of the teacher, AFT named four competencies for paraprofessionals: (a) Content Knowledge; (b) Thinking Skills; (c) Interpersonal Relations/Human Relations; and (d) Personal Qualities. This reiterates the fact that the skills of an effective paraprofessional must go beyond having a desire to work with children (Moody, 1967).

In an effort to increase student knowledge and further support instruction, clear standards and meaningful professional development programs must be established to assist paraprofessionals who generally enter the profession with only a basic skills understanding of how to best assist in the classroom environment (AFT, 2008). The Council for Exceptional Children's lists eight Core Competencies (a) Typical and Atypical Child Development; (b) Assessment (c) Family, (d) Service Delivery; (e) Program Management; (f) Service Coordination; (g) Research; and (h) Professional
Development, Values, and Ethics (Killoran, Templeman, Peters, & Udell, 2001, p. 69). These competencies serve as a foundation for some state standards.

Thirty-one states have standards or set guidelines for paraprofessionals, and 13 states have mandated credentialing requirements. The standards for these states “are not always part of the state's requirements for paraprofessionals, and school districts are not forced to adhere to the guidelines for developing and maintaining standards for paraprofessionals” (Education Commission of the States, 2006, p. 3). As the federal and state mandates continue to dictate the qualifications of paraprofessionals, the actual role of the paraprofessional continues to change.

Paraprofessional Recruitment

Paraprofessional recruitment is portrayed as an effective response to the problems of teacher shortages in special education and the problem of inadequate diversity of students in teacher education (White, 2004). According to White (2004), paraprofessionals bring into the profession a record of proven performance preceding entry into teacher education, representation from the local community, a diverse recruitment pool, and higher promise of retention. Thus, many researchers and educators have been focusing on paraprofessionals as an untapped resource of future classroom teachers (Smith, 2003).

Genzuk (1995), listed reasons why paraprofessionals are ideal teacher candidates. First, paraprofessionals increase the pool of potential teachers from underrepresented groups. A large percentage of paraprofessionals who enter the teaching field are minorities (Haselkorn, 1996). These individuals tend to know their students and communities well and are more apt to help make the school experience less intimidating...
and make better connections between school and home. In areas with large populations of English language learners, many paraprofessionals are speakers of the students’ native language, thus providing a much needed resource.

Genzuk (1995) reported that the large number of paraprofessionals expressing a desire to become educators is another reason why paraprofessionals have immense potential for becoming exceptional teachers. In a 1995 survey of paraprofessionals in the Los Angeles area researchers estimated that 52% of the Latino paraprofessionals desired to become teachers before becoming paraprofessionals, and 75% aspired to become educators after having worked as paraprofessionals for an average of 5 years (Genzuk, 1995).

Paraprofessional recruitment may also help alleviate the fiscal and pedagogic concerns caused by high teacher attrition rates. Paraprofessionals, with strong ties to the community, are more likely to remain in the community for years (Hentschke, 1995). They know their students well and are committed to their success. They know the neighborhoods, families, and social/cultural infrastructure that make up their school and community. This provides the much needed stability and consistency for instructional programs.

Paraprofessional-to-teacher programs have been created across the nation to aide paraprofessionals in becoming fully licensed teachers. According to writers of *A Guide to Developing Paraeducator-to-Teacher Programs* (2000), family and financial obligations, basic skill testing, problems with time and/or commitment, and lack of college credits are all obstacles paraprofessional face when considering returning to school to pursue a teaching degree. These programs are designed to help
paraprofessionals overcome these barriers. Not every program is the same; however, most paraprofessional-to-teacher programs recruit paraprofessionals into regular university course-based teacher education programs, and many incorporate nontraditional means to deliver instruction and encourage learning.

Several states have implemented programs designed to assist paraprofessionals in earning a bachelor’s degree in education. The U. S. Department of Education website lists several such programs. In Florida, the Duval County Public Schools (DCPS) recruits recent college graduates and eligible paraprofessionals to teach in areas of high demand. The DCPS Transition to Teaching program partners with area colleges and universities to provide various paths to meeting required requirements obtain teacher certification (U. S. Department of Education, Transition to Teaching, 2008). Through a partnership between the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) and California State University, Los Angeles (CSULA) individuals who agree to work part-time as paraprofessionals while preparing to become teachers are recruited for jobs in special education and math. Participants benefit from paid apprenticeship positions under the supervision of a highly qualified teacher while working towards their bachelor’s degree and teaching certification. Programs such as these are essential for helping paraprofessionals to meet the certification requirements and increase the pool of qualified teacher candidates.

Teacher Attitudes and Beliefs Regarding Classroom Management

In a meta-analysis of 50 years of research, Wang, Haertel, and Walberg (1994) concluded that classroom management has nearly as much of an impact on student learning as student ability. Classroom management refers to strategies that teachers use
to maintain behavior conducive to a productive and safe learning environment (Hyman et al., 1997; Pasi, 2001). According to Pasi (2001), effective classroom management aids in enhancing a school climate that affords students, staff, and community members an environment that empowers, motivates, and fosters success. It is the crucial factor that intensely affects effective teaching and learning environments and student achievement.

Beliefs on how to effectively manage classroom vary greatly from teacher to teacher. Martin, Yin, and Baldwin (1998) suggest that how teachers manage a classroom could change depending upon their beliefs concerning appropriate and inappropriate behavior. According to Morin and Battalio (2004), a teacher's attitude about his or her profession and skill play a vital role in understanding and managing incidents of misbehavior. Like students, teachers respond to reinforcement. Therefore, when a teacher learns that a particular strategy is effective, the teacher is likely to use the strategy more frequently. Conversely, if it is evident that a strategy is not very effective, it will not be repeated (Morin & Battalio, 2004).

Similarly, Bandura (1993) found that teachers are more likely to engage in a task when they feel competent that they are able to execute the task successfully. While researching teachers' abilities to manage student behavior, Baker (2005) found "as a teacher's perceived self-efficacy increases, so does that teacher's ability, willingness, and readiness for managing challenging student behaviors" (p. 59). Baker (2005) also studied teacher self-efficacy and beliefs about their own classroom management abilities and their eagerness to employ behavior strategies. According to Baker (2005), teachers reported the highest self-efficacy in establishing rules for students and willingness to consult and collaborate with colleagues and administrators for support. Conversely,
teachers reported low self-assurance when dealing with students with defiant and difficult behaviors.

Abidin and Robinson (2002) studied variables that may persuade teachers' judgment when referring a student for disciplinary action. These researchers found that teachers often base their decisions on observed behavior rather than their own prejudices, personal attitudes, or perceptions. Goodnough (2000) found that teachers who perceive problems with classroom management are more likely to leave the teaching profession than teachers with difficulties in other areas.

A 2003 study by Wayman et al. revealed that new alternate route teachers were generally more concerned about their classroom management capabilities than were their traditionally certified counterparts. In an earlier study, Horak and Roubinek (1982) found that alternatively certified teachers' attitudes were more interventionist. Several early studies point out the fact that interventionist attitudes negatively affect teacher ability. Highly interventionist attitudes result in poorer teachers. In addition, McConnell (1978) stated that interventionist teachers were less clear and provided few opportunities for learning. Furthermore, Bhushan (1985) found that interventionist teacher attitudes created friction, favoritism, and dissatisfaction in the classroom. This resulted in reduced student learning.

Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy is defined as teachers' beliefs or conviction that they can influence how well students learn (Guskey and Passaro, 1994). Thus, it is an important variable in teachers' classroom management approaches. Several researchers have found teacher efficacy to be a reliable predictor of student achievement (Capa, 2005). According to
Bandura (1997), mastery experiences, such as personal experiences with success or failure, are the “most influential sources of efficacy information because they provide the most authentic evidence of whether one can muster whatever it takes to succeed” (p. 80). If a person does not have a well established sense of self-efficacy failure is inevitable (Bandura, 1997).

Self-efficacy beliefs affect every aspect of a person’s life. Capa (2005) found that teachers who perceived themselves as being effective teachers were more likely to remain in the teaching profession and seemed more content in general. Mulholland and Wallace (2001) noted that the support given to new teachers by administrators during the first few years of teaching is essential for establishing self-efficacy. Efficacy is most acquirable in the earlier sages of learning (Bandura, 1993); consequently, a teacher’s quality of teaching is heavily dependent on his or her first-year experiences. According to Capa (2005), the factor that most strongly affected teachers’ first-year efficacy beliefs was the quality of the teacher preparation program in which participated. Mulholland and Wallace (2001) found that students’ eagerness to participate in classroom activities is an incentive for new teachers, where students’ disorderly behavior increased negative perceptions of teachers’ own teaching abilities.

In a study completed by Feistritzer in 2005, 62% of the alternatively certified participants claimed to have entered teaching profession because of an aspiration to work with young people. Forty-five percent reported that an appreciation of the significance of education in society lead them into the field, and only 39% of alternatively certified teachers stated that they began the certification process feeling very competent to teach the subject matter. Darling-Hammond, Chung, and Frelow (2002) found an existing
relationship between teachers' feelings of their overall preparedness and their confidence in their ability to reach all students and effectively manage classrooms.

A new teacher's feelings of competence are a vital component for self-efficacy. Self-efficacy beliefs develop early in the career and rarely change afterward (Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy, & Hoy, 1998). Teachers generally have more support during student teaching but report very little or no support during their first years of teaching (Nagy & Wang, 2007). Woolfolk and Hoy (1990) state that self-efficacy was most likely to decrease in the teacher's first year when that support was withdrawn. Chester (1991) reported that additional support of the new teacher was needed in order for new teachers to feel successful and secure in his or her teaching abilities.

Caprara, Barbaranelli, Borgogni and Steca (2003) found a correlation between a teacher's high self-efficacy and increased job satisfaction. In contrast, Pillar, Goddard, and Wilss (2005), correlated low self-efficacy with teacher burnout. Teacher self-efficacy also has positive affects on a teacher's commitment to teaching (Coladarci, 1992) and use of innovative teaching methods (Ghaith & Yaghi, 1997). Bandura's (1997) stated "with regards to the role of self-efficacy beliefs in human functioning, motivation, affective states, and actions are based more on what they believe than on what is objectively true" (p. 2).

Beginning teachers with a high sense of self-efficacy sought volunteer opportunities and extracurricular activities which in turn increased their self-perceptions (Somech & Drach-Zahavy, 2000). Teachers with high self-efficacy displayed less stress and more control (Greenwood, Olejnik, & Parkay, 1990). According to Gibson and Dembo (1984) teachers with low efficacy ridiculed students for their failures and had
very short wait time during questioning. Teachers with a high sense of self-efficacy were less critical of student failures and more likely to praise students for accomplishments. They were more academically focused and were more apt to guide struggling students (Gibson & Dembo, 1984). Involvement in school and classroom decision making also increased teachers' sense of efficacy (Moore & Esselman, 1994). In addition, teachers felt more effective when supportive relationships among colleagues existed (Taylor & Tashakkori, 1997).

Related Studies

Although there is little or no evidence of past studies comparing traditionally certified teachers who were previously assistant teachers to teachers who were alternatively certified, there are several studies comparing traditionally certified teachers to alternatively certified teachers. However, synthesis of results is difficult because the differences in types of alternative certification programs and variations in quality and length of the training participants receive (Bradshaw, 1998).

In a study by Glickman and Tamashiro (1980), the Beliefs on Discipline Inventory, a self-administered, self-scored assessment instrument which assesses teachers' beliefs on discipline was used to identify teachers' thoughts concerning classroom management strategies. According to responses, participants' attitudes were identifies as non-interventionists, interventionists, or interactionists. In 1999 Martin and Shofo used The Inventory on Attitudes and Beliefs on Classroom Control (ABCC) to explore differences in attitudes and beliefs regarding classroom management between traditionally and alternatively certified teachers. A significant difference was discovered
in that alternatively certified teachers scored more as interventionists in Instruction Management on the ABCC than traditionally certified teachers.

In a later study, revised Tamashiro’s Beliefs on Discipline Inventory and named it the Inventory of Classroom Management Styles (ICMS) (Martin et al., 2008). This instrument included forced-choice items with the same categories of Non-Interventionists, Interactionists, and Interventionists. Results from this study indicated that preservice teachers were more likely to be categorized as non-interventionists while experienced teachers were more likely to be categorized as interventionists in classroom management styles (Martin & Yin, 1997).

Through further research on beliefs about classroom management between beginning and experienced teachers, Martin and Shoho (1999) found that novice teachers scored significantly higher in the interventionist range than experienced teachers. In addition, Martin and Yin (1997) used the Attitudes and Beliefs on Classroom Control (ABCC) Inventory to study the differences in attitudes about classroom management between males and females. The ABCC Inventory consisted of three subscales: instructional management, people management, and behavior management. It was found that males scored significantly higher on both the instructional management and behavior management subscales of ABCC (Martin & Yin, 1997).

In 1998, Martin, Zenong, and Baldwin used the ABCC Inventory to determine possible variables impacting teachers' beliefs regarding classroom management style. One variable used was effects of classroom management training on teachers' attitudes and beliefs. Results revealed that teachers who had received training in Assertive Discipline scored significantly more interventionists than those trained in Cooperative
Discipline or teachers who had received no formal training in discipline (Martin et al., 1998).

Theoretical Framework

In an effort to offer clarification about the underlying mechanisms involved in the learning process, theories aid researchers in examining why factors, such as school climate and classroom management techniques, are significant (Ormrod, 1999). It is important to understand how teachers' use of specific strategies affects behavior and how teachers' perceive and understand classroom management practices. Investigating how classroom management techniques are perceived involves exploring teachers' perceptions and behaviors. For this study, theory provides the framework for the examination of teachers' perceptions and use of their own attitudes and beliefs towards classroom management.

Although no single theory can explain everything about learning, Ormrod (1999) lists four advantages of using theories when studying the learning process. They include (1) theories permit the summary of results and the integration of principles; (2) theories present beginning points for new research; (3) theories aid us in making sense of research results, and findings; and (4) theories can help in the development of programs and learning environments that contribute to optimal learning. Various learning theories may be considered when exploring teachers' perceptions of their own classroom management techniques.

Behaviorism

Behaviorism is the "first psychological perspective to have significant impact on our understanding of how human beings learn" (Ormrod, 1999, p. 9). Behaviorism is a
belief that the learner starts of as a blank slate and behavior is shaped through positive and negative reinforcements. Positive and negative reinforcement increases the probability that the behavior will happen again, and punishment decreases the chances that the behavior will continue.

Originated by B.F. Skinner, operant conditioning follows the behaviorist school of thought. According to Woolfolk (2011) operant conditioning is “learning in which voluntary behavior is strengthened or weakened by consequences or antecedents” (p. 211). Reinforcement is used to encourage behavior, and punishment is used in an effort to discourage or suppress (Woolfolk, 2011).

Also under the behaviorist umbrella are applied behavior analysis and social learning theories. Applied behavior analysis or behavior modification includes the procedures in which an individual’s environment is changed to encourage acceptable behaviors and discourage nonacceptable behaviors (Woolfolk, 2011). The Premack Principle, which maintains that a more preferred activity can function as a reinforcer for a less preferred activity, demonstrates the implementation of applied behavior analysis (Woolfolk, 2011).

Introduced by Albert Bandura in 1977, the social learning theory conceives that human learning is a continuous reciprocal interaction of cognitive, behavioral, and environmental factors (Schunk, 2004). The social learning theory is based on behavior modeling, in which the child observes and then emulates the behavior of others (Schunk, 2004). Social learning theory posits that an individual's behavior is regulated by “internal standards and self-evaluative reactions to their actions” (Schunk, 2004, p. 533).
Constructivism

Constructivists believe that learners utilize prior knowledge and experience to build their own set of constructs, or content, rather than depending on others, to make sense of things (McBrein & Brandt, 1997). Woolfolk (2011) maintains that constructivists believe that higher mental processes increase through interactions; therefore, shared learning is encouraged. Student behavior is learned based on the experiences that students have with their peers and teachers.

Vygotsky's social development theory, one of the foundations for constructivism, is the belief that social interaction precedes development. According to Vygotsky (1978), the internalizing of tools initially developed to serve as social functions, led to higher thinking skills. Instead of the teacher being a lecturer who transmits information to students, learning becomes a reciprocal experience where the teacher and students collaborate to help generate an understanding.

Although most practices are based on behaviorist and/or constructivist theories of learning teachers’ attitudes and beliefs about how to effectively manage classrooms vary. Glickman and Tamashiro’s (1980) theoretical prospective and Wolfgang (1995) developed a framework to explain teacher beliefs regarding classroom management. Three approaches to student-teacher interaction were identified: non-interventionist, interactionist, and interventionist. According to Wolfgang and Glickman (1986) although teachers usually act according to all three approaches, one method typically predominates in beliefs and actions. Since teachers’ ways of thinking and understanding are vital components of their practice (Nespor, 1987), and classroom management skills are
primary factors in determining success in teaching, it is important that teachers are aware of the fact that their beliefs affect their action.

Non-interventionists believe that teachers should not impose rules on students. They should instead allow students to reason and develop their own boundaries. They contend that students are capable of making their own decisions regarding behavior and have the natural ability to solve their own problems (Glickman and Tamashiro, 1980). According to non-interventionist, the student should have a higher level of control than the teacher.

Interactionists presuppose that students learn to behave through experience. They believe that children are not equipped to make their own decisions, but as they are confronted with the reality of life they develop rules of behavior that are satisfactory for specific situations (Glickman and Tamashiro, 1980). In this school of thought, teachers and students have equal levels of control.

Interventionists maintain that a student's misbehavior is the result of inadequate rewards and punishments, and students learn to behave as behaviors are reinforced (Glickman and Tamashiro, 1980). Teachers must set the expectations for behavior and systematically teach those behaviors in order for students to comply. Under this belief the teacher has an extremely high level of control.

In order to define what makes an effective teacher, beliefs of teachers must be investigated (Agnee, Greenwood, & Miller 1994). Larrivee (2005) states that a teacher may be a proficient classroom manager, but being conscious of beliefs may open up the possibility of a greater range in possible choices and responses to classroom situations.
and individual student behaviors. Understanding this notion will aid teachers in becoming better managers of classroom behaviors.

Summary

There have been many paradigm shifts in teacher certification since its beginning. Currently, the trend is to attract professionals from other areas of occupation to the field of education via alternative routes to certification. To better address the teacher shortage, and to attract individuals with prior experience in the field of education, many school districts across the country have begun to partner with local colleges and universities to offer incentives that will entice paraprofessionals to return to college to become certified teachers.

There is little or no research comparing the two groups of teachers; however, teachers who were previously assistant teachers enter the classroom with a slight edge over their alternatively certified counterparts because they arrive with previous classroom experience and in some cases professional development. Research on the effectiveness of alternatively certified is inconclusive. Most researchers agree that attitudes, beliefs, and self-efficacy are bigger predictors of teacher success than certification method.

The ability to effectively manage a classroom can lead to the success or demise of a teacher. Many novice teachers report that they do not feel confident in their ability to successfully manage a classroom of students. Since research shows that attitudes and beliefs are directly related to practice it is evident that many first year teachers struggle with classroom management. This may lead to job dissatisfaction and eventually leaving the profession.
CHAPTER III
METHODOLOGY

Introduction

In this causal comparative study, the researcher compared two groups to determine if teachers’ perceptions of their own classroom management differ comparing teachers who were alternatively certified and teachers who were traditionally certified and previously assistant teachers. Data will be obtained from a questionnaire distributed to teachers across the state.

Research Design

In this quantitative study, the researcher will use a Likert-type survey to quantify the dependent variables in the two subscales within the areas of classroom management: people management and instructional management. The following variables were examined in this study:

- **Independent variable** – whether or not teachers were alternatively certified or traditionally certified with previous assistant teaching experience;
- **Dependent variable** – teacher attitudes and perceptions regarding classroom management; and
- **Status variables** – gender; age; number of years experience; certification type; experience prior to certification

For this study, the following research hypotheses were tested:

H₁: There is no statistically significant difference between alternatively certified teachers and traditionally certified teachers who were previously assistant teachers in the
Instructional Management dimension of classroom management as measured by the ABCC-R Inventory.

$H_0$: There is no statistically significant difference between alternatively certified teachers and traditionally certified teachers who were previously assistant teachers in the People Management dimension of classroom management as measured by the ABCC-R Inventory.

Participants

The participants in this research study included 77 teachers who were traditionally certified and previously assistant teachers and 94 teachers who were alternatively certified and not previously assistant teachers from select school districts across the state. They were selected through a voluntary or convenience sample selection. Name of teachers and schools will remain confidential.

Instrumentation

The instrument used in this was the Attitudes and Beliefs on Classroom Control Inventory – Revised and Revisited (ABCC-R) (Appendix A). This is a “multidimensional instrument in the form of a 20-item questionnaire is designed to measure various aspects of teacher beliefs and predispositions toward classroom management practices” (Martin & Sass, 2009, p. 1125). Permission to use this instrument was requested of and granted by co-author, Dr. Nancy Martin, the University of Texas at San Antonio (Appendix B). Responses to the survey were placed under four categories with $4 = \text{Describes me very well}$, $3 = \text{Describes me usually}$, $2 = \text{Describes me somewhat}$, $1 = \text{Describes me not at all}$.
The ABCC-R is separated into two different subscales: people management and instructional management. The people management dimension “pertains to what teachers believe about students as persons and what teachers do to develop the student-teacher relationship” (Martin & Sass, 2009, p. 1126). Instructional management includes tasks having to do with classroom instruction such as monitoring seatwork, organizing routines, and distributing material.

To acquire a score for each participant, responses to the survey items for each subscale were added. The scores were then divided by the number of items on the survey to attain a mean score. This score reflects the participants’ perceptions of their own classroom management. Scores above the mean are identified as more of a controlling interventionist style, and those scoring below the mean are considered less controlling.

A reliability analysis was performed on the subscales of the ABCC-R to assess the internal consistency of the questionnaire items. An internal consistency coefficient (Cronbach’s alpha) that exceeds .70 is considered acceptable (Cronbach, 1950). Results for both the people and instructional management subscales showed robust item discrimination and satisfactory to good internal consistency measures. In the Instructional Management subscale, the reliability is reported to range from .70 to .83. The People Management subscale reliability ranges from .71 to .80 (Martin et al., 2008).

Martin et al. (2007) further analyzed the reliability of the instrument. The reliability for all subjects overall for Instructional Management was .78 and for People Management was .77. When analyzed by certification status, the elementary level’s reliability rated, IM= .79 (PM=.77), and secondary was, IM= .78 (PM=.770). For gender, the reliability for males was IM= .78 (PM=.76), and females, IM= .70 (PM=.78).
For teaching experience, the years were broken into three groups. The reliability for those teaching five years or less was IM= .72 (PM=.80), those teaching six to 20 years, IM= .77 (PM=.77), and 20 years or more, IM= .83 (PM=.71). Overall, the instrument showed an appropriate reliability rate in these both subscales.

Procedures

Distribution of questionnaires and collection of the data will began upon successful completion of the proposal defense by the researcher and IRB approval by The University of Southern Mississippi (Appendix C). Permission to administer questionnaires was sought from superintendents of participating school districts (Appendix B). The ABCC-R and a demographic survey (Appendix A) were distributed to a contact person in each of the selected school districts. The contact person distributed the questionnaire and cover letter to traditionally teachers who were previously assistant teachers and a random sample of alternatively certified teachers who were not previously assistant teachers. The contact persons returned the completed questionnaires to the researcher in a self addressed stamped envelope.

An informational cover letter was attached to each questionnaire. The cover letter explained that the respondents’ answers would be kept in the strictest of confidence, their questionnaires would be completely anonymous, that the information ascertained by the researcher would only be used for research purposes, and that their questionnaires would be destroyed upon completion of the research study. Upon reading the letter, the participants decided whether or not they wanted to answer the questionnaire.
Data Analysis

The data was collected from questionnaires and analyzed using SPSS, statistical software. Two two-tailed independent sample \( t \) tests were conducted, one for each scale of the ABCC-R. The researcher compiled the results and presented an analysis of the data to determine if teachers' perceptions of their own classroom management differ significantly comparing teachers who were alternatively certified and previously assistant teachers and teachers who were alternatively certified. The probability level or alpha value was set at .05.
CHAPTER IV
ANALYSIS OF DATA

Introduction

This chapter presents the characteristics of the sample as well as the results from the analyses conducted. Surveys were hand delivered to schools in four school districts across the state. Three hundred and fifty surveys were distributed. The researcher collected 172 completed surveys. One survey was eliminated from the study because it was found that the participants were both alternatively certified and were previously assistant teachers.

The remaining 171 surveys were sorted into two groups, traditionally certified teachers who were previously assistant teachers and alternatively certified teachers. The end result was 77 participants who were traditionally certified and previously assistant teachers and 94 alternatively certified teachers. Two independent sample two-tailed t tests were used to address the proposed hypotheses, one for each scale of the ABCC-R Inventory with the average mean score as the independent variable (i.e. People Management and Instructional Management).

Descriptive

Qualified surveys were collected from 171 participants who were traditionally certified teachers who were previously assistant teachers (n = 77) or alternatively certified (n = 94). Table 1 shows the distribution of the two groups by gender. Of the traditionally certified teachers who were previously assistant teachers, one, or 1.3% were male and 76 or 98.7% were female. Of the alternatively certified teachers, 38, or 40.9%
were male and 55 or 59.1% were female. Of the total number of teachers 39, or 22.9% were male and 131 or 77.1% were female. Females dominated both groups of teachers.

Table 1

*Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Sample by Gender*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Certification</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Traditional</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>171</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. $N = 171$

Table 2 illustrates the age ranges of the two groups of teachers. Four, or 5.2% of traditionally certified teachers who were previously assistant teachers and 4, or 4.3% of the alternatively certified teachers were between 19 and 25 years of age. Twenty, or 26.0% of traditionally certified teachers who were previously assistant teachers and 30, or 32.3% of the alternatively certified teachers were between 26 and 35 years of age.

Thirty-five, or 46.5% of traditionally certified teachers who were previously assistant teachers and 42, or 45.2% of the alternatively certified teachers were between 36 and 50 years of age. Eighteen, or 23.4% of traditionally certified teachers who were previously assistant teachers and 17, or 18.3% of the alternatively certified teachers were over 50 years of age. The greatest percentage (45.3% or $n = 77$) of the total population were between the ages of 36 and 50.
Table 2

*Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Sample by Age*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Traditional Count</th>
<th>Traditional %</th>
<th>Alternative Count</th>
<th>Alternative %</th>
<th>Total Count</th>
<th>Total %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19 to 25 years</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 to 35 years</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>32.3</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>29.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36 to 50 years</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>45.5</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>45.2</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>45.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 50 years</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>23.4</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>18.3</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>20.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. N = 171

Table 3 depicts the years of teaching experience of the two groups of teachers.

Twenty-two or 28.6% of traditionally certified teachers who were previously assistant teachers and 49 or 52.1% of alternatively certified teachers had between 0 and 5 years teaching experience. Twenty or 26.0% of traditionally certified teachers who were previously assistant teachers and 23 or 24.5% of alternatively certified teachers had between 6 and 10 years teaching experience. Twenty-seven or 35.1% of traditionally certified teachers who were previously assistant teachers and 21 or 22.3% of alternatively certified teachers had between 11 and 25 years teaching experience. Eight or 10.4% of traditionally certified teachers who were previously assistant teachers and 1 or 1.1% of alternatively certified teachers had over 50 years teaching experience. The greatest percentage (41.5% or $n = 71$) of the total population had between 0 and 5 years teaching experience.
Table 3

*Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Sample by Teaching Experience*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Certification</th>
<th>Traditional</th>
<th></th>
<th>Alternative</th>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0 to 5 years</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>52.1</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>41.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 to 10 years</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>26.0</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>24.5</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>25.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 to 25 years</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>35.1</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>22.3</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>28.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 25 years</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. N = 171

Table 4 lists the mean scores of the participants in the People Management and Instructional Management dimensions of classroom instruction. Scores on the two dimensions of the instrument were related to the degree of interventionism expressed by each participant. The highest score (4) revealed a high degree of interventionism carrying the belief that teachers do and should have high levels of control over the classroom environment. The lowest score (1) indicated noninterventionist beliefs that students should be nurtured, not controlled, and as a result students learn to control their own actions and behaviors. In between the interventionist and the noninterventionist lies the interactionists whose scores (2, 3) reflect an attitude that students and teachers should share equal power and responsibility over classroom control.
Table 4

Descriptive Statistics of Sample for Instructional Management and People Management

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Instructional Management</th>
<th></th>
<th>People Management</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>Minimum</td>
<td>Maximum</td>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>1.80</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>3.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>2.10</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>3.19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Scale 1 = low level of control  4 = high level of control

Mean scores for the Instructional Management dimension were higher for both traditionally certified teachers who were previously assistant teachers and alternatively certified teachers. Traditionally certified teachers who were previously assistant teachers had a mean score of 3.19 with a standard deviation of .50, and alternatively certified teachers also had a mean score of 3.19 with a standard deviation of .42. This indicated that both groups of teachers shared a more interventionist belief that the teacher does and should have a high level of control over the Instructional Management of the classroom.

For the people management dimension, mean scores for both groups were lower and more indicative of the interactionist belief that teachers and students should equally share power and control. Traditionally certified teachers who were previously assistant
teachers had a mean score of 2.22 with a standard deviation of .50, and alternatively certified teachers had a mean score of 2.07 with a standard deviation of .52.

Statistics

In this study, the researcher sought to test the following hypotheses:

H<sub>1</sub>: There is no statistically significant difference between alternatively certified teachers and traditionally certified teachers who were previously assistant teachers in the Instructional Management dimension of classroom management as measured by the ABCC-R Inventory.

Hypothesis 1 was accepted \([t (169) = -0.50, p = .960]\).

H<sub>2</sub>: There is no statistically significant difference between alternatively certified teachers and traditionally certified teachers who were previously assistant teachers in the People Management dimension of classroom management as measured by the ABCC-R Inventory.

Hypothesis 2 was accepted \([t (169) = 1.94, p = .054]\).

The overall findings of this study support both null hypotheses presented in Chapter I. No statistically significant difference was found between alternatively certified teachers and traditionally certified teachers who were previously assistant teachers in the Instructional Management or People Management dimension of classroom management as measured by the ABCC-R Inventory.

Although there were no significant differences in attitudes and beliefs when examining entire dimensions of classroom management, there were significant differences in responses to 3 of the 20 questions included in the survey. Table 5 reflects the results of the t-test for Equality of Means. On question number 4, *When moving from*
one learning activity to another, I will allow students to progress at their own rate., alternatively certified teachers scored a mean of 1.91 and traditionally certified teachers who were previously assistant teachers scored significantly higher with a mean of 2.22 \( (p = .029) \). These teachers also scored significantly higher than their alternatively certified counterparts on questions number 5 and 9. On question number 5, \textit{I believe student's emotions and decision-making processes must always be considered fully legitimate and valid.}, alternatively certified teachers scored a mean of 2.48 and traditionally certified teachers who were previously assistant teachers scored significantly higher with a mean of 2.79 \( (p = .037) \). Similarly, alternatively certified teachers scored a mean of 2.51 on question number 9, \textit{I believe friendliness, courtesy, and respect for fellow students is something that students have to learn first-hand through free interaction.}, while traditionally certified teachers who were previously assistant teachers scored significantly higher with a mean of 2.87 \( (p = .017) \). This indicated that traditionally certified teachers as a whole were proponents of more teacher control over student transitions, decision making, and courtesy in the classroom, all tasks in the People Management dimension.
Table 5

*Table of Means for Question Numbers 4, 5, and 9*

Question # 4: *When moving from one learning activity to another, I will allow students to progress at their own rate.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Traditional</td>
<td>2.22</td>
<td>1.047</td>
<td>.119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative</td>
<td>1.91</td>
<td>.771</td>
<td>.080</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question # 5: *I believe student's emotions and decision-making processes must always be considered fully legitimate and valid.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Traditional</td>
<td>2.79</td>
<td>.928</td>
<td>.106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative</td>
<td>2.48</td>
<td>.981</td>
<td>.101</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question # 9: *I believe friendliness, courtesy, and respect for fellow students is something that students have to learn first-hand through free interaction.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Traditional</td>
<td>2.87</td>
<td>.951</td>
<td>.108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative</td>
<td>2.51</td>
<td>1.007</td>
<td>.104</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Scale 1 = low level of control  4 = high level of control
CHAPTER V
SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This chapter contains a summary, discussion, and recommendations based on the research and data presented in the study. It also includes a discussion which explains the results, limitations, and conclusions of the study. Recommendations for policy, practice, and future research are also included in this study. The purpose of the study was to determine if there was a statistically significant difference in teachers’ perceptions of their own classroom management between alternatively certified teachers and teachers who were formally assistant teachers. In the study, the researcher addressed two dimensions of classroom management: people management and instructional management. The Attitudes and Beliefs on Classroom Control Inventory – Revised (ABCC-R) (Martin, Zenong, & Mayall, 2008) was the instrument used in the survey. The sample population in this study included one hundred seventy-one certified teachers from four school districts across the state. Of the total population of participants, 77 were traditionally certified teacher who were previously assistant teachers, and 94 were alternatively certified teachers.

Conclusions and Discussion

Two-tailed independent sample t tests were used to determine answer to two questions:

1. Is there a difference in teachers’ perceptions of their own classroom management between alternatively certified teachers and teachers who were
formally assistant teachers as identified by the instructional management dimension of classroom management?

2. Is there a difference in teachers’ perceptions of their own classroom management between alternatively certified teachers and teachers who were formally assistant teachers as identified by the people management dimension of classroom management?

One analysis was conducted for each question or dimension of classroom management (i.e., Instructional Management and People Management).

In regards to question 1, no statistically significant difference was noted between the two groups of teacher in the instructional management dimension. Horak and Roubinek (1982) found that alternatively certified teachers’ attitudes were more interventionist than traditionally certified teachers’. That notion did not hold true for this study. Both groups scored in the interventionist range in the Instructional Management dimension. In this dimension, the mean score was exactly the same for teachers who were traditionally certified and previously assistants and alternatively certified teachers. This indicates that teachers in both groups believe that it is the teacher’s job to control tasks having to do with classroom instruction such as monitoring seatwork, organizing routines, and distributing material.

In regards to question 2, no statistically significant difference was noted between the two groups of teacher in the people management dimension. This study again countered Horak and Roubinek’s assertion that alternatively certified teachers’ attitudes were more interventionist than traditionally certified teachers’. Although the mean score for the People management dimension was slightly higher for traditionally certified
teachers who were previously assistant teachers than alternatively certified teachers, the difference was not significant. Both groups scored in the interactionist range in People Management indicating the belief that both groups believe that students and teachers have equal control over developing relationships in the classroom.

In their doctoral dissertations, both Parker (2002) and Gibbes (2004) achieved results similar to those in this study. Both researchers used the Attitudes and Beliefs on Classroom Control Inventory (ABCC) (Martin & Shoho, 1999) to investigate the differences classroom management beliefs between traditionally and alternatively certified teachers. No significant differences were found in either study. Like this study, both groups displayed higher interventionist beliefs in the area of Instructional Management than in People Management. This indicates that both groups of teachers are more likely to want more control over instructional practices such delivery methods and specific teaching strategies used, but they are more open minded when it comes to relationships in the classroom and how students and teacher interact with one another.

Pasi (2001) states that beliefs on how to effectively manage classroom vary greatly from teacher to teacher, and teachers’ beliefs about classroom management affect their choice methods for managing their classrooms. Following this premise, one can conclude that since there were no significant differences in the beliefs of the groups of teachers in this study, there are no significant differences in choice methods between the two groups of teachers. This contradicts Darling-Hammond and Cobb’s (1996) earlier findings that teachers who participated in traditional preservice preparation before beginning their teaching careers were more advanced than alternate route teachers in every area of teaching including classroom management.
Recommendations for Policy and Practice

Horak and Roubinek (1982) and Bhushan (1985) all found that interventionist teacher attitudes negatively impacted student performance. Both groups of teachers displayed higher interventionist attitudes and beliefs in Instructional Management. This indicated the need for professional development in the area of classroom management for both groups of teachers.

Classroom management is a major factor affecting student achievement. It is evident that the teacher attitudes and perceptions reported in this study are not consistent with what researchers believe to be positive and beneficial to a healthy classroom environment. Slider, Noell, and Williams, (2006) found that teachers’ use of effective classroom management strategies increased after training; therefore, school districts and policymakers must make it a priority to provide professional development and ongoing support in an effort to influence teacher perceptions and use of classroom management techniques and ensure that teachers are equipped with the tools needed provide quality instruction.

The use of classroom management techniques depends largely on school policy. Therefore, policymakers should create regulations that would provide schools with the resources and programs needed to ensure that quality classroom management exists in every classroom and that building administrators are qualified to oversee and assist in the implementation and monitoring of effective classroom management techniques and strategies. School administrators will also need to monitor classrooms daily to ensure that best practices and effective strategies are being utilized in the classroom. Through
constant assessment and revisions as needed, successful classroom management practices programs could continue to grow and benefit both teachers and students.

The literature in this study highlighted the lack of quality classroom management instruction in both alternative routes to education programs and paraprofessional training programs. Results of this study can lead to the incorporation of more meaningful classroom instruction training into all teacher and paraprofessional training courses. This will hopefully lead toward more interactionist attitudes which are more conducive to quality teaching and learning.

One final recommendation addresses the area of recruiting and hiring. According to White (2004), paraprofessionals bring into the profession a record of proven performance preceding entry into teacher education, representation from the local community, a diverse recruitment pool, and higher promise of retention. Since the data from this study revealed that there was no significant difference in the classroom management of paraprofessionals compared to their alternatively certified counterparts, it would benefit school and district administrators to encourage and support programs that provide opportunities for paraprofessionals to return to school to receive degrees in education.

Limitations

1. The results of the ABCC-R are limited because of possible biases when using self-reported data. Considering that the survey asked for teachers to report on data about their own attitudes and perceptions of classroom management, some teachers may have answered based on what they perceived to be a socially
acceptable response, rather than what they actually believe to be effective in classroom management.

2. The sample size was small in relation to alternatively certified and traditionally certified teachers who were previously assistant teachers across the state; therefore, this may not be a true representation of either group. This limited the researcher's ability to generalize findings beyond this study's sample population because the results could be sample-specific and teachers who responded may be qualitatively different from those of a larger sample.

3. Responses were limited to those individuals who agreed to participate in the survey. As a result, responses may be skewed toward one group or another.

4. The sample size of male teachers was relatively small compared to female teachers. Therefore, it is difficult to draw conclusions about the relationship between gender and classroom management techniques.

5. Of the entire sample, 77.1% were females, 65.9% were between the ages of 36 and 50, and 66.6% had between 0 and 10 years teaching experience. It is possible that demographic similarities rather than paths to certification may have caused similar attitudes and beliefs towards classroom management.

6. The results may also be limited because the least effective teachers were probably least likely to complete and return the survey. The data may be skewed because most of the surveys that were returned may have been completed by more experienced teachers.
Recommendations for Future Research

This study revealed that alternatively certified teachers and traditionally certified teachers who were assistant teachers have similar attitudes and beliefs regarding classroom management. A qualitative study consisting of classroom observations and teacher interviews to obtain additional information about teacher attitudes and perceptions and their rationale for the using particular classroom management techniques may offer support to the findings of the current study. Through observations, research could be extended to other areas such as student reaction to certain classroom management methods or strategies. Interviews could provide additional information and insight into what teachers think about when selecting a classroom management strategy and allow the examination of other classroom management techniques that were not included in the survey.

Researchers can use this study as a starting point to gain a deeper insight impact of the differences in attitudes and beliefs of traditionally certified teachers who were previously assistant teachers and their alternatively certified counterparts. Researchers can explore the difference in student achievement, number of behavior infractions, and administrator perceptions, etc. This will provide additional information for school districts to utilize when developing policies and procedures regarding recruiting and hiring.

Also, the sample size in this study was relatively small, especially in regards to traditionally certified teachers who were previously teacher assistants. This was a result of three school districted electing not to participate in the study and a low survey response rate. In the future, researchers should attempt to meet face-to-face with
superintendents of perspective school districts to discuss the importance of such studies. Superintendents may be less likely to decline to participate when given a personal invitation than they would when asked to participate in writing. Asking principals to administer the surveys at a specific time, such as during a whole group professional development session, may increase the response rate. However, this may decrease anonymity and may increase bias.

Finally, there is very little literature on the effectiveness of certified teachers who were previously assistant teachers. It would be interesting to see the results of a study to determine the effectiveness of such teachers compared to their alternatively certified and traditionally certified counterparts who did not benefit from on the job training. Researchers can then better compare the benefits and costs of recruiting and hiring paraprofessionals vs. alternatively certified teachers.

**Summary**

A summary of the research study and conclusions drawn from the data analysis was presented in this chapter. This study investigated the differences in attitudes and beliefs about classroom management between traditionally certified teachers who were previously assistant teachers and their alternatively certified counterparts. This chapter also offered a discussion that investigated and clarified the results of the conclusions of this study including limitations of the study. Recommendations for policy and practice and recommendations for future research were also included in this chapter.

Four of the seven school districts that were originally invited to participate in the study accepted the invitation. The researcher administered the ABCC-R Inventory along with a demographic to survey teachers in those four school districts. One hundred
seventy-two of the 350 surveys were returned, and 171 surveys contained sufficient data to include in the study.

Through this study, the researcher sought to determine if there was a significant difference in the attitudes and perceptions between teachers who were traditionally certified and previously assistant teachers and teachers who were alternatively certified. The researcher focused on two dimensions of classroom management, Instructional Management and People Management.

Data from the survey revealed that although there was no significant difference in either dimension of classroom management. Mean scores for the Instructional Management dimension were higher for both groups of teachers. This indicated that both groups of teachers shared a more interventionist belief that the teachers have a high level of control over instructional task such as delivery and choice of teaching methods. For the people management dimension, mean scores for both groups were lower and more indicative of interactionist attitudes toward building teacher student relationships. It is evident that the teachers in this study were more willing to share the responsibility of building relationships in the classroom than instructional decisions.

Data from this study contradicted the 1982 study by Horak and Roubinek where the researchers found traditionally certified teachers to have more interventionist beliefs than alternatively certified teachers. Since teachers’ attitudes and beliefs affect their methods of classroom management (Pasi, 2001), results from this study also challenges Darling-Hammond and Cobb’s (1996) assertion that teachers who participated in traditional preservice preparation before beginning their teaching careers were more advanced than alternate route teachers in every area of teaching including classroom
management. However, data from this study confirmed the findings of Parker (2002) and Gibbes (2004). Both researchers found no significant different in the area of classroom management when comparing traditionally certified teachers to alternatively certified teachers.

Based on the results of this study, the researcher made several recommendations for policy and practice in the area of classroom management. Because of high interventionist attitudes in the Instructional Management dimension, the researcher suggested ongoing professional development in the area of classroom management for all teachers regardless of their routes to certification. The researcher suggested that policymakers create legislation to ensure that resources and training quality classroom management are made available and being utilized by schools. In addition, the researchers suggested that colleges, universities, and other teacher and/or paraprofessional preparation programs incorporate more meaningful classroom management training into their curriculum and that school districts encourage and support programs that provide opportunities for paraprofessionals to return to school to receive degrees in education.

Finally, the researcher also used results of this study to make recommendations for future research. The researcher suggested that future researchers take additional measures to increase the sample size and also add a qualitative component to the study consisting of classroom observations and teacher interviews. This will aid future researchers in obtaining additional information about teacher attitudes and perceptions and their rationale for the using particular classroom management techniques. Since there is very little research on the effectiveness on certified teachers who were previously
paraprofessionals, the researcher suggested that future researchers explore the difference in student achievement, number of behavior infractions, and administrator perceptions, etc. This will provide additional information for school districts to utilize when developing policies and procedures regarding recruiting and hiring.
**APPENDIX A**

Attitudes and Beliefs on Classroom Control
Revised (ABCC-R)

**Directions:** For each item, check the option that best describes your beliefs or describes what you do in the classroom. **DO NOT SKIP ANY ITEMS.**

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I believe students will be successful in school if allowed the freedom to pursue their own interests.</td>
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<td>2. I believe teachers should give students freedom so they will develop their own ways of interacting with each other.</td>
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<td>3. I do not specify a set time for each learning activity because that can only be determined by the students.</td>
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<td>4. When moving from one learning activity to another, I will allow students to progress at their own rate.</td>
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<td>5. I believe student's emotions and decision-making processes must always be considered fully legitimate and valid.</td>
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<td>6. I believe students can manage their own learning behavior during seatwork.</td>
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This statement

___ Describes me very well
___ Describes me usually
___ Describes me somewhat
___ Describes me not at all

This statement

___ Describes me very well
___ Describes me usually
___ Describes me somewhat
___ Describes me not at all

This statement

___ Describes me very well
___ Describes me usually
___ Describes me somewhat
___ Describes me not at all

This statement

___ Describes me very well
___ Describes me usually
___ Describes me somewhat
___ Describes me not at all

This statement

___ Describes me very well
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| 7. I believe students should choose the learning topics and tasks. | This statement  
___ Describes me very well  
___ Describes me usually  
___ Describes me somewhat  
___ Describes me not at all  |
| 8. Students in my classroom are free to use any materials they wish during the learning process. | This statement  
___ Describes me very well  
___ Describes me usually  
___ Describes me somewhat  
___ Describes me not at all  |
| 9. I believe friendliness, courtesy, and respect for fellow students is something that students have to learn firsthand through free interaction. | This statement  
___ Describes me very well  
___ Describes me usually  
___ Describes me somewhat  
___ Describes me not at all  |
| 10. I believe students should create their own daily routines as this fosters the development of responsibility. | This statement  
___ Describes me very well  
___ Describes me usually  
___ Describes me somewhat  
___ Describes me not at all  |
| 11. When a student is repeatedly off task, I will most likely remove a privilege or require detention. | This statement  
___ Describes me very well  
___ Describes me usually  
___ Describes me somewhat  
___ Describes me not at all  |
| 12. I believe the classroom runs more smoothly when the teacher assigns students specific seats. | This statement  
___ Describes me very well  
___ Describes me usually  
___ Describes me somewhat  
___ Describes me not at all  |
| 13. During the first week of class, I will announce the classroom rules and inform students of the penalties for disregarding the rules. | This statement  
___ Describes me very well  
___ Describes me usually  
___ Describes me somewhat  
___ Describes me not at all |
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| **14.** I believe the teacher knows best how to allocate classroom materials and supplies to optimize learning. | This statement  
|   |   |
| **15.** When a student bothers other students, I will immediately tell the student to be quiet and stop it. | This statement  
|   |   |
| **16.** While teaching a lesson on library skills, a student begins to talk about the research she is doing for her book report. I would remind the student that the class has to finish the lesson before the end of the class period. | This statement  
|   |   |
| **17.** I believe teachers should require student compliance and respect for law and order. | This statement  
|   |   |
| **18.** I believe students will be successful in school if they listen to the adults who know what's best for them. | This statement  
|   |   |
| **19.** I believe class rules are important because they shape the student's behavior and development. | This statement  
|   |   |
| **20.** If students believe that a classroom rule is unfair, I may explain the reason for the rule but would not change it. | This statement  
|   |   |

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Please respond to the following:

1. What is your gender?
   - [ ] male
   - [ ] female

2. What is your age?
   - [ ] Between 19 and 25
   - [ ] Between 26 and 35
   - [ ] Between 36 and 50
   - [ ] Over 50

3. How long have you been teaching?
   - [ ] 0 – 5 Years
   - [ ] 6 – 10 Years
   - [ ] 11 – 25 Years
   - [ ] Over 25 Years

4. How did you earn your teacher certification?
   - [ ] traditional college program
   - [ ] alternative certification

5. Were you previously an assistant teacher?
   - [ ] yes
   - [ ] no
APPENDIX B

PERMISSION TO USE THE ABCC-R INVENTORY

Fwd: Re: ABCC Inventory

From: Caterria Payton
Subject: Fwd: Re: ABCC Inventory
To: Caterria Payton

Caterria Payton,

>>> Nancy Martin <nancy.martin@utsa.edu> 4/14/2008 11:18 AM >>>
Caterria,
I am the contact person for this and yes, you definitely have my permission to use the ABCC in your study. We have recently published a revised version of the ABCC-R. I have attached it. The full reference for the revised version is:


Good luck with your study and let me know if you need any additional information.

On 4/14/08 9:20 AM, "Caterria Payton" wrote:

> Dr. Martin,
> >
> I am writing to obtain permission to use the ABCC inventory in my research project to obtain my Ed.D. from the University of Southern Mississippi. Will you please give me the name of the contact person for this?
> >
> Thank you,
> > Caterria Payton, NBCT
> > PSD - Elementary Lead Teacher
> >
APPENDIX C

IRB APPROVAL

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: 12021406
PROJECT TITLE: Classroom Management Styles: The Differences Among Traditionally Licensed Teachers who Were Formally Paraprofessionals and Alternatively Licensed Teachers
PROJECT TYPE: Dissertation
RESEARCHER/S: Caterria B. Payton
COLLEGE/DIVISION: College of Education & Psychology
DEPARTMENT: Educational Leadership & Research
FUNDING AGENCY: N/A
IRB COMMITTEE ACTION: Expedited Review Approval
PERIOD OF PROJECT APPROVAL: 02/14/2012 to 02/12/2013

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

DIRECTIONS LETTER TO PRINCIPALS

November 7, 2011

Dear Colleague,

I am currently enrolled in the doctoral program at The University of Southern Mississippi. I have successfully completed my coursework, and I am in the process of conducting research associated with my dissertation topic: Classroom Management Styles: The Differences Among Traditionally-Licensed Teachers Who Were Formally Paraprofessionals and Alternatively-Licensed Teachers. I have obtained permission from your superintendent (see attached) to distribute a simple questionnaire to participating teachers in your school.

All identifying teacher and school information will remain anonymous throughout the study. The data will not include any information disclosing names of teachers or students. Once the dissertation is complete, I will gladly share the findings of my research project with interested individuals.

The following are directions for distributing, completing, and collecting the survey:

1. Please distribute surveys to certified teachers who obtained their certification via alternative certification (alternate route) and teachers who were previously assistant teachers only.
2. Have your teachers complete the informed consent and the survey and place them in the separate envelope in the designated location.
3. A designee or I will pick up the envelopes in one week. We will call to confirm completion before arriving.

Thanks again for your assistance in this professional endeavor. Should you have any questions or need assistance, I can be contacted at 228-235-3236 or n2teachn@bellsouth.net.

Sincerely,

[Signature]
Caterria B. Papyrus, Ed.S.
APPENDIX E

LETTER REQUESTING PERMISSION TO CONDUCT STUDY

LETTER REQUESTING PERMISSION TO CONDUCT STUDY

November 7, 2011

Dear Superintendent,

I am currently enrolled in the doctoral program at The University of Southern Mississippi. I have successfully completed my coursework and will be conducting research associated with my dissertation topic in the near future. My project is entitled *Classroom Management Styles: The Differences Among Traditionally-Licensed Teachers Who Were Formally Paraprofessionals and Alternatively-Licensed Teachers*. Ultimately, I am requesting permission to distribute a simple questionnaire to participating teachers in your school district.

Upon Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval, I would like to distribute questionnaires to all traditionally licensed teachers who were previously assistant teachers and alternatively licensed teachers. The data will not need to include any information disclosing names of teachers or students.

All identifying teacher and school information will remain anonymous throughout the study. Once the dissertation is complete, I will gladly share the findings of my research project with interested individuals. IRB requires that I obtain written permission from superintendents prior to beginning my project. Should you grant me permission, feel free to use the attached letter as a template. You will need to place your letter on district letterhead, sign, and return it to me using the enclosed envelope. I appreciate your assistance in this educational venture.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Caterria B. Payton, Ed.S.
REFERENCES


Laczko-Kerr, L, & Berliner, D.C. (2002). The effectiveness of "Teach for America" and other under-certified teachers on student academic achievement: A case of


