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The effect of mentoring on beginning teacher retention in Bossier Parish (Louisiana) school system

Olufolabo Olamide Ogunlana Ogunyemi

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THE EFFECT OF MENTORING ON BEGINNING TEACHER RETENTION IN BOSSIER PARISH (LOUISIANA) SCHOOL SYSTEM

by

Olufọlabọ Qlamide Ogunlana Ogunyemi, B.A., M.B.A.

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree Doctor of Education

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the effect of mentoring on beginning teacher retention in the Bossier Parish Schools, a northwest Louisiana parish school system. The sample consisted of complete responses from 161 participants out of a population of 499 Pre-K through 12th grade teachers who had participated in the Louisiana Teacher Assistance and Assessment Program (LaTAAP) between August 1998 and May 2007. Participants completed a 28-item questionnaire that was posted on the internet via SurveyMonkey. The questionnaire was divided into three sections: (a) general information, (b) appraisal of mentoring and professional development activities, and (c) background information.

Statistical analyses were performed according to data type: correlated t-test for pre- and post-measures; Mann-Whitney U and Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA for between-group differences. Statistical analysis indicated a significant relationship between the mentor’s assistance and the mentee’s competency in the following areas: (a) teaching students with special needs, (b) classroom management and student discipline skills, and (c) communicating school and district culture. A significant relationship was found between gender and retention. Additional findings indicated the following: (a) 66% of the participants rated their skill levels higher, post-mentoring; (b) participants rated observations of certified teachers as the most helpful professional development activity; and (c) 77% of the participants indicated satisfaction with the teaching profession. Conversely, no significant relationship was found between teacher retention and the following variables: (a) students’ socio-economic status; (b) teachers’ age bracket;
(c) race; (d) initial mode of certification; (e) grade-level taught; and (f) duration of mentoring. Additionally, no significant relationship was found between the mentor’s assistance and the mentee’s competency with regard to the following variables: (a) executing content standards; (b) planning effective classroom instruction skills; (c) communicating with parents; and (d) assessing student progress. Implications for practice and recommendations for further study were presented.
APPROVAL FOR SCHOLARLY DISSEMINATION

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Author Olufolade Ogunyemi
Date 07/31/2013
DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my parents, the late Chief Samuel O. Ogunyemi and the late Mrs. C. Ibitayo Oremule Ogunyemi. They were my earliest and most impactful models and teachers. My parents’ favorite mantra, as far back as I can remember, was “the only lasting legacy a parent can bequeath to his/her children is a good education.” This mantra played in my head like a familiar anthem and spurred me on in times of uncertainty as I jogged my way through the dissertation marathon. The memory of their abiding love and confidence gave sustenance to my quest.

This dissertation is also dedicated to my beloved sons: Fọlabọ and Sẹgun. I wish to thank them for their patience and understanding as they observed me labor in the vineyard of the doctoral program. They accompanied me to the defense of my dissertation; their presence buoyed my spirits during the dissertation defense. Thank you, Ijebus, for your love and support.

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CHAPTER I

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Staffing elementary and secondary classrooms with qualified teachers stands as a central concern of school administrators. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (2010), 8% of the 3,380,300 public school teachers who taught during the 2007-2008 school year left the profession, and another 7.6% of the total moved from their initial school. In 2007, the National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future (NCTAF) estimated “the national cost of public school teacher turnover could be over $7.3 billion a year” (p. 1). Carroll and Foster (2010) observed that since 1994, the nation has experienced a 30% rate of attrition among first-year teachers. Thus, retention of highly-qualified teachers in the present age of accountability and high-stakes testing makes new teacher induction programs a necessity.

No Child Left Behind, commonly referred to as NCLB, (United States Department of Education, 2002) identified professional development of teachers as a key ingredient for its accountability scheme in securing help for students to meet high academic standards. Title II of NCLB allowed a Local Education Agency (LEA) and states to apply for “transition to teaching” and other analogous grants. Grantees were required to expend these funds for recruitment of quality teachers and for provision of these teachers with effective induction support activities such as mentoring. Rockoff (2008) affirmed that teacher attrition could be moderated through policies that equip
teachers with training and in turn positively affect student learning and achievement. According to Rockoff (2008), school districts expend scarce resources on new teacher induction or mentoring programs in order to aid the new teachers in the acquisition of effective teaching skills so as to help them surmount the professional challenges they will encounter at the outset of their careers. Haynes (2011) affirmed that teacher retention is directly attributable to the quality of the first teaching experience. Darling-Hammond (2007) concluded that no other factor affects student achievement more than teacher quality and that provision of mentoring for beginning teachers fosters retention and increases competency.

Mentoring is a key component of induction programs designed for reducing teacher turnover and staffing problems. Odell (1990) proffered that teacher mentoring programs provide “beginning teachers with a structured and supportive entry into the profession” (p. 7). Early research on first-year teachers identified many areas of concern, among which were isolation (Rosenholtz, 1989), classroom management (Coats and Thoressen, 1978), general frustrations (Bullough, 1987), and adapting to students’ needs and abilities (Fox and Singletary, 1986).

**Louisiana Teacher Assistance and Assessment Program**

The teacher induction program operational in the state of Louisiana was titled the Louisiana Teacher Assistance and Assessment Program (LaTAAP) and was overseen by the Louisiana Department of Education (2004). It was a uniform statewide program with a mentoring component designed for assisting first-time teachers in Louisiana public school systems. The mentoring component focused on the socialization of new teachers into their new roles as classroom teachers and provided adaptive training regarding
classroom and professional issues teachers would encounter early in their careers. Each new teacher was required to be assigned a mentor, or a mentor support team, at the beginning of his/her first semester of teaching. The mentor was expected to furnish the mentee with technical assistance and support. The end goal of LaTAAP was a provision of assurance to the state by the LEA that the new teacher had demonstrated competency in the understanding and demonstration of the *Louisiana Components of Effective Teaching* prior to the issuance of a state-endorsed teaching certificate.

The enabling legislation for LaTAAP was codified in the *Louisiana Administrative Code, Title 28, Bulletin 1943* (Louisiana Department of Education, 2006). The legislation provided three rationales for the enactment of LaTAAP: (a) to improve teaching and learning; (b) to assure that the teachers certificated by Louisiana are competent; and (c) to provide new teachers with a supportive system and assistance, thereby strengthening their instructional knowledge and skills. The program started as a regulatory mandate of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) and became operational in August 1994 as a one-year induction program: one support semester followed by an assessment semester. LaTAAP was later modified from a one- to a two-year mentoring and assessment program in August 2001. The two-year program differed from the one-year program in that BESE mandated continuous mentoring of new teachers for the duration of the two-year program in contrast to the one-semester support for the one-year program. The *Code* required that mentors and new teachers should be matched by grade level and subject areas. LEAs and principals were obliged to adhere to this and other enumerated guidelines when assigning mentors to new teachers. LaTAAP was placed in abeyance in May 2009; however, the responsibility and accountability for new teacher induction were passed on to the LEAs beginning in August 2009.
The *Louisiana Administrative Code, Title 28, Bulletin 1943* described the purpose of LaTAAP as a uniform statewide program of assistance for and assessment of new teachers entering service for the first time in a Louisiana public school system; however, the Code offered an exclusion waiver, upon a formal request and review, for two categories of teachers who applied to teach in a Louisiana school for the first time: (a) experienced teachers from out-of-state and (b) experienced teachers holding a National Board for Professional Teaching Standards Certificate.

**Parties Responsible for Implementing LaTAAP**

The *Louisiana Administrative Code, Title 28, Bulletin 1943* (Louisiana State Department of Education, 2006) essentially created a symmetric accountability system through apportioning the responsibilities for successful implementation of LaTAAP among seven interdependent agents: (a) BESE; (b) the Louisiana Department of Education (LDE); (c) LEAs; (d) mentors or mentor support teams; (e) principals; (f) assessor teams; and (g) mentees. Mentors were required to have successfully completed the Louisiana Teacher Assessor and Training Programs prior to selection as a mentor. A three-person assessment team comprised of the principal (or designee), an experienced teacher, and an external assessor, was assigned to the new teacher early in the teacher’s third semester of teaching. Team members were required to observe the new teacher once during the support semester.

The observation was designed to be formative in scope, creating an opportunity for team members to fashion a professional development plan to ameliorate areas of the *Louisiana Components of Effective Teaching* that the assessors identified to be the teacher’s weak points prior to the summative assessment (Louisiana Department of Education, 2004; 2007). A new teacher was assessed on his/her proficiency and
demonstrated effectiveness on 11 components from a hierarchy of five domains as outlined in the *Louisiana Components of Effective Teaching*. A domain, according to the *Louisiana Components of Effective Teaching*, is a major area of teaching responsibility. The five domains were planning, management, instruction, professional development, and school improvement. A new teacher receiving a rating of "2" on the summative assessment, based on the criteria set out in the *Louisiana Components of Effective Teaching*, indicated an achievement of a "competent" designation and the teacher would, therefore, receive a Louisiana teaching certificate at the conclusion of LaTAAP.

**Qualifications of Mentors**

A mentor was required to have the following qualifications and attributes prior to his/her selection: (a) a minimum of three years of teaching experience; (b) at least two years of experience in the school system, preferably in the school where the mentee was assigned; (c) documented evidence of continuing professional development; (d) demonstrated excellence in teaching; (e) successful completion of the LaTAAP training for assessors and mentors; (f) capacity to model effective instruction and good communication skills; (g) teaching experience in the same content area as the mentee; and (h) accessibility to the assigned new teacher (Louisiana Department of Education, 2004; 2006).

**Responsibilities of Mentors**

The *Louisiana Administrative Code Title 28, Bulletin 1943* (Louisiana State Department of Education, 2006) required a mentor to carry out the role set of coach, model, and professional development specialist to the mentee. These three tasks were geared towards helping the mentee assimilate functions, knowledge and skills that were representative of an effective teacher.
Coach. The coaching responsibility involved having the mentor train a mentee in the following areas: (a) the analysis of classroom instruction in order to gauge how well students are learning, (b) the expansion of effective teaching strategies, and (c) the conducting of informal advisory conferences and observations with feedback.

Model. The modeling responsibility entailed having the mentor, first, to fashion for the mentee effective illustration and application of the attributes enumerated under three of the domains in the *Louisiana Components of Effective Teaching* (planning, management, and, instruction) and, second, to serve as a booster.

Professional Development Specialist. The professional development aspect of the position required the mentor to serve as the mentee’s guide and buffer on matters relating to needed assistance and resources, formulating the professional growth plan, and analyzing student performance data relative to the school improvement plan.

Responsibilities of Principals

The *Louisiana Administrative Code* (Louisiana Department of Education, 2006) assigned the principal the following responsibilities: (a) introduction of the beginning teacher to the policies and procedures of the school and the school system, the faculty and staff of the school, the school improvement and accountability program plan, LaTAAP, and available resources in the school district; (b) assignment of a mentor from the trained pool; (c) monitoring and evaluating the activities of the mentor and mentee; (d) assurance that the mentor and mentee meet weekly; (e) assurance that the mentee and mentor observe each other’s classrooms a minimum of two times per grading period (the equivalent of a 9-week instructional period) during the mentee’s first year in LaTAAP; (f) arrangement for the manning of the mentor or mentee’s classroom when either schedules a classroom observation; (g) performance of a minimum of one informal
conference and one structured observation of the new teacher during his/her second semester of enrolment in LaTAAP; (h) provision of feedback from the structured observation to the mentee; (i) presiding over the assessment team; and (j) aiding the mentee and mentor in obtaining resources to effect professional development activities.

**Compensation**

The *Louisiana Administrative Code* required assessors and mentors to be paid stipends for their assessment and mentoring endeavors. The *Code* limited eligibility for remuneration to a specified group of educators for their assistance and/or assessment services: mentors, college faculty, retired educators, assessors and other educators the LEA deemed appropriate.

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study was to examine the relationship between the effectiveness of mentoring, a key component of LaTAAP, and beginning teacher retention in the Bossier Parish Louisiana School System. Bossier Parish is located in the northwest quadrant of Louisiana. Participation in the study was limited to Bossier Parish School System teachers who were enrolled in LaTAAP during the period August 1998 to May 2007: three cohorts for the 1-year induction program (1998 through 2001) and six cohorts for the 2-year program (2001 through 2007). The study focused on beginning teachers who continued teaching a minimum of three years after undergoing LaTAAP.

A 28-item questionnaire (Appendix C.1) was employed in asking participants to evaluate the mentoring they received during LaTAAP induction and its effect on their decision to remain in teaching. Data were obtained from the responses of those Bossier Parish teachers who had participated in LaTAAP in accordance with the Louisiana
Department of Education and BESE's directives for new teachers. The study examined the following independent variables for teachers: (a) gender, (b) socio-economic status (SES), (c) ethnicity, (d) age, (e) initial mode of certification, (f) duration of mentoring, (g) grade-level taught. The study also examined the following independent variables for mentor's assistance in: (a) teaching students with special needs, (b) executing content standards, (c) developing classroom management and student discipline skills, (d) planning effective classroom instruction skills, (e) communicating school and district culture, (f) communicating with parents, and (g) assessing student progress. Additionally, teacher commitment, which is regarded as a catalytic factor in decisions to stay or leave teaching, was assessed from the responses to Question 25 of the survey instrument. The responses to Question 25 of the survey instrument served as the dependent variable.

The study utilized the Mann-Whitney and Kruskal-Wallis one-way ANOVA for nonparametric methods when comparing two or more groups of teachers, and the correlated t-test for scaled data in examining the relationship between mentoring and teacher retention in the Bossier Parish School System.

Justification for the Study

The National Association of State Boards of Education (2012) affirmed two crucial factors that necessitate teacher induction-with-mentoring: (a) student achievement is directly affected by effective teaching; and (b) it takes beginning teachers a three- to five-year experience to be able to teach at a level that encourages optimal student growth and achievement. The state of Louisiana holds schools and school
districts responsible for student achievement through its annual publication of school and district accountability scores.

BESE and the LDE placed LaTAAP in abeyance in May 2009; however, the burden and accountability for new teacher induction were passed on to the LEAs. Devolvement of new teacher induction programming to the LEAs ended the uniformity that was inherent in the teacher certification process that LaTAAP fostered. The transfer of new teacher induction responsibilities to LEAs by BESE and LDE is puzzling when contrasted with a 2011 legislation enacted by Vermont’s legislature. The state of Vermont recently redoubled its efforts in providing beginning teachers there with an upgraded uniform induction-with-mentoring program. Following completion of a study on the manner in which the education profession inducts and mentors new teachers in Vermont, the state of Vermont’s Department of Education (2012) submitted three recommendations in its report to the Vermont’s House and Senate Committees on Education: (a) establishment of a unitary set of standards regarding induction-with-mentoring program, (b) annual reporting of the efficacy of the induction-with-mentoring program by supervisory unions and districts, (c) development of statewide recommendations for sustainable funding of the induction-with-mentoring program. The report was submitted by the Act 20 Study Committee, which was commissioned by the state following enactment of a law in 2011 that was geared towards the provision of mentoring support for three groups: teachers, new principals, and new technical center directors. The authors of the report submitted to the Vermont Legislature summarized the reasoning behind making induction-with-mentoring a uniform facet of Vermont’s elementary and secondary educational system thus: the placement of highly effective
educators in every classroom in order to close the achievement gap and to increase student learning. The Vermont induction-with-mentoring program mirrors LaTAAP.

Recruitment and retention of highly qualified teachers are signal goals of school districts. Ingersoll and Strong (2011) argued that the twin objectives of mentoring programs are to facilitate an improvement in both the performance and the retention of beginning teachers, which will in turn redound to student learning and achievement. Additionally, Ingersoll and Smith (2004) observed that beginning teacher induction had an affirmative effect on the retention of teachers. School districts need a cadre of competent and highly qualified teachers to staff their classrooms in order to effectively meet school and district’s accountability goals; therefore, schools and/or districts with teacher turnover rates above the norm may find it difficult to meet established growth targets. If a rise in teacher turnover were to occur, a school district would experience a drain on its fiscal health stemming from costs associated with continual recruitment and hiring. The lack of stability in the teacher corps would negatively impact students’ achievement and learning. In 2007, the National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future (NCTAF) estimated “the national cost of public school teacher turnover could be over $7.3 billion a year” (p. 1). High rates of turnover among beginning teachers create a dual threat to staffing and organizational stability.

Costigan (2005) stated that recent graduates of colleges of education expressed concerns about not being fully prepared to deal with classroom management issues at the start of their careers as teachers. These are issues that mentoring helps beginning teachers to overcome. The state of Louisiana’s Department of Education placed LaTAAP in abeyance starting in August 2009. Investigating the effectiveness of mentoring in fostering beginning teacher commitment and retention may, perhaps, cause BESE to
restore a uniform, statewide induction program. According to the Alliance for Excellent Education (2011), the most important contributor to student learning is the caliber of the teacher along with the quality of teaching.

**Theoretical Framework**

Research studies on employee turnover and its obverse – retention – have generally employed theoretical constructs from the three social science fields of economics, psychology, and sociology. Mor Barak, Nissly, and Levin (2001) furnished an explanation for each construct: (a) the economics construct is premised on opportunity cost, which is an employee’s rational evaluation of the job and organizational conditions in contrast with other available employment options; (b) the psychological construct regards turnover as a function of behavioral outcomes that stem from an employee’s assessments and views about work conditions and (c) the sociological construct views turnover as a result of an employee’s evaluation of social supports and the work environment.

Teaching is an occupation that takes place within the context of a nested social web of an organization and also undergirded by the social complex of a school culture. Wang, Odell, and Schwille (2008) conducted an analysis of the extant literature on teacher induction programs to probe the pivotal effects on teacher retention, the shaping of teaching behaviors, and students’ learning. Wang et al. concluded that the quality of beginning teachers’ learning and teaching practice is dependent on the organizational and socio-cultural milieu of the school. Ingersoll and Strong (2011) advanced four additional purposes of mentoring from induction theory and theorists: teacher socialization, adjustment, development, and assessment. Ingersoll’s (2001, 2003) studies on school
staffing issues in relation to the organizational characteristics and school conditions undergirded the sociological construct employed as the theoretical framework for this study. Ingersoll (2001) proposed that the policies and practices of the employing school management affected the levels of teacher retention and reported job satisfaction. Teachers reporting satisfaction with teaching during the early years of their profession tended to have effective administrators and also experienced a supportive mentoring system.

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) has conducted dual surveys of staffing and organizational characteristics of elementary and secondary schools in the United States since 1990: the Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), and the Teacher Followup Survey (TFS). Researchers have based their studies on school staffing on these data (NCES, 2010; Kukla-Acevedo, 2009; Ingersoll, 2003; Ingersoll & Smith, 2004). The 1999-2000 SASS edition featured questions on induction and mentoring of beginning teachers for the first time. The survey instrument used for this study featured questions that were adapted from these surveys. Ingersoll (2003) described two forms of teacher turnover based on the 1999-2000 SASS: (a) movers—teachers who migrate to other schools and (b) leavers—teachers who permanently exit the profession. The teachers classified as “leavers” have been the focus of research studies on teacher attrition. Ingersoll (2003) observed that between 40 and 50% of all beginning teachers exit the teaching profession within five years. This study is also concerned with teacher retention and attrition.

Assumptions of the Study

This study was based on four assumptions: (a) that Bossier Parish schools are staffed with qualified teachers; therefore, an effective mentoring program would increase
retention of beginning teachers, thus translating into good school performance and reduced school staffing problems; (b) that the Bossier Parish School System’s administration reported valid data to the Louisiana Department of Education about the number of teachers who completed the one- and two-year LaTAAP inductions (one-year program, during the period August 1998 to May 2001 and the two-year program, during the period of August 2001 through May 2007); (c) that participants were truthful in their self-reporting when responding to the survey questionnaire; and (d) that the variables selected for inclusion in the study were in concert with existing literature and, therefore, appropriate for predicting the effect of mentoring on beginning teacher retention.

**Research Questions and Hypotheses**

This study examined the relationship between the mentoring component of LaTAAP and its mediating effects on beginning teacher retention in Bossier Parish schools. According to Ingersoll (2001), successful schools display a spirit of *esprit de corps*; therefore, unexpected levels of teacher turnover may indicate problems with the optimal functioning of a school. Ingersoll (2001; 2003) concurred with previous research on teacher turnover that used teacher characteristics (ethnicity, age, gender, subject taught, and grade level) as control variables. Ingersoll (2001) viewed teacher retention as a dependent variable.

**Research Questions**

This study addressed the following questions concerning teachers who have been through the one- and two-year mentoring component of LaTAAP:

1. Is there a significant relationship between gender and teacher retention?
2. Is there a significant relationship between the socio-economic status (SES) of the students and teacher retention?

3. Is there a significant relationship between ethnicity and teacher retention?

4. Is there a significant relationship between age bracket (at entry) and teacher retention?

5. Is there a significant relationship between the initial mode of certification (traditional versus alternate) and teacher retention?

6. Is there a significant relationship between the grade level taught and teacher retention?

7. Is there a significant relationship between the mentor’s assistance and the mentee’s competency in teaching students with special needs, before and after mentoring?

8. Is there a significant relationship between the mentor’s assistance and the mentee’s competency in executing content standards, before and after mentoring?

9. Is there a significant relationship between the duration of mentoring (one-year versus two-year) and teacher retention?

10. Is there a significant relationship between the mentor’s assistance and the mentee’s competency on development of classroom management and student discipline skills, before and after mentoring?

11. Is there a significant relationship between the mentor’s assistance and the mentee’s competency in planning effective classroom instruction skills, before and after mentoring?
12. Is there a significant relationship between the mentor’s assistance and the mentee’s competency in communicating school and district culture, before and after mentoring?

13. Is there a significant relationship between the mentor’s assistance and the mentee’s competency in communicating with parents, before and after mentoring?

14. Is there a significant relationship between the mentor’s assistance and the mentee’s competency in assessing student progress, before and after mentoring?

Null Hypotheses

The following research hypotheses will be tested in this study:

1. There is no statistically significant relationship between the teacher’s gender and teacher retention.

2. There is no statistically significant relationship between the students’ socio-economic status (SES) and teacher retention.

3. There is no statistically significant relationship between the teacher’s ethnicity and teacher retention.

4. There is no statistically significant relationship between the teacher’s age bracket and teacher retention.

5. There is no statistically significant relationship between the teacher’s initial mode of certification and teacher retention.

6. There is no statistically significant relationship between the grade level taught and teacher retention.

7. There is no statistically significant relationship between the mentor’s assistance and the mentee’s competency in teaching students with special needs, before and after mentoring.
8. There is no statistically significant relationship between the mentor's assistance and the mentee's competency in executing content standards, before and after mentoring.

9. There is no statistically significant relationship between the duration of mentoring (one-year versus two-year) and teacher retention.

10. There is no statistically significant relationship between the mentor's assistance and the mentee's competency on development of classroom management and student discipline skills, before and after mentoring.

11. There is no statistically significant relationship between the mentor's assistance and the mentee's competency in planning effective classroom instruction skills, before and after mentoring.

12. There is no statistically significant relationship between the mentor's assistance and the mentee's competency in communicating school and district culture, before and after mentoring.

13. There is no statistically significant relationship between the mentor's assistance and the mentee's competency in communicating with parents, before and after mentoring.

14. There is no statistically significant relationship between the mentor's assistance and the mentee's competency in assessing student progress, before and after mentoring.

**Definition of Terms**

1. *Assessment*: the process by which the state determines whether a new teacher satisfactorily demonstrates the *Louisiana Components of Effective Teaching* to
qualify for the teaching credentials being sought (Louisiana Department of Education, 2007).

2. **Attribute**: a behavior that explains a component (Louisiana Department of Education, 2007).

3. **Component**: a primary function within a domain (Louisiana Department of Education, 2007).

4. **Domain**: a main area of teacher responsibilities (Louisiana Department of Education, 2007).

5. **Formative Assessment**: an appraisal of a teacher's performance for the expressed purpose of identifying areas for professional growth and improvement (Louisiana Department of Education, 2007).

6. **Intention to quit**: a state of mind in which an employee seriously considers quitting the job (Mor Barak, Nissly & Levin, 2001).

7. Leaver: a teacher who left teaching within five years of entering the profession (Ingersoll, 2003).

8. **Mentor Teacher**: an experienced teacher assigned to a new teacher to provide assistance as a coach, model, and professional development specialist. (Louisiana Department of Education, 2007).

9. **Mover**: a teacher that moves from one school to another within the same school district (Ingersoll, 2003).

10. **New Teacher**: a full-time teacher employed for the first time to teach in a public school in Louisiana after August 1, 1994 (Louisiana Department of Education, 2007).
11. Professional Growth Plan: a written plan for improvement, based on the new teacher's self-assessment of areas for refinement and needs identified during the mentoring or assessment processes (Louisiana Department of Education, 2007).

12. Socio-Economic Status (SES): the percentage of students in a school district who are eligible for a federally subsidized program of free or reduced lunches based on family economic condition (Louisiana Department of Education, 2009).

13. Stayer: a teacher who stayed in the teaching profession longer than five years (Ingersoll, 2003).


15. Title I School: a public school with high numbers or percentages of poor children. The school receives federal Title I funds to help ensure that all children meet challenging state academic content and student academic achievement standards (U. S. Department of Education, 2009).
CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

This study examined the relationship between mentoring, a component of LaTAAP induction, and retention of beginning teachers in the Bossier Parish School System. The literature reviewed provided a historical perspective on mentoring, and an evaluative review of the research on mentoring effect on beginning teacher retention. The issues and problems faced by beginning teachers have been evaluated by numerous research studies in the last twenty-five years, especially regarding teacher retention. Carter and Francis (2001) found that the professional and social supports provided to first-year teachers were crucial to the tenor of their professional experiences and professional learning. Many school districts have implemented induction programs with a mentoring component to obviate the culture shocks faced by teachers during their first year of service. This chapter is organized into three sections and presents a review of the literature related to mentoring programs for new teachers and teacher retention research: Section 1, historical and legal antecedents to NCLB; Section 2, mentoring practice and its evolution in the teaching profession; and Section 3, research on mentoring programs and beginning teacher retention.
Historical and Legal Antecedents to the No Child Left Behind Act

Public education reflects the social and cultural traditions of its society in tandem with its political philosophy (Alexander and Alexander, 2005). The primordial legal latticework of the current American public education was forged through legislative enactments over the span of two and a quarter centuries (from 1642 through 1868), from the colonial period through the early Reconstruction era: (a) the Massachusetts Laws of 1642 and 1647; (b) the Land Ordinance of 1787, enacted by the Continental Congress; (c) the Massachusetts Compulsory School Attendance Law of 1853; and (d) the First and Tenth Constitutional Amendments, ratified in 1791, and the Fourteenth Amendment, ratified in 1868.

The idea of a free public educational system emerged in the United States in New England with the enactment of the Massachusetts Law of 1642. The Colony of Massachusetts, in obeisance to the Church, asserted its right to require communities to establish and maintain schools under penalty if they refused. It directed "the chosen men" of each town to ascertain, from time to time, if the parents and masters were attending to their educational duties. The Massachusetts Law of 1642 made education compulsory for all youths in the Massachusetts Bay Colony (Hlebowitsh, 2001). While The Law of 1642 did not "establish schools, or direct the employment of schoolmasters" (Cubberley, 1920, p. 365), it instead spurred on a cottage education industry that made parents responsible for the education of their children. The Massachusetts Law of 1647, also known as the Old Deluder Act, was enacted as a corrective measure to authorize provision of schools and the employment of teachers (Hlebowitsh, 2001). The authors of the Law of 1647 intended it to be a prophylactic for warding off Satan's exploitative schemes on people. The law is historic for fashioning three precedents: 1) asserting the
state’s authority to establish educational requirements; 2) ceding authority to local
governments to levy taxes for mandated public schools; 3) instituting the legal
philosophy that the state must provide the ways and means for financing public education
it deems necessary (Johns, Morphet, & Alexander, 1983).

In 1787, the Continental Congress effectuated a momentum for the establishment
of public education in the states entering the union through the passage of Article III, a
component of which was the Northwest Ordinance of 1787. The Continental Congress
inserted a hopeful, philosophical provision for posterity in The 1787 Land Ordinance,
expressing their beliefs that “religion, morality, and knowledge [were] necessary [for]
good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and [that] the means of
education [should] be forever encouraged” (qtd. in Alexander and Alexander, 2005,
p. 63).

The framers of the United States Constitution designed a government of
symmetric accountability, a federative, albeit, triangulated, system of government of
separated powers: legislative, executive, and, judicial. Government power was in turn
distributed over national, state, and, local levels. The Tenth Amendment to the
Constitution expressly states that “the powers not delegated to the United States by the
Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or
to the people” (qtd. in Alexander and Alexander, 2005, p. 66). The Constitution reposes
in state governments the plenary power over education within their borders; however, the
states’ plenary power has historically been pierced by the national government through its
use of the General Welfare Clause of the Constitution to interpose itself. This
interposition occurs episodically when the national government declares an interest in
education. The most recent example of the federal government's interposition is the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001.

According to Knight (1941), the United States of America's public education plan was predicated on the principle that the state is obligated to provide "equal educational opportunity for all the people" (p. 3). This obligation, in turn, conferred the responsibility to provide this educational provision by means of taxation on the state. The state of Massachusetts instituted the first compulsory attendance law in 1853; however, the principle did not take hold in the majority of the states until early in the twentieth century (Alexander and Alexander, 2005). A state's ability to compel children between certain ages to attend school was established by the common law doctrine of *parens patriae*. *Parens patriae* implies simply that the state, as a parent, has the authority "to provide for the commonwealth and individual welfare" (Alexander and Alexander, p. 241). The Supreme Court, in a 1925 Oregon case *Pierce v. Society of Sisters*, ruled that while the states can compel school attendance, the children cannot be compelled to attend only public schools (Alexander and Alexander, 2005). The Supreme Court's 1954 ruling in the signal case of *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* accorded with the tenet of the Fourteenth Amendment. The Court ruled that "separate educational institutions are inherently unequal" (qtd. in Alexander and Alexander, 2005, p. 895). The ruling vitiated, haltingly, the *status quo ante* principle of state-sponsored segregation.

Public education has been buffeted by calls for curriculum reform over the past 55 years. Curriculum is defined as "the knowledge and skills that schools are supposed to help students master" (McNergney and McNergney, 2007, p. 290). In the 1950s, the conservatives championed the "Back-to-Basics" curriculum reform at a time when the Cold War was in its early stages (Hlebowitsh, 2001). The proponents of the "Back-to-
"Basics" curriculum were successful in getting public schools to adopt the strict reductionist curriculum plan because the United States was competing with the Soviet Union for global dominance in the throes of the Cold War (Hlebowitsh, 2001). The Soviet Union launched Sputnik I, the first space satellite, in 1957 ahead of the United States (U.S.). This feat spurred the U.S. Congress to establish the National Defense Education Act (NDEA) of 1958. NDEA overtly provided federal support and revenue for a discipline-centered curriculum with emphases on mathematics, science, and foreign languages (Hlebowitsh, 2001; Brimley and Garfield, 2005).

President Lyndon Johnson signed The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965 into law as a full-throttle demonstration of the federal government's involvement in public education (McNergney and McNergney, 2007). Supporters of ESEA also perceived it as an ostensible culmination of the protracted struggle for Civil Rights since it was designed for overcoming poverty, persisting issues of segregation, and racial and gender inequities. Title I of ESEA provided funds for schools through categorical programs such as compensatory education, disability education, and Head Start (Brimley and Garfield, 2005). ESEA was reauthorized as the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (United States Department of Education, 2004).

In 1983, the National Commission on Excellence in Education (NCEE) issued a report titled A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform. The report was a metamorphosed edition of the 1950's call for curriculum reform. It was condemnatory of the perceived poor state of the educational affairs in the U.S. through the early 1980s and declaratory of a national crisis. NCEE promoted the "basics" and the subject-centered curriculum. It advocated three points: (a) strengthening and increasing course loads for graduation requirements, (b) lengthening of the school day and year, and (c) renewed
emphasis on math and science education. Additionally, NCEE raised the issue of finding new methods for teacher training and education and was supportive of merit pay for teachers (Hlebowitsh, 2001). The publication of NCEE engendered a national debate that resulted in focused attention on test-based accountability and standards-based reform.

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 was signed into law by President George W. Bush on January 8, 2002 (United States Department of Education, 2004). It was a significant victory for the standards and accountability movement. According to the U.S. Department of Education (2004), NCLB was designed for the twin purposes of improving student achievement and closing achievement gaps. The law aimed at assuring that all students were taught by highly qualified teachers without regard to the students' socio-economic and cultural background. It required each state to develop benchmarks for measuring students' learning and progress and to produce an annual report of student achievement while holding schools responsible for the learning and progress of students belonging to subgroups (United States Department of Education, 2004). NCLB stated a main goal of having all students reach proficiency level on assessments by 2014. Title II of NCLB addresses the issues of preparation, training, recruitment, and professional development of highly qualified teachers and administrators. Title II, Part A, The Improving Teacher Quality State Grants program, awards grant funds to LEAs and states for training, recruiting, and preparing high-quality teachers. These grants permit LEAs to implement and to expend these funds on the recruitment of quality teachers and new teacher induction-support activities, such as mentoring, in order to provide students with effective teachers.

The No Child Left Behind: A Toolkit for Teachers (2004) cited three fundamental requirements that teachers of core academic subjects must meet in order to be considered
highly qualified teachers: a baccalaureate degree, full state certification, and
demonstration of subject-matter competency in the core academic subjects taught. The
core academic subjects, as defined by NCLB, are English, language arts, math, science,
history, civics and government, geography, economics, the arts, and foreign language.
The state of Louisiana mandated that all new teachers, regardless of the subject taught,
should undergo the state’s induction with a mentoring program titled LaTAAP. This
responsibility, however, was revoked by the state of Louisiana when it placed the
uniform induction-with-mentoring program, LaTAAP, in abeyance. As previously stated,
the responsibility was devolved to the school districts.

**Mentoring Practice and Its Evolution in the Teaching Profession**

Teacher induction programs are essentially a socialization process with mentoring
as a crucial component. Mentoring is not a new idea; however, the topic has garnered
episodic interest from researchers (Tonidandel, Avery, and Phillips, 2007). Aryee,
Wyatt, and Stone (1996) viewed mentoring as a means of transmitting an organization or
profession’s norms, values, and behavior expectations from the mentor to the person
being mentored (mentee). Popenoe (1971), who viewed socialization of new members as
a pivotal organizational process, noted that “through socialization the new members learn
how to carry out their assigned duties and internalize the group values and norms that
will support their activities” (p. 196).

Hargreaves (2000) and Hargreaves and Fullan (2000) sketched a descriptive
analysis of the four phases that the teaching profession has undergone in the United
States and the mentoring practice that typified each age: Phase 1, the pre-professional
age; Phase 2, the autonomous professional; Phase 3, the collegial professional; and
Phase 4, the professional age. Hargreaves and Fullan referred to these historical phases as the four ages of professionalism. In the pre-professional age, the teacher listened to recitations, tested the students’ memory, and kept order in the classroom (p. 50). Hargreaves and Fullan portrayed the teacher induction process during this phase as becoming a teacher “through practical apprenticeship.” Apprenticeship is defined by Popenoe (1971) as a form of socialization typified by informal training and instruction by a member of the organization; accordingly, the apprentice’s instructor served the role of “a model to be copied” (Popenoe, p. 197). Cubberley (1920) depicted the pedagogical method employed during the eighteenth century as the individual method which is another form of apprenticeship. Continuing professional education for teachers during the pre-professional age was minimal; new teachers were left to their own designs. According to Hargreaves and Fullan (2000), mentoring comprised of a few words of encouragement and management tips offered in the staff room; otherwise new teachers were on their own. Both concluded that “this is scarcely mentoring at all” (p. 51).

The age of the autonomous professional was transitory and was quickly followed by the collegial professional age (during the 1960s through the late 1980s). While the autonomous professional age was transitory, teacher professionalization was significantly elevated in contrast to the first age with regards to status, training, and working conditions. The autonomous professional age came into being as a result of a confluence of factors: the launching of Sputnik in October 1957 by the then Soviet Union; and the enactment of the National Defense Education Act (NDEA) of 1958 by the United States government in response to the international space race challenge from the Soviet Union. NDEA triggered the revamping of the science and mathematics curricula of secondary schools in order to produce top-flight scientists. According to Short and Greer (2002),
“Study teams consisting of university-based scholars, curriculum specialists in science and mathematics, and classroom teachers met together during much of the late 1950s to produce the revised curricular programs” (p. 30). Evaluative studies of these programs revealed a less than stellar success rate in terms of their effectiveness. Hargreaves (2000) hypothesized that the age of professional autonomy, in concert with the lack of institutional structures of support for teachers, impeded successful adoption and implementation of innovations. The age typified a culture of teaching that was noted for its individualism and the isolation of teachers from their peers. This produced a subpar environment for professional development and mentoring programs. Hargreaves and Fullan (2000) declared that “the surrounding culture of individualism meant that helping relationships in a school were confined to new mentoring” (p. 51). The message being sent was that “only novices or incompetents needed help” (p. 51).

The collegial professionalism age arose as individual teacher autonomy became untenable by the middle of the 1980s in dealing with burgeoning “intricacies of schooling that stemmed from judicial and state mandates, the rapidity of change, and the explosive growth in knowledge” (Hargreaves and Fullan, 2000, p. 51). These complexities attenuated the erstwhile individualistic approach in the professional ranks and opened the door to the emergence of a culture of collaboration. Coincidentally, issues relating to education and the teaching profession were catapulted into national consciousness by the publication of A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform report in 1983 by the National Commission on Excellence in Education (NCEE). The report caused a national furor that generated a chorus for test-based accountability and standards-based reforms. It also induced the teaching profession and professionals to change from the autonomous professional culture to that of a “collaborative” culture in order to grapple
with externally imposed changes. Hargreaves and Fullan (2000) declared that the new collaborative cultures helped "teachers develop common purpose, cope with uncertainty, respond to rapid change, create a climate of risk taking, and develop stronger senses of teacher efficacy" (p. 51). Darwin (2000) viewed the new collaborative paradigm and the mutual learning that it fostered as redounding positively to the benefit of the entire organization. Hargreaves and Fullan (2000) offered six implications that the collaborative culture of the collegial professional age had for teaching, two of which bore directly on mentoring:

Continuous learning is both an individual responsibility and an institutional obligation; [and] teaching must be framed and informed by professional standards of practice that define what good teachers should know and be able to do and what qualities and dispositions they should possess to care for and connect with their students. (p. 51)

The professional age, labeled "the edge of an age of postmodern professionalism" by Hargreaves and Fullan (2000, p. 51) is twenty-first century in scope, but it has not fully run its course sufficiently enough for a retrospective review. Hargreaves and Fullan (2000) offered a prescriptive and normative process for the change envisaged based on the profound transformations impacting the world's social, economic, political, and cultural realms. This age will have two prime implications for teachers and administrators in terms of mentoring: (a) the communities served by teachers will be more diverse than heretofore, and (b) teachers will view parents as sources of learning and support instead of as impediments.
Research on Mentoring Programs and Beginning Teacher Retention

Ingersoll and Strong (2011) provided a framework for evaluating descriptive studies on the effects of induction programs on beginning teachers. They performed a critical review of 15 descriptive research studies that were published between the years 2000 and 2010. The studies provided empirical support for the positive effects of induction programs on the following: (a) student achievement; (b) teacher classroom teaching practices; and (c) teacher job satisfaction, commitment, and retention.

Four of the 15 studies reviewed by Ingersoll and Strong (2011) focused on the relationship between beginning teacher mentoring and its effect on students’ academic achievement. All the teachers in the sample participated in a mentoring program; however, the studies evaluated the teachers on the basis of the varying degrees and types of support that the beginning teachers received while enrolled in the district’s induction program. Three of the aforementioned four studies observed that a teacher’s participation in beginning teacher mentoring positively impacted students’ academic achievement; the fourth study produced mixed results. Ingersoll and Strong (2011) commented on the limitations inherent in these studies: (a) non-random assignment of teachers and students between schools and classes; (b) parental choice and selection of teachers, schools, or districts; (c) differential distribution of district’s resources; and (d) variations in classroom climates. These factors, according to Ingersoll and Strong (2011), will affect observed gains in students’ achievement when left uncontrolled.

Ingersoll and Strong (2011) also reviewed five studies that dealt with the effects of mentoring on the classroom practices of beginning teachers who participated in their schools’ induction program. Four of the five studies stated that mentoring had a positive effect on beginning teachers’ classroom practices, but the fifth study found a declining
use of effective teaching practices among beginning teachers during the course of their first year, irrespective of the intensity of the induction. However, this fifth study found a lessened decline among beginning teachers who were assigned to the intensive induction group.

Ingersoll and Strong (2011) devoted a large segment of the review on seven studies that focused on the effects of induction on beginning teacher commitment and retention. Three of the seven studies evaluated particular state or school district’s induction programs while the remaining four studies based their research on secondary statistical analyses of teacher surveys from nationally representative samples. The researchers used data from the national survey on actual teacher retention or departures; however, two of the studies based their findings of the effects of mentoring on teacher retention from teachers’ self-reported intentions to stay or leave. The three studies that were based on state and district mentoring programs found that beginning teacher induction had a positive effect on retention. Three of the four studies that were based on national samples found a positive relationship between beginning teacher induction and higher teacher retention. The fourth study, which was conducted by Glazerman, Isenberg, Dolfin, Bleeker, Johnson, Grider, and Jacobus (2010), offered a combination of mixed and contradictory results on the effects of induction on beginning teacher retention.

Glazerman, Isenberg, Dolfin, Bleeker, Johnson, Grider, and Jacobus (2010) conducted an extensive study on the effects of comprehensive teacher induction on retention, teachers’ classroom practices, and student achievement. The research team conducted a randomized test in school districts that had not implemented comprehensive induction. The team collected survey and administrative four-year data from a sample of
1,009 elementary school teachers working in 418 elementary schools (kindergarten through sixth-grade) that were located in 17 urban districts, including mobility survey data each fall term to follow the careers of the teachers. The 418 elementary schools were randomly assigned to either a control or treatment group. Teachers from the treatment group were provided comprehensive induction while teachers in the control group were given the district's normal fare of less comprehensive induction. Teachers in ten school districts received one-year treatment while teachers from seven districts received two-year treatments. This substantial study by Glazerman et al. (2010) produced mixed findings. The team listed four major findings: (1) there was no connection between mentoring and retention because they observed no significant differences between the retention rate of teachers assigned to the control versus treatment group, after three years; (2) no significant differences were noted in teachers' classroom practices between the control and treatment groups at the end of the first year; (3) there were no significant differences found in achievement of students taught by the teachers in the control and treatment groups after the first two years; and (4) student achievement improved in the third year of teachers from both control and experimental groups.

Ingersoll and Strong (2011) took issue with the inconsistencies and findings reported in the Glazerman, Isenberg, Dolfin, Bleeker, Johnson, Grider, and Jacobus (2010) study on three grounds: (a) the lack of clarity and inconsistencies in the reported differences between the study's treatment and control groups; (b) the study's disputable finding of no significant differences noted in the classroom practices of teachers in the treatment and control groups. This finding was based on a one-time observation of teachers during the last half of their first year of teaching; there were no follow-up observations, during the remainder of the mentoring process, to confirm or refute this
premature conclusion; and (c) the non-representativeness of the study sample regarding the teachers, schools, and, school districts.

Fletcher and Strong (2009) conducted a comparative study of two groups of fourth grade and fifth grade beginning teachers who were assigned to one of two different mentoring options: mentoring by a mentor on full-release versus mentoring by a site-based mentor. The full-release mentor’s primary job responsibility was as a full-time mentor whereas the site-based mentor had teaching responsibilities in addition to serving as a mentor. Both groups of mentors received the same professional training development prior to engagement as mentors. The target population of the study consisted of a total of 28 new teachers: 16 fourth grade and 12 fifth grade. Twelve teachers (5 teaching fourth grade and 7 teaching fifth grade) were assigned to site-based mentors while 16 teachers (11 fourth grade and 5 fifth grade) were assigned to the full-release mentors. A total of 211 fourth graders and 141 fifth graders were included in the analysis. The teachers who were mentored by full-release mentors had more low-achieving and low-income students compared with the teachers who were mentored by site-based mentors. The study found that students of teachers connected with full-release mentors exhibited greater achievement gains than those assigned to teachers who were under the tutelage of site-based mentors.

Rockoff (2008) researched the effects of mentoring on teacher retention and student achievement in public schools that were under the jurisdiction of the New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE). NYCDOE started its own mentoring in the 2004-2005 school year after the State of New York mandated that all new teachers with less than a year of teaching experience be enrolled in a mentoring program: 4,774 were mentored during the school year 2004-2005, and 5626 during 2005-2006. Mentors were
required to meet with mentees weekly. Rockoff used a difference-in-differences methodology to facilitate comparisons between two groups of teachers in measuring the effect of NYCDOE's program on beginning teachers with less than one-year of teaching experience who were assigned mentors and new teachers with prior teaching experience who were not assigned mentors. The study focused on an examination of the effects of mentoring on teacher retention and student outcomes and a comparison of the effect of more mentoring time on the new teachers who were so treated and those who received less time. Rockoff concluded the following: (1) regarding retention, mentors had a significant effect on teacher retention when mentoring in schools with which the mentor had prior experience; (2) students of teachers who received more mentoring hours showed higher gains in both math and reading achievement scores compared with students of teachers who had fewer mentoring hours; and (3) no difference was found in the achievement gains of students taught by new teachers who received mentoring and those students that were taught by new teachers who did not receive mentoring.

Johnson (2011) questioned the theory-in-use and related assumptions that merely offering beginning teachers induction and mentoring programs would positively influence teacher quality and student learning. Johnson conducted a qualitative case study analysis on four inexperienced teachers, who were also described as women of color, employed by difficult-to-staff urban schools in California. Johnson based her study on Csikszentmihalyi's theory of optimal experience, which has two elements: (a) a dynamic balance of high challenge and high skill and (b) optimal-specific support in terms of a consistent and accurate feedback. Csikszentmihalyi proposed that the presence of these two elements produces an optimal work experience for an employee, in this case, a beginning teacher. The four teachers experienced varying levels of induction and
mentoring supports: (a) low support – low challenge, (b) high support – high challenge, (c) low support – high challenge, and (d) high support – low challenge. The teacher who received low support – low challenge moved from the school after the first year. The teacher that experienced the low support – high challenge also moved from the urban school after the first year, and she left teaching after two years. The teacher that was exposed to high support – high challenge stayed in teaching; the teacher that received the high support – low challenge induction treatment also stayed. Johnson concluded that her findings illustrated the need for mentoring and induction programs targeted to meet the beginning teacher’s specific needs such as supportive relationships (with colleagues and administrators) and professional development activities and experiences geared to the beginning teacher’s needs.

Elliot, Isaacs, and Chugani (2010) re-examined the data from an earlier mixed-method study conducted by Isaacs in 2007. The initial study examined the experience, attitudes, and projected career plans of teachers from three Florida southwest school districts with less than three years of experience. A total of 194 teachers responded to the survey out of a population of 1800, a response rate of 11%. The purpose of the re-examination was to provide principals with strategies for dealing with the career needs of beginning teachers. The study outlined the mentoring and supervision activities that can be implemented at the building level to retain early-career teachers. The sample was arranged into three groups: mode of certification (traditional or alternate certification), area of specialty, and grade level taught. Elliot, Isaacs, and Chugani (2010) found the following: (a) teachers with traditional certification felt more competent than their alternately certified peers in the performance of procedures and classroom management such as lesson planning, teaching different types of students, executing curriculum and
state standards, communicating with all stakeholders, and assessing student progress; (b) 90% of participants indicated that they planned to remain in teaching; and (c) 76% indicated the likelihood of moving from their school to another school in the future. Elliot, Isaacs, and Chugani recommended strategies for fostering new teachers’ competencies through provision of targeted professional development, training, and mentoring to meet their differential needs.

Kukla-Acevedo (2009) affirmed that mentoring new teachers provided “a more cost-effective means of reducing turnover” (p. 444); however, her study primarily explored the effects of a first-year teacher’s evaluation of three independent workplace conditions - administrative support, classroom autonomy, and behavioral climate - on a teacher’s decision to stay (stayer), move (mover), or exit (leaver) the teaching profession. Administrative support was described as the amount of support a teacher perceived s/he received from the school’s administrators. Classroom autonomy was described as the degree of control a teacher had in management of the assigned classroom: planning, teaching, and student discipline. Behavioral climate related to the level of student misbehavior and the teacher’s perceived sense of safety. Kukla-Acevedo (2009) viewed these three factors (administrative support, classroom autonomy, and behavioral climate) to be stress-inducers. Kukla-Acevedo used data from the SASS 1999-2000 and the TFS 2000-2001 public-use surveys, administered by the National Center for Educational Statistics, in conducting the analysis. Kukla-Acevedo (2009) concluded the following about the three independent variables and their effects on teacher retention, particularly among first-year teachers: (a) classroom autonomy had no statistically significant effect on teacher retention; (b) administrative support presented an intriguing finding, that increased administrative support heightened the incidence of turnover among first-year
teachers while it was found to be “a protective factor against teacher turnover among the full sample of teachers” (p. 450); and (c) behavioral climate was found to have the most statistically significant effect on attrition of first-year teachers.

Research studies have documented the usefulness of teacher induction programs in reducing attrition rates among new teachers as well as a means for improving teaching capabilities (Weiss and Weiss, 1999; Curran and Goldrick, 2002). Young and Castetter (2004) viewed effective induction as “a systematic organizational effort for helping personnel to adjust readily and effectively to new work assignments so that they can contribute maximally to organizational goals and objectives through achieving personal work satisfaction” (p.124).

Glickman and Bey (1990) suggested that a structured induction program effectuates increased retention of highly qualified teachers and promotes four other outcomes: (a) transitioning of new teachers into teaching, (b) classroom management training, (c) effective teaching techniques, and (d) propagation of the district’s culture. Young and Castetter (2004) viewed the end goal of induction as the reduction of “voluntary turnovers” among new employees, thereby lessening the strain on the financial and human resource allocations of the school system. The 2006 Education Week article “Efforts to Improve Teacher Quality” described three specific strategies currently employed by states to facilitate teacher retention at the beginning of 2006: (a) teacher mentoring and induction programs (17 states), (b) targeted professional development (35 states), and (c) diversified compensation and retention bonuses (35 states). The diversified compensation and retention strategies were designed to lure teachers or to get them to continue teaching in districts and schools that experience critical teacher shortages in core subjects.
Mentoring, as an essential component of teacher induction program, has evolved into a major focus of research studies within the last thirty years. Many of the studies contend that mentoring has ameliorated teacher attrition and forestalled the negative spillover effects of teacher turnover on school cohesion and student achievement. Odell (1990) argued that "the retention of beginning teachers represents a legitimate goal of mentoring beginning teachers" (p.18). An effective mentoring program, according to Odell, must be undergirded by the twin theories of cognitive development and stages-of-teacher concerns. Effective mentoring programs are dependent on the selection of experienced teachers who are deemed competent and effective by their peers as mentors. Odell concluded by cautioning that mentoring is an integral part of a long-term professional development program for expanding a teacher’s knowledge and pedagogical acumen.

Haycock and Crawford (2008) studied the uneven distribution of good teachers among different types of schools and students, specifically schools populated by students from low socio-economic neighborhoods. The study questioned the wisdom of school districts’ practice of keeping teachers known to be ineffective in the classrooms. Keeping ineffective teachers in the classroom creates a cumulative and negative achievement gap when contrasted with students taught by effective teachers. It results in the widening of the significant "black-white achievement gap." Haycock and Crawford offered as exemplars the programs established in Chattanooga, New York City, Boston, Chicago, and Colorado as initiatives that have yielded results through furnishing strong teachers to students who really need the assistance. All the exemplar districts emphasized mentoring as a key feature of their professional development programs, which very likely is one of the reasons that each school system reported a new teacher retention rate of 90% or
higher despite placing the new teachers in target districts serving low-income and minority students.

A study by Jacob (2007) focused on the difficulties faced by urban schools in manning their classrooms with effective teachers, particularly in highly impoverished schools. Jacob argued that the challenges experienced by urban schools in attracting and hiring teachers were caused by the contingency factors of demand and supply. The demand factors related to school districts' personnel hiring practices. Supply factors consisted of salaries, working conditions, the socio-economic status of the students, and the students' achievement levels. Supply factors affected the ability of urban schools to lure sufficient numbers of high-quality teachers. Jacob (2007) declared that induction and mentoring programs are vitally important in retaining high-quality teachers; however, their usefulness may be negated by the absence of Herzberg's satisficing hygiene needs or satisfactory motivators such as teachers' perceived lack of support from the administrators. Consequentially, teachers exit the profession or change schools.

Lindgren (2005) conducted a qualitative study of seven Swedish novice teachers enrolled in a school-based mentoring program in Sweden. Lindgren employed a four-stage interview process for data collection during an eleven-month period. The study focused on three conjunctive elements of a mentoring program from the mentees' perspectives: (a) the degree of support received from mentors, (2) the ranking of subjects or subject matters the mentees felt were meritorious enough to discuss with their mentors, and (3) the efficacy of the mentoring process. Lindgren identified three emergent themes through the iterative process: (a) every experienced teacher was not necessarily suitable to be a mentor without prior training and a signed commitment to serve as a mentor,
(b) discussions of pedagogical issues between mentors and mentees occurred at "a low degree," and (c) lack of an established set of goals and expectations affected the quality of communications between mentors and mentees. The mentees proposed four corrective actions for future programs: (a) administrators must provide a clear definition of the program's aim to mentors and mentees, (b) mentors should be required to address the concerns of mentees, (c) mentees must share in the responsibility of making mentoring productive, and (d) the administration should select mentors who are whole-heartedly motivated. Lindgren (2005) concluded that the results from this study supported the contention "that mentoring is a proficient method for supporting novice teachers" (p. 260).

Wang, Odell and Schwille (2008) conducted an analysis of the extant literature on teacher induction programs to probe their pivotal effects on teacher retention, the shaping of teaching behaviors, and student learning. Wang et al. utilized a four-stage threshing process in reviewing published literature featured in the ERIC database for the period 1960 through 2003, using the search terms teacher induction, beginning teacher, and mentoring. The search result was separated into three groups: (a) empirical and case studies, (b) program and descriptions, and (c) literature reviews and position papers. Wang et al. selected the empirical and case studies for further review, and then isolated three assumed effects that induction components had on new teachers' beliefs and practice and the focus of induction programs. Wang et al. concluded the following: (a) the quality of new teachers' learning and teaching practice was more dependent on the organizational and socio-cultural milieu of the school than the induction components, (b) induction and its components should not be viewed by organizational leaders as isolates but as milestones in a teacher's professional development continuum, and (c) beginning
teachers' learning would be enhanced if the knowledge of effective teaching to which they were exposed during induction was based on national standards, and (4) teacher mentoring programs must adopt a multi-dimensional approach to mentees' learning.

Lankau and Scandura (2002) studied the outcomes of personal learning within the context of mentoring relationships in a medium-sized hospital located in south-eastern United States. They surveyed 2,100 employees of a southeastern United States hospital and generated a response rate of almost 21% (440 out of 2100). The organization surveyed did not have a formalized mentoring program; however, 52.7% of the 440 respondents professed to have mentoring relationships. Lankau and Scandura hypothesized that (a) mentoring fostered personal learning which in turn positively impacted job attitudes and employee turnover and (b) mentors furnished mentees' role modeling, vocational, and psychosocial supports. Personal learning was defined “as knowledge acquisition, skills, or competencies [germane] to individual development” (p. 780). Lankau and Scandura concluded the following from their study: (a) mentoring relationships provided a major font for personal learning, (b) there was a strong relationship between role modeling and skill development, (c) no significant relationship was found between role modeling and vocational and psychosocial supports, and (d) no correlation was found between personal skill development and “actual turnover.”

Stockard and Lehman (2004) examined the effects of demographic characteristics, mentoring supports, and school management and administrative practices on first-year teachers' job satisfaction and their decision to stay in teaching. The data for the study originated from two disparate surveys of first-year teachers: (a) a national sample from the National Center for Education Statistics for the period 1993-1995 school years; and (b) a sample from a target population of first-year teachers employed in a western state
during the 1998-1999 school year. Stockard and Lehman's study focused on testing two hypotheses: 1) the effectiveness of school management and social supports have stronger effects on a teacher's job satisfaction and decision to remain in teaching (retention) than do demographic variables, and 2) a teacher's intention to stay or leave is influenced by the degree of job satisfaction experienced. Stockard and Lehman (2004) found that job satisfaction primarily influences teacher retention. Additionally, a first-year teacher's job satisfaction is largely affected by his/her work environment such as mentoring, colleague and administrative supports, the level of effectiveness in the classroom and safety.

Chapman and Green (1986) evaluated the applicability of Krumboltz’s theory on career decision making to teacher retention. The study employed Chapman’s 1983 model on the influences associated with teacher retention as the basis for the study. Chapman argued in that 1983 model that a teacher’s decision to stay in education is dependent on six factors which, collectively, regulate decisions on career satisfaction: (a) educational preparation, (b) teachers’ personal characteristics, (c) initial commitment to teaching, (d) quality of first teaching experience, (e) professional and social integration, and (f) external influences such as employment climate. Chapman and Green concluded that teacher mobility is a function of initial commitment to teaching as well as the quality of the first teaching experience. Chapman and Green argued that these two factors can be positively affected by school administrators while simultaneously questioning school administrators’ tendency of tasking first-year teachers with assignments deemed undesirable.

Ingersoll and Alsalam (1997) found that providing formal mentoring programs did not foster teacher commitment; however, the average commitment of teachers increased if, according to the teaching staff as a whole, new teachers were effectively
assisted in matters of discipline, instruction, and adjustment to the school environment, whether from a mentor or some other mechanism.

A qualitative research study by Bauer and LeBlanc (2002) was the lone study on LaTAAP found in extant literature. The study was conducted in the Jefferson Parish (Louisiana) School District and focused on two issues: the mode of implementation of the mentoring component of LaTAAP and the influence mentoring had on beginning teachers’ professional and classroom practices. Thirty-five teachers that were already enrolled in LaTAAP participated in the study. The study employed open-ended interview questions geared towards ascertaining the participants’ perception of LaTAAP. Bauer and LeBlanc identified three themes for effective mentoring: (a) mentees’ perceived associative conditions for effective mentoring, (b) mentor-mentee relationships, and (c) modeling of professionalism and the attendant socialization of mentees. Associative conditions for effective mentoring were based on the perception of mentees regarding the rationale and logistics surrounding the selection of mentors. Mentees believed that the proximal location and accessibility of mentors afforded the greatest impact for mentoring. Additionally, mentees held the view that an effective mentoring program is dependent on the quality and training of mentors who have strong interpersonal skills. A symbiotic mentor-mentee relationship decreased the mentees’ learning curve, thus effectively assuaging four areas of concern cited by early research studies on new teachers: (a) isolation (Rosenholtz, 1989); (b) classroom management (Coates and Thoressen, 1978); (c) general frustrations (Bullough, 1987); and (d) adapting to students’ needs and abilities (Fox and Singletary, 1986). Bauer and LeBlanc suggested that mentees found LaTAAP “valuable to their professional growth and learning when their mentor(s) modeled effective teaching practice” (p. 27).
Meta-Analyses of Research on Retention and Turnover

Hittleman and Simon (2002) described meta-analyses of research as a critical examination of several quantitative primary research studies that tackle related research hypotheses. Several research studies on teacher retention identified a plethora of factors that influence the outcome of a teacher’s dichotomous career decision: stay (retention) or leave (turnover) the teaching profession. Authors of these studies provided an array of factors affecting a teacher’s decision to stay or to leave, chiefly job satisfaction, mentoring, administrative support, and, teacher and school demographics. Several scholars (Mor Barak, Nissly, and Levin, 2001; Billingsley, 2003; Borman and Dowling, 2008) conducted meta-analyses of research studies that were focused on factors affecting employee retention in human service organizations, including teaching. The scholars produced an integrated but non-holistic agreement on factors that cause employee turnover or promote employee retention.

Mor Barak et al. (2001) conducted a meta-analysis on predictors of employee turnover or intention to leave in human services agencies. They combed through existing literature for research studies on “intention to quit and turnover” among employees of human services agencies and settled on 25 studies for inclusion in the metanalysis: four studies focused on child welfare workers; two examined other social workers; and 20 dealt with other human service workers. Eighteen of the studies evaluated intention to leave; twelve studies assessed actual turnover; and five studies assessed both intention to leave and actual turnover. Mor Barak et al. concluded, after a comprehensive evaluation of the 25 studies and 80 predictor variables, that the antecedent factors influencing an employee to leave or plan to leave an employment can be classified into three categories:
(a) demographic factors; (b) professional perceptions; and (c) organizational conditions. Many of the studies selected for analysis by Mor Barak et al. (2001) included one or more of the following independent variables: (a) age, (b) job satisfaction, (c) job commitment, (d) pay satisfaction, (e) working conditions, (f) stress, (g) social support, (h) burnout, (i) intention to leave, and (j) availability of employment alternatives. Mor Barak et al. noted inconsistencies in the study results, caused perhaps by “the complexity of defining and measuring the multifaceted predictor and outcome constructs” (p. 629). According to Mor Barak et al., earlier studies investigated turnover from the vantage of “a fixed point in time” and as a “dichotomous ... dependent variable” (p. 629), but more recent studies employ employee’s intention to quit as the dependent variable rather than actual turnover. Mor Barak et al. concluded that the foremost predictor of turnover is an employee’s intention to quit, which they defined as a state of mind in which an employee is “seriously considering leaving one’s current job” (p. 633).

Borman and Dowling (2008) synthesized the findings from 34 quantitative studies of 63 attrition moderators and their palliative effects, or non-effect, on teacher attrition, or retention. Nineteen of these studies “reported teacher attrition/retention outcomes as logged odd ratios derived from multivariate models while 15 reported teacher attrition outcomes as proportions and means” (p. 373). The two researchers sorted attrition moderators into five broad groups: (a) teacher demographic characteristics, (b) teacher qualifications, (c) school organizational characteristics, (d) school resources, and (e) school student body characteristics. Borman and Dowling distilled the meta-analysis of the 34 quantitative studies on teacher retention and attrition into four thematic findings that would be instructive for future research: (a) attrition is not necessarily healthy, (b) attrition occurs as a result of some personal and professional issues that may modulate
during the individual’s lifetime, (c) teachers’ working conditions are more predictive of attrition, (d) factors such as emolument and administrative support may negate thoughts of intention to quit. According to Borman and Dowling (2008), mentoring has a positive effect on the retention of new teachers in organizations with formalized mentoring programs.

Billingsley (2003) conducted a meta-analysis of 16 research studies on factors that influence attrition and retention of special education teachers, specifically, and, regular education teachers in general. The 16 research studies were published between 1993 and 2002. Billingsley cited two theoretical models that illustrated factors shaping retention and attrition of special education teachers. Each model lists variables that act independently and interactively in their effects on teacher career decisions regarding attrition and retention. Billingsley consolidated findings from the 16 research studies into four themes: (a) teacher characteristics and personal factors, (b) teacher qualifications, (c) work environment factors, and (d) affective reactions to work. Billingsley critiqued the absence of agreement on the definition of attrition used in research studies on attrition: intent to leave or actual turnover. The dichotomy creates inconsistencies that are inherent in the study results. Billingsley listed 18 studies in an Appendix to the meta-analytic study, nine of which used “intent to leave” as the definitional construct for attrition.
CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This study investigated the effectiveness of mentoring in promoting beginning teacher retention in the Bossier Parish School System, a public school system located in northwest Louisiana. The participants consisted of two groups of teachers enrolled in LaTAAP, in accordance with the Louisiana Department of Education and the BESE’s directives for new teachers between August 1998 and May 2007: (a) three cohorts for the 1-year induction program (1998 through 2001), and (b) six cohorts for the 2-year program (2001 through 2007). A 28-item questionnaire (Appendix C.1) was employed for the study. Participants were asked to provide a retrospective appraisal of the quality of the mentoring they received during LaTAAP and its effect on their decision to remain in teaching. Data obtained from these responses were used for this study.

Research Design

The research design for this study was an amalgam of cross-sectional survey and descriptive, non-experimental retrospective research. Creswell (2005) described cross-sectional survey design as research in which “the researcher collects data at one point in time” (p. 355). Johnson (2000) also delineated three types of non-experimental quantitative studies based on the dimensionality of time in relation to data collection: cross-sectional, longitudinal, and retrospective. Johnson (2000) defined cross-sectional research as study in which “data are collected from research participants at a single point
in time or during a single, relatively brief period and comparisons are made across the
variables of interest” (p. 15). Best and Kahn (2003) characterized descriptive research as
a study that “deals with the relationships between variables, the testing of hypotheses,
and the development of generalizations, principles, or theories that have universal
validity” (p. 115).

This study examined fourteen independent variables. Eight of the variables
compared respondents’ evaluation of their pre-mentoring knowledge and skills levels on
eight attributes in contrast with their rating of the same attributes, post-mentoring
(Appendix C.1, Questions 9 and 20). The other six independent variables were gender,
socio-economic status (SES) of students, teacher’s ethnicity, teacher’s age, initial mode
of certification, and grade-level taught. Additionally, job satisfaction, which is regarded
as a catalytic factor in decisions to stay or leave teaching, was assessed from the
responses to Question #25 of the survey instrument. The dependent variable was
participants’ responses to Question #25 of the survey instrument. The study utilized
parametric and nonparametric statistical methods to examine the relationship between
mentoring and teacher retention in the Bossier Parish School System.

**Target Population and Sample**

The target population for this study was comprised of all Bossier Parish Schools’
beginning teachers who participated in LaTAAP during the referent period August 1998
through May 2007. According to a memo from the Louisiana Department of Education’s
Office of Educator Support (Appendix B.2), a total of 499 Bossier Parish school teachers
were enrolled in the one- and two-year LaTAAP during the referent period of August
The sample for this study was comprised of the teachers from the target population of 499 Bossier Parish school teachers who responded to the invitation to participate in the study. The participants were drawn from all 36 schools in the Bossier Parish School System, 32 of which were accountability schools: 19 elementary, 7 middle, and 6 high schools.

**Instrumentation**

A 28-item questionnaire (Appendix C.1) was employed for this study. The questionnaire was adapted, with permission, from the following: (1) *Teacher Questionnaire: Schools and staffing survey, 2007 – 08 school year*, published by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) of the U. S. Department of Education (2010); and (2) Louisiana FIRST 8(g) Questionnaire for Teachers (Spring 2005). The adapted questionnaire featured a mix of nominal, ordinal, and interval scales of measurement. The questionnaire was used to seek information about respondents’ experience with the mentoring provided by the Bossier Parish School System at the start of their teaching career and an evaluation of the mentoring process from teachers who participated in the program. The questionnaire was segmented into three sections: Section A (General Information) asked if the teacher wished to participate in the survey, the duration of LaTAAP assignment name of the school where teacher enrolled in LaTAAP, students and grade levels taught, teaching status and certification; Section B (Mentoring Appraisal and Professional Development) requested a retrospective evaluation of teacher’s first days in the classroom, assignment of mentor, evaluation of the mentoring experience and participation in professional development, teacher’s level of satisfaction
with mentoring, teaching, and intention to stay in teaching; Section C (Background Information) solicited information about teacher’s age bracket, gender, and ethnicity.

Survey questions fell into three broad types: (a) forced choice, in which the participant had to select only one response; (b) a five-point Likert scale, consisting of “strongly agree,” “agree,” “somewhat agree,” “disagree,” or “strongly disagree”; and (c) selection of as many options as were applicable. The questionnaire had a total of 20 forced choices, six Likert-types, and two that featured ‘many options.’ Two of the Likert-scaled questions, Numbers 9 and 20, served as the pre- and post-tests for evaluating the effectiveness of mentoring. Question 25 was used as the dependent variable.

**Data Collection Procedures**

A preclearance approval for this study was simultaneously sought in December 2010 from the Human Use Committee at Louisiana Tech University (Appendix A.1) and the Director of Human Resources for the school district (Appendix A.3). These steps were taken in obeisance to Louisiana Tech University’s rules and protocol on Human Subject Research. Upon approval of the study by the Human Use Committee at Louisiana Tech University and by the school district, the researcher set up and posted the approved questionnaire on the Survey Monkey (2011) website. Accessibility to the website was limited to teachers who met the criterion, i.e., teachers who had participated in LaTAAP during the school years August 1998 through May 2007. The website displayed the questionnaire (Appendix C.1). The Director of Human Resources for the Bossier Parish Schools sent a memo to all district principals, asking them to disseminate the memo to teachers who met the time frame requirement for the research study (Appendix C.2). The Director’s correspondence referred to an attached memo from the
researcher, which explained the purpose of the study, voluntary participation, referent period, and the link to the website address for use in accessing and completing the survey instrument (See Appendix C.2).

The data for this study were obtained from teachers in the Bossier Parish Schools that participated in LaTAAP. Participants were required to log on to Survey Monkey website to access, respond to, and, electronically return the completed questionnaire. The internet was employed as a means for disseminating the survey and for collecting responses to the questionnaire because it provided the dual advantages of maximization of overall response rate and lower processing costs. The first question of the survey instrument (Appendix C.1) required participants to give their consent by answering the question: “Do you wish to participate?” Yes / No. The responses to the first question and the remaining twenty-seven were captured electronically. The survey was conducted in February 2011.

A follow-up memo was sent by the Director of Human Resources for Bossier Parish School System to the district principals (Appendix C.3) in order to increase the return rate (123, 25%) in response to the researcher’s request for assistance. The follow-up memo boosted the return rate to a total of 263 (53% of 499 in the sample) teachers accessing the website; however, only 239 (48%) actually agreed to participate.

Validity and Reliability

The survey instrument for this study was adapted from three sources: (a) the 2007-08 Schools and Staffing Survey; (b) its supplement, the Teacher Followup Survey (SASS) both published by the U.S. Department of Education – National Center for Education Statistics; and (c) Louisiana First 8(g) Questionnaire for Teachers. A content
evaluation panel, consisting of two principals, an assistant principal, and two former mentors with ten years of prior mentoring experience, was requested to independently assess the content validity of the survey instrument. The assessments were based on observable behaviors and skills the Louisiana Department of Education (2007) required mentors to display and possess. Each question from Number 2 through Number 25 of the instrument was evaluated according to Lawshe's (1975) concept of "essentiality" and the Assessor Training Manual (Louisiana Department of Education, 2007) directives. A content validity ratio developed by Lawshe (1975) was computed for each item in order to validate the questions. A content validity ratio of 0.99, a minimum item statistic Lawshe recommended for inclusion in the final form, was calculated for Questions 2 through 25.

Responses from participants were collected on four scaled sections of the survey: teacher’s perception of the quality of the mentor and mentoring program, self-evaluation of skills before the onset of mentoring, job satisfaction, and demographic or descriptive information. Reliability of the instrument was evaluated through the use of Cronbach alpha measures, with alpha equal to .92.

**Data Analysis**

Data analysis was conducted on the basis of each research question and the corresponding hypothesis. A total of fourteen hypotheses were tested. Seven hypotheses addressed teachers' self-evaluation of their perceived competency, pre-mentoring versus post-mentoring, in the performance of tasks relating to pedagogy; effective classroom management; meeting socio-cultural expectations of the teacher as a professional with regards to communications with parents and adjusting to school and district cultures. The
remaining seven hypotheses dealt with demographic variables that were featured in prior research: gender, duration of mentoring, grade level taught, age, socio-economic status of the students, ethnicity and respondent's level of job satisfaction was measured by asking them about their future plans (Appendix C.1, Item 25). Each hypothesis was subjected to statistical analysis according to the data type: correlated t-test for scaled data; and the Mann-Whitney U and Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA analysis for between group differences. The goal of these tests was to determine the relationship between attributes stated in the hypotheses and teacher retention. An alpha level of \( p < 0.05 \) was employed in testing the statistical significance of the calculated \( p \) for each null hypothesis.

**Limitations**

The research was limited for four reasons: First, the Louisiana State Department of Education does not maintain archival data, which would differentiate “stayers” (those teachers who continue to teach three or more years after LaTAAP induction) from “leavers” (those teachers who leave teaching within three years of LaTAAP induction); therefore, a comparative analysis was not possible. Second, the data for the research relied on self-reporting by teachers participating in the study; thus, the sample was subject to sampling errors. All the samples used in testing the null hypotheses were tested at the \( p \leq 0.05 \) levels. The questionnaire was accessed electronically by the teachers in the school district who wished to participate in the study; therefore, results obtained reflected the self-reported intentions and views of teachers and not those of the administrators, e.g., principals, supervisors, or central office personnel. The survey sample was a limited slice of the state’s population; however, the questionnaire contained measures directly related to the literature on mentoring and expressed in the *Louisiana*
Administrative Code, Title 28, Bulletin 1943 (2006) on the new teacher induction program. Third, measures for the dependent and independent variables were aggregated at the district's school level. Fourth, the study excluded evaluation of "leavers," those employees who had left the school district during the referent period. This decision was made due to Bossier Parish School Board's administrative policy against releasing personnel records without the written consent of the employee, both past and present; therefore, an exploration of turnover trends in the school district was not feasible.
CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of mentoring on beginning teacher retention in the Bossier Parish School System, which is located in northwest Louisiana. The study also contrasted teachers' self-assessment of their assuredness with socio-cultural expectations before (pre) and after (post) mentoring. The research questions addressed teachers' self-evaluation of their perceived competency, pre-mentoring versus post-mentoring, in the performance of tasks relating to pedagogy; effective classroom management; meeting socio-cultural expectations of the teacher as a professional with regards to communications with parents and adjusting to school and district cultures. Respondents' level of job satisfaction was measured by asking them about their future plans (see Item 25 of the survey in Appendix C.1). The researcher hypothesized that there would be no difference in teachers' self-evaluation of their competency before and after participating in the school district's mentoring staff development program for beginning teachers. The results of the statistical analysis of the data, as well as the descriptive data analysis, are included in this chapter.
Research Questions

The first research question examined the relationship between gender and teacher retention. A discussion of the research findings of the first hypothesis for this research question focuses on the relationship between gender and teacher retention.

The second research question examined the relationship between the socio-economic status (SES) of the students and teacher retention. A discussion of the research findings of the second hypothesis centers on the relationship between the SES of the students and teacher retention.

The third research question examined the relationship between ethnicity and teacher retention. A discussion of the research findings of the third hypothesis centers on the relationship between ethnicity and teacher retention.

The fourth research question examined the relationship between the age of the teacher at entry and teacher retention. A discussion of the research findings of the fourth hypothesis centers on the relationship between the age of the teacher at entry and teacher retention.

The fifth research question examined the relationship between initial mode of certification (traditional versus alternate) and teacher retention. A discussion of the research findings of the fifth hypothesis deals with the relationship between the initial mode of certification and teacher retention.

The sixth research question examined the relationship between grade-level taught and teacher retention. A discussion of the research findings of the sixth hypothesis deals with the relationship between the grade-level taught and teacher retention.
The seventh research question utilized the self-assessment of study participants on their perceived level of competency in teaching students with special needs prior to and after undergoing mentoring. A discussion of the research findings of the seventh hypothesis centers on the relationship between participants’ evaluation of their pre-mentoring competency in teaching students with special needs and evaluation of the effect that mentor’s assistance had on their competency, post-mentoring.

The eighth research question utilized the self-assessment of study participants on their perceived level of competency in executing content standards prior to and after undergoing mentoring. A discussion of the research findings of the eighth hypothesis centers on the relationship between participants’ evaluation of their pre-mentoring competency in executing content standards and evaluation of the effect that mentor’s assistance had on their competency, post-mentoring.

The ninth research question examined the relationship between the duration of mentoring (1-year versus 2-year) and teacher retention. A discussion of the research findings of the ninth hypothesis deals with the relationship between the duration of mentoring (1-year versus 2-year) and teacher retention.

The tenth research question utilized the self-assessment of study participants on their perceived level of competency in developing classroom management and student discipline skills prior to and after undergoing mentoring. A discussion of the research findings of the tenth hypothesis centers on the relationship between participants’ evaluation of their pre-mentoring competency in developing classroom management and student discipline skills and evaluation of the effect that mentor’s assistance had on their competency, post-mentoring.
The eleventh research question utilized the self-assessment of study participants on their perceived level of competency in planning effective classroom instruction prior to and after undergoing mentoring. A discussion of the research findings of the eleventh hypothesis centers on the relationship between participants' evaluation of their pre-mentoring competency in planning effective classroom instruction and evaluation of the effect that mentor's assistance had on their competency, post-mentoring.

The twelfth research question utilized the self-assessment of study participants on their perceived level of competency in communicating school and district culture prior to and after undergoing mentoring. A discussion of the research findings of the twelfth hypothesis centers on the relationship between participants' evaluation of their pre-mentoring competency in communicating school and district culture and evaluation of the effect that mentor's assistance had on their competency, post-mentoring.

The thirteenth research question utilized the self-assessment of study participants on their perceived level of competency in communicating with parents prior to and after undergoing mentoring. A discussion of the research findings of the thirteenth hypothesis centers on the relationship between participants' evaluation of their pre-mentoring competency in communicating with parents and evaluation of the effect that mentor's assistance had on their competency, post-mentoring.

The fourteenth research question utilized the self-assessment of study participants on their perceived level of competency in assessing student progress prior to and after undergoing mentoring. A discussion of the research findings of the fourteenth hypothesis centers on the relationship between participants' evaluation of their pre-mentoring
competency in assessing student progress and evaluation of the effect that mentor’s assistance had on their competency, post-mentoring.

Data Analysis Strategy

The data for this study stemmed from responses to a questionnaire survey by Bossier Parish (Louisiana) Schools teachers who participated in the beginning teacher mentoring program (LaTAAP) during the referent period August 1998 through May 2007. Participants were required to log on to Survey Monkey (2011) website to access, respond to, and, electronically return the completed questionnaire. The first question of the survey instrument required participants to give their consent (Appendix C.1) by answering the question “Do you wish to participate?” The responses to the first question and the remaining 27 were captured electronically. The analyses for this study were limited to data collected from completed responses from teachers surveyed.

Survey Response Rates

Data were collected from 263 respondents using the SurveyMonkey (2011) online website from a target population of 499 (234 that participated in the 1-year mentoring and 265 that participated in the 2-year mentoring). A follow-up memo from the Director of Human Resources for the Bossier Parish Schools System boosted the return rate to a total of 263 teachers (53% of 499 of the target population) accessing the website but with only 239 (48%) actually agreeing to participate by notating “Yes” to the first item on the questionnaire (see Figure 1). The survey questionnaire was online for 45 days. The responses were sorted into three groups: (1) complete response, (2) incomplete response, and (3) outlier. A complete response means that a participating teacher who met the
criteria for inclusion responded to every question on the questionnaire (Table 1). An incomplete response means that a participating teacher who met the criteria for inclusion omitted some of the items/questions in the questionnaire; therefore, the data were excluded for use in the statistical analysis segment. An outlier refers to a response that was received from an ineligible participant, with ineligibility being based on the respondent's participation in LaTAAP before or after the referent period (August 1998 through May 2007) selected for this study.

Table 1.

**Number of Teachers in Sample and Useable Demographic Response Rates**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic Variable</th>
<th>All Responses (a)</th>
<th>Useable N (b)</th>
<th>Response Rate (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>70.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>80.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>71.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration of Mentoring</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One-year</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>80.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two-year</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>63.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>241</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>66.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of School</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>64.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>56.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>75.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>246</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>65.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African-American</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>73.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>50.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>72.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native American</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>71.56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 1 (cont.)

*Number of Teachers in Sample and Useable Demographic Response Rates*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic Variable</th>
<th>All Responses (a)</th>
<th>Useable N (b)</th>
<th>Response Rate (%) (b) / (a)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age Grouping</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22-29</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>75.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-40</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>68.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-50</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>61.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51-60</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>50.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60&gt;</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>224</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>71.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Socio-economic Status</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title I</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>92.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Title I</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>95.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>172</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>93.60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(a) Total includes respondents that were employed pre- and- post referent period (before August 1998 and after May 2007). Data from completed responses were employed for descriptive analysis.

(b) Number of teachers with complete responses for each demographic variable. These data were used for statistical analysis.

According to a memo from the Louisiana Department of Education (see Figure 1; Appendix B.2), there were 499 Bossier Parish teachers enrolled in LaTAAP during the referent period August 1998 through May 2007 who were qualified to respond to the survey; however, 236 did not respond to the invitation to participate. A total of 263 teachers responded to the request to survey: 24 of these teachers declined to participate by marking the “No” option on the questionnaire, and 239 teachers agreed to participate. Of the 239 respondents, 161 were complete responses, 12 were incomplete, and 66 were outlier responses (20 pre-1998 and 46 post-2007 school year). Of the 499 teachers who were eligible, 161 responded with a complete response to each question on the questionnaire. This was a response rate of 32.3 percent for eligible teachers;
however, a total of 10 participants sent in incomplete responses (three from the 1-year mentoring program and seven from the 2-year mentoring program). Forty-seven of the teachers who were enrolled in the 1-year LaTAAP plan participated in the study: three respondents sent in incomplete responses, and six responses came in from outliers, for a net total response of 38 out of 234. This was a response rate of 16.2% for the participants in the 1-year mentoring program. A total of 194 teachers enrolled in the 2-year LaTAAP curriculum participated in the study; seven of these respondents sent in incomplete responses and 64 responses came from outliers, for a net total response of 123 out of 265. This was a response rate of 46.4% for the participants in the 2-year mentoring program. Data from the incomplete and outlier groups were excluded from the statistical analysis for this study; however, responses from all respondents were used in the descriptive data analysis.

Figure 1. Response to Request to Survey: Question 1
Descriptive Data Analysis

The researcher collected data for use in summarizing teacher characteristics and demographics. Table 1 lists seven of the demographic variables employed in this study. A detailed analysis was performed on the basis of the primary characteristics of the participants and their evaluation of the mentoring experience. Responses to a question that participants marked as “Strongly Agree” and “Agree” were combined as “Agree”; “Strongly Disagree” and “Disagree” responses were combined as “Disagree.”

Demographic data, including gender, ethnicity, duration of mentoring, certification, current job, school and school-level assignments, were obtained from the survey responses.

Participants’ characteristics and program evaluation were organized around five broad areas: (a) general information and LaTAAP assignment – teacher characteristics and demographics; (b) teachers’ ratings of their knowledge and skills (pre- versus post-mentoring); (c) professional development – teachers’ perceptions of influential and valuable experiences gained from mentoring; (d) rating of administrative supports, assigned mentor, and the mentoring program; and, (e) teachers’ evaluation of their contentment with the teaching profession, that is, job satisfaction.

Gender, Tenure, and, Ethnicity

The sample consisted of 85% female (137) and 15% male (24) teachers. All respondents had a minimum of three years of classroom teaching experience at the time of the survey. Participants who enrolled in the 1-year mentoring program had an average of 8.6 years-of-service, while those who enrolled in the 2-year mentoring program had an average of 6.4 years-of-service. The age at the time of enrolment in LaTAAP ranged
between 22 and 60: 65% between the ages of 22 and 29; 24% between the ages of 30 and 40; 9% between the ages of 41 and 50; and 2% between the ages of 51 and 60. White non-Hispanic teachers made up 91% (147) of the completed responses used for this study, followed by African-American at 6.8% (11). There was one Hispanic, one Asian, and one response from a teacher who notated “Other” (see Table 1).

**Certification Type and Job Position**

Seventy-seven percent of the respondents had regular teacher certification at the time of enrolment in LaTAAP; 9.3% had provisional certification; while 11.8% started teaching with an out-of-area certification. One respondent was granted a waiver (see Table 1). Eighty-nine percent of the respondents were classified as regular teachers; 4% were other professionals (counselor, coordinator, curriculum coach, and social worker); 2% were itinerant teachers; and 1% was classified as librarians.

**Movers and Stayers**

At the time of the study, 29.7% of the responders who participated in the 1-year mentoring program stayed at the school to which they were originally assigned at the time they enrolled in LaTAAP (stayers); 70.3% of the responders who enrolled in the 1-year mentoring program moved to other schools or facilities within the Bossier Parish School System (movers). Among the responders who participated in the 2-year mentoring program, 59.8% stayed at the school to which they were originally assigned at the time they were enrolled in LaTAAP (stayers), while 40.2 percent of those who enrolled in the 2-year mentoring program moved to other schools or facilities within the Bossier Parish School System (movers) since completion of LaTAAP.
Teachers’ Self-Rating of Skills and Attributes: Pre- versus Post-Mentoring

Participants were asked to rate their competence on 10 attributes or skills at two professional junctures: pre-mentoring and post-mentoring phases of their teaching career. Seven of these skills were identified in the *Louisiana Components of Effective Teaching* as valuable attributes for teachers to acquire and display, proficiently, in the classroom: planning and providing instruction effectively; managing classroom; technology use in instruction; assessment of student progress; communicating with parents; implementing curriculum standards; and teaching students with special needs. Table 2 shows the cumulative response by type (“Agree,” “Somewhat Agree,” and “Disagree”) of the respondents’ self-ratings of their knowledge and attributes pre-mentoring relative to post-mentoring. The cumulative pre-mentoring response was 2,246, while the cumulative post-mentoring response was 2,254. There were eight more cumulative responses for post-mentoring than the total for pre-mentoring. Fifty-seven percent of all the cumulative pre-mentoring responses was in the “agree” group; 31%, in the “somewhat agree”; and 12%, in the “disagree.” The “agree” group comprised 66% of all the cumulative post-mentoring response, followed by “somewhat agree” with 20%, and 13% for the “disagree” group.
Table 2.

*Cumulative Response: Comparison of Pre-mentoring versus Post-mentoring*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response Types</th>
<th>Pre-Mentoring</th>
<th>Post-Mentoring</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cumulative</td>
<td>Cumulative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Response</td>
<td>Response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>Percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>1,285</td>
<td>1,498</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>57.21</td>
<td>66.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat Agree</td>
<td>699</td>
<td>458</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>31.12</td>
<td>20.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>262</td>
<td>298</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11.67</td>
<td>13.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Cumulative Response</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,246</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,254</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>100.00</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.00</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 shows “Agree” responses from mentees to Question 9 and Question 20 of the survey instrument (see Appendix C.1). Table 3 reflects response contrasts and the weighted means of mentees’ self-ratings of their knowledge and attributes pre-mentoring relative to post-mentoring: by skill type, the percentage rating associated with each skill type, the cumulative responses, and the differential for each skill or attribute. There were 213 more responses, cumulatively, for post-mentoring than there were for pre-mentoring. The cumulative “Agree” response was 1498, or 66% of all post-mentoring responses. The weighted mean for “Agree” responses for post-mentoring was 102.34 compared to 75.87 for the pre-mentoring responses. Responders rated their post-mentoring skills higher by more than ten percentage points in six skill areas: planning and providing instructions, student disciplining and classroom management, teaching students with special needs, meeting expectations of LaTAAP, adjusting to school and district cultures, and preparing for LaTAAP assessment. The participants rated their skill levels higher in the using of technology at the pre-mentoring stage, compared to the post-mentoring stage. Participants’ self-ratings for “Agree” are illustrated by the double bar chart in Figure 2.
Table 3.

"Agree" Responses: Comparative Rating of Skills/Attributes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skills/Attributes</th>
<th>Pre-Mentoring (a)</th>
<th>Post-Mentoring (b)</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(N)</td>
<td>(%)</td>
<td>(N)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effectively plan and provide Instruction</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>0.584</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discipline student &amp; manage classroom</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>0.416</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use technology</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>0.600</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assess student progress</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>0.602</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicate with parents</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>0.571</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implement content standards</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>0.591</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teach students with Special Needs</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>0.360</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meet expectations of LaTAAP</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>0.713</td>
<td>186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjust to school and district cultures</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>0.682</td>
<td>168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepare for LaTAAP assessment</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>0.606</td>
<td>187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cumulative Responses</td>
<td>1285</td>
<td></td>
<td>1498</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weighted Mean</td>
<td></td>
<td>75.87</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a) percentage derived from number of responders divided by total response count for each skill/attribute
b) derived from (N) x (%).
c) derived from (pre-mentoring N – post-mentoring N) *100 / pre-mentoring N.
Prepare for LaTAAP assessment
Adjust to school & district cultures
Meet expectations of LaTAAP
Teach students with Special Needs
Implement content stds
Communicate with parents
Assess student progress
Use technology
Discipline student & manage class
Effectively Plan/provide Instruction

![Bar chart showing comparative ratings of Pre-mentoring versus Post-mentoring Skills/Attributes]

Figure 2. Agree Responses: Comparative Rating of Pre-mentoring versus Post-mentoring Skills/Attributes

Tables 4 presents “Somewhat Agree” responses from mentees to Question 9 and Question 20 of the survey instrument (see Appendix C.1). Table 4 reflects response contrasts for “Somewhat Agree” and the weighted means of mentees’ self-ratings of their knowledge and attributes pre-mentoring relative to post-mentoring: by skill type, the percentage rating associated with each skill type, the cumulative responses, and the differential for each skill or attribute. There were 241 fewer responses, cumulatively, for post-mentoring than there were for pre-mentoring. The cumulative “Somewhat Agree” response was 458 for post-mentoring, which was 20% of all post-mentoring responses. The cumulative response for pre-mentoring was 699, or 31% of all the cumulative response. The weighted mean for “Somewhat Agree” responses for post-mentoring was 10.05 compared to 22.42 for the pre-mentoring responses. Responders rated their post-mentoring skills lower, except in the use of technology. The double bar chart in Figure 3 reflects participants’ self-ratings.
### Table 4.

**“Somewhat Agree” Responses: Comparative Rating of Skills/Attributes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skills/Attributes</th>
<th>Pre-Mentoring</th>
<th>Post-Mentoring</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(a) (N) (%) (b) Product</td>
<td>(a) (N) (%) (b) Product</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effectively plan and provide Instruction</td>
<td>74 0.33 24.19</td>
<td>40 0.177 7.08</td>
<td>45.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discipline student &amp; manage classroom</td>
<td>92 0.41 37.44</td>
<td>44 0.195 8.58</td>
<td>52.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use technology</td>
<td>56 0.25 13.94</td>
<td>61 0.270 16.47</td>
<td>-8.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assess student progress</td>
<td>70 0.31 21.63</td>
<td>50 0.221 11.05</td>
<td>28.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicate with parents</td>
<td>74 0.33 24.19</td>
<td>62 0.274 16.99</td>
<td>16.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implement content standards</td>
<td>69 0.31 21.18</td>
<td>54 0.240 12.96</td>
<td>21.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teach students with Special Needs</td>
<td>88 0.39 34.41</td>
<td>60 0.265 15.90</td>
<td>31.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meet expectations of LaTAAP</td>
<td>51 0.23 11.68</td>
<td>27 0.120 3.24</td>
<td>47.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjust to school and district cultures</td>
<td>57 0.26 14.59</td>
<td>35 0.155 5.42</td>
<td>38.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepare for LaTAAP assessment</td>
<td>68 0.31 20.94</td>
<td>25 0.112 2.80</td>
<td>63.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cumulative Responses</td>
<td>699</td>
<td>458</td>
<td>55.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weighted Mean</td>
<td>22.42</td>
<td>10.05</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a) percentage derived from number of responders divided by total response count for each skill/attribute
b) derived from (N) x (%).
c) derived from (pre-mentoring N – post-mentoring N) * 100 / pre-mentoring N.
Prepare for LaTAAP assessment
Adjust to school and district
Meet expectations of LaTAAP
Teach students with Special
Implement content standards
Communicate with parents
Assess student progress
Use technology
Discipline student & manage
Effectively Plan and provide

Figure 3. Somewhat Agree Responses: Comparative Rating of Pre-mentoring versus Post-mentoring Skills/Attributes

Table 5 shows “Disagree” responses from mentees to Question 9 and Question 20 of the survey instrument (see Appendix C.1). Table 5 reflects response contrasts and the weighted means of mentees’ self-ratings of their knowledge and attributes pre-mentoring relative to post-mentoring: by skill type, the percentage rating associated with each skill type, the cumulative responses, and the differential for each skill or attribute. There were 36 more responses, cumulatively, for post-mentoring than there were for pre-mentoring. The cumulative “Disagree” response was 298 for post-mentoring, which was 14% of all post-mentoring responses. The cumulative response for pre-mentoring was 262, or 12% of all cumulative responses. The weighted mean for “Disagree” responses for post-mentoring was 4.64 compared with 3.82 for the pre-mentoring responses. The “Disagree” responders viewed mentoring as not effective on six of the 10 attributes reflected by the minus sign in the “percent change” column of Table 5. Participants’ self-ratings for “Disagree” are illustrated by the double bar chart in Figure 4.
Table 5.

"Disagree" Responses: Comparative Rating of Skills/Attributes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skills/Attributes</th>
<th>Pre-Mentoring</th>
<th>Post-Mentoring</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(a) (b) Product</td>
<td>(a) (b) Product</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effectively plan and provide Instruction</td>
<td>20 0.088 1.76</td>
<td>25 0.111 2.77</td>
<td>-25.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discipline student and manage classroom</td>
<td>40 0.177 7.08</td>
<td>31 0.138 4.28</td>
<td>22.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use technology</td>
<td>34 0.151 5.13</td>
<td>54 0.239 12.91</td>
<td>-58.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assess student progress</td>
<td>20 0.088 1.76</td>
<td>33 0.146 4.82</td>
<td>-65.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicate with parents</td>
<td>23 0.102 2.35</td>
<td>32 0.141 4.51</td>
<td>-39.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implement content standards</td>
<td>23 0.102 2.35</td>
<td>31 0.138 4.28</td>
<td>-34.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teach students with Special Needs</td>
<td>56 0.259 14.50</td>
<td>46 0.203 9.34</td>
<td>17.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meet expectations of LaTAAP</td>
<td>13 0.058 0.75</td>
<td>12 0.053 0.64</td>
<td>7.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjust to school and district cultures</td>
<td>14 0.062 0.87</td>
<td>23 0.102 2.35</td>
<td>-64.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepare for LaTAAP assessment</td>
<td>19 0.086 1.63</td>
<td>11 0.049 0.54</td>
<td>42.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cumulative Responses</td>
<td>262</td>
<td>298</td>
<td>-21.58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Weighted Mean 3.82 4.64

a) percentage derived from number of responders divided by total response count for each skill/attribute
b) derived from (N) x (%).
c) derived from (pre-mentoring N – post-mentoring N) *100 / pre-mentoring N.
Figure 4. Disagree Responses: Comparative Rating of Pre-mentoring versus Post-mentoring Skills/Attributes

Professional Development

Survey participants were asked to indicate, by checking off from the list provided, all the professional activities in which they participated during LaTAAP. A total of 223 respondents answered the question. Table 6 presents a listing of the professional activities, the total number of respondents by type of professional activity, as well as the percent of the total responses associated with each type of professional activity. Survey participants were subsequently asked to indicate which professional activity that they participated in, during LaTAAP, they deemed to be most helpful. Table 7 provides a listing of all the professional activities by descending order of choices, the total number of respondents by type of professional activity, as well as the percent of the total responses associated with each type of professional activity. A total of 223 respondents answered the question. The majority of the responders (58%) rated “Observation of classrooms of certified teachers” as the most helpful professional development activity.
they engaged in during LaTAAP. It was distantly followed by “in-service training for
beginning teachers” and “workshops” (16% and 15%, respectively).

Table 6.

_Professional Development Activity Participated in During LaTAAP_

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities/Coursework</th>
<th>(N)</th>
<th>Percent of Responders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Workshops</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>92.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-service Training for beginning Teachers</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>91.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observation of Classrooms of certified Teachers</td>
<td>193</td>
<td>86.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louisiana Components of Effective Teaching</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>53.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conferences</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>46.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Course(s) towards Certification</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>24.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Course(s) for Professional Development</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Responses to Question 10 of the Survey.
Table 7.

*Most Helpful Professional Development Activity During LaTAAP*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities/Coursework</th>
<th>(N)</th>
<th>Percent of Responders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Observation of Classrooms of certified Teachers</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>58.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-service Training for beginning Teachers</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>16.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workshops</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>15.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Course(s) towards Certification</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conferences</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louisiana Components of Effective Teaching</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Course(s) for Professional Development</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>223</td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Responses to Question 11 of the Survey.

**Rating of Administrative Supports, Mentors, and the Mentoring Program**

Approximately 98% of all responders (complete responders, incomplete responders, and outliers) noted that they were assigned mentors during their first year of teaching. Ninety-five percent of all responders reported that the mentors were based in the same school as the mentees. Sixty-one percent of the responders noted that their assigned mentors taught a different grade level from the mentee; 39% of the mentees taught the same grade level as their mentors (see Table 8).
Table 8.

*Mentor Assignment*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mentor Assigned During First Year</td>
<td>221</td>
<td>98.2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentor Was Based At Same School</td>
<td>214</td>
<td>95.5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentor Taught Same Grade-level</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>39.1</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>60.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Responses to Questions 12, 13, and 14 of the Survey.

Participants were asked to rate the responsiveness of their assigned mentors to the mentees’ needs as a new teacher. Sixty-five percent of the participants rated their mentors as “very responsive”; 31% rated their mentors as “somewhat responsive”; and 4% gave a “not responsive” rating (see Table 9 and Figure 5).

Table 9.

*Responsiveness of Mentor to Mentee’s Needs*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree of Responsiveness</th>
<th>Very Responsive</th>
<th>Somewhat Responsive</th>
<th>Not Responsive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>65.2</td>
<td>30.8</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Responses to Question 15 of the Survey.
Fifty-three percent of the teachers reported that assigned mentors “engaged in activities and communications” with mentees six or more times during a grading period while 24% noted three to five times during a grading period (see Table 10). On the question of the frequency with which the mentor observed the mentee teaching in the classroom and provided feedback on skills improvement, 57% of the mentees reported one to two times per grading period; 32% reported that their mentors observed and provided feedback three to five times during an average grading period; and 5% reported six or more times during an average grading period (see Table 11).
Table 10.

Mentor's Engagement with Mentee in Activities/Communications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency of Visits per Grading Period</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 times</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-2 times</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>20.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-5 times</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>24.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 or more times</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>52.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Responses to Question 16 of the Survey.
One Grading Period is equal to a nine-week instructional period.

Table 11.

Observation of Classroom Instruction/Feedback by Mentor per Grading Period

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 times</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-2 times</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>57.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-5 times</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>32.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 or more times</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One Grading Period is equal to a nine-week instructional period.
Responses to Question 19 of the Survey.

Table 12 reflects the rating, by participants, of the sources of regular supportive communication while in the mentoring program. Respondents ranked colleague teachers as providing the most regular supportive communication; next, their principal; and finally, other administrators.
Table 12.

Rating of Regular Supportive Communications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Yes Number</th>
<th>Yes Percent</th>
<th>No Number</th>
<th>No Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>72.6</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>27.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Administrators</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>31.7</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>68.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Teachers</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>88.4</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>11.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Responses to Question 17 of the Survey.

Table 13 reveals the rating, by participants, of the sources of support most helpful to them while in the mentoring program. Respondents ranked colleague teachers as providing the most helpful support; secondly, the assigned mentor; and thirdly, school administrators. The External Assessor was rated the least helpful.

Table 13.

Helpful Sources of Support During Mentoring

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sources</th>
<th>Agree (N)</th>
<th>Agree (%)</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree (N)</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree (%)</th>
<th>Disagree (N)</th>
<th>Disagree (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Other Teachers at my School</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>83.2</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assigned Mentor</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>76.8</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>9.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Administrators</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>65.3</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>22.4</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>12.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School-Based Mentor</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>66.8</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>16.4</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>16.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead Teacher</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>59.4</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>25.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External Assessor</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>34.0</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>27.5</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>38.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 14 shows the rating provided by participants on the effect that the mentor's guidance had on routine teaching skills and tasks. Imbuing mentees with confidence in the classroom was rated as an area where mentors were most impactful. Classroom management skills ranked second, followed by a tie between student achievement and self-assessment. Teaching test-taking skills was rated the area where a mentor's guidance was least impactful.

Table 14. Impact of Mentor's Guidance on Tasks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tasks</th>
<th>Agree (N)</th>
<th>Agree (%)</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree (N)</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree (%)</th>
<th>Disagree (N)</th>
<th>Disagree (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Confidence in the Classroom</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>79.0</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Management Skills</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>70.0</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>13.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Achievement</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>69.0</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>14.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Assessment Skills</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>69.0</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>21.0</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Craft Knowledge</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>65.0</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>16.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching of Test-Taking Skills</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>60.0</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Responses to Question 21 of the Survey.

Respondents were asked to respond to a statement: "The effectiveness of my mentor was instrumental in my decision to stay in teaching." Table 15 shows the tabulated responses. A plurality, 48%, agreed with the statement; 32% of the respondents disagreed; and 20% of the respondents "agreed somewhat" with the statement.
Table 15.

*Effectiveness of Mentor and Decision to Stay in Teaching*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>(N)</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>48.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>32.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat Agree</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Responses to Question 22 of the Survey.

**Teachers’ Evaluation of Their Contentment With the Teaching Profession**

Participants were asked to respond to a query, Question 25: “If you could go back to your college days and start over again, would you become a teacher or not?”

Responses to the question were divided into three groups: “would become a teacher,” “chances are about even for and against,” and “would not become a teacher.”

The purpose of the query was to examine the level of a respondent’s job satisfaction. Job satisfaction, in this case, was the dependent variable. Responding to the query required participants to have reflected on factors such as school characteristics, compensation, administration’s support, parish and school cultures, and, work conditions, before responding to the question. The response was indicative of an affirmation of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the teaching profession. Responses to Question 25 that were marked by participants as “certainly” and “probably would become a teacher” were combined as “would become a teacher”; “probably would not” and “certainly would not become a teacher” responses were combined as “would not become a teacher.” A total of 174 respondents (77%) answered probably/certainly would become a teacher.
This group's response indicated a high level of job satisfaction. Nineteen respondents (8%) selected probably/certainly would not become a teacher. This rating was indicative of a sub-optimal level of job satisfaction. Thirty-three respondents (15%) marked the intermediate response: chances about even for and against. The level of job satisfaction with teaching for those 33 respondents was classified as indeterminate. Table 16 reflects a summary of the responses by group.

Table 16.

**Job Satisfaction**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>All Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(N)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would become a teacher</td>
<td>174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chances about even for and against</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would not become a teacher</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Responses to Question 25 of the Survey.

**Statistical Data Analysis**

The null hypotheses for this study were tested at 0.05 significance level which, according to Kerr, Hall & Kozub (2002), is the established alpha level employed to test statistical significance in behavioral science research. Nonparametric procedures (Mann-Whitney U and Kruskal-Wallis tests) were employed to assess the variables found in Null Hypotheses 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 9. These hypotheses used Question 25 as the dependent variable: “If you could go back to your college days and start over again, would you become a teacher or not?” Correlated t-tests were utilized in testing Null Hypotheses 7,
8, 10, 11, 12, 13, and 14. These hypotheses were based on teachers' evaluation of the effectiveness of the technical assistance provided by mentors on aspects of the Louisiana Components of Effective Teaching that the state expected mentors to emphasize while mentoring new teachers. The questions were designed to elicit mentees' self-evaluation on specific tasks prior to the commencement of mentoring (items in Question 9) and then to contrast their self-evaluation with the value added by their mentors (items in Question 20). Responses to Question 25 (dependent variable), along with the paired pre- and post-treatment responses, were used in computing Cronbach's alpha value for the reliability test.

Hypothesis Testing

Research Question One

Research Question One examined the relationship between gender and teacher retention.

H₁. Null Hypothesis stated that there is no statistically significant relationship between the teacher's gender and teacher retention.

The Mann-Whitney rank-sum procedure was employed to test whether mentoring affected the retention rate for male and female teachers. Results of this analysis appear in Table 17. The mean rank for females was higher (84.78) than the mean rank for males (59.44), indicative of a higher retention rate for females than males. The Mann-Whitney U statistic was 1126.500, with a significant p-value equal to .006. The small p-value indicated a statistically significant result, which signified that there was a statistically significant relationship between gender and teacher retention. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected.
Table 17.

**Hypothesis 1: Mean Ranks for Gender Concerning Teacher Retention**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean Rank</th>
<th>Sum of Ranks</th>
<th>Test Statistics</th>
<th>Test Statistics Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>59.44</td>
<td>1426.50</td>
<td>Mann-Whitney U</td>
<td>1126.500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>84.78</td>
<td>11614.50</td>
<td>z</td>
<td>-2.723</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>161</td>
<td></td>
<td>11614.50</td>
<td>Asymp. Sig.</td>
<td>.006</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*a Grouping Variable: Male; Female

**Research Question Two**

Research Question Two examined the relationship between students' socio-economic status and teacher retention. Socio-economic status (SES), for the purpose of this study, was indicative of the designation the Bossier Parish School System assigned to schools, based on the percentage of students who qualified for free-reduced lunches. The Bossier Parish School System had a total of 16 SES and 14 non-SES schools in the district during the period August 1998 through May 2007.

H2. Null Hypothesis stated that there is no statistically significant relationship between the students’ socio-economic status (SES) and teacher retention.

The Mann-Whitney rank-sum procedure was employed to test whether the SES of the students had an effect on teacher retention. The Mann-Whitney U test, as seen in Table 18, showed that the difference between retention of teachers in SES schools was not significant when contrasted with that of non-SES schools (z = -1.474, p > .05). The p-value indicated a statistically non-significant result. Therefore, the null hypothesis was accepted.
Table 18.

_Hypothesis 2: Mean Ranks for Students' Socio-Economic Status (SES) Concerning Teacher Retention_

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Socio-Economic Status (SES)</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean Rank</th>
<th>Sum of Ranks</th>
<th>Test Statistics a</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-SES</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>75.96</td>
<td>5925.00</td>
<td>Mann-Whitney U</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SES</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>85.73</td>
<td>7116.00</td>
<td>z</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.140</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a Grouping Variable: School Designation: Non-SES vs. SES

_Research Question Three_

Research Question Three examined the relationship between the teacher’s ethnicity and teacher retention.

H₃. Null Hypothesis stated that there is no statistically significant relationship between the ethnicity of the teacher and retention.

The Mann-Whitney rank-sum procedure was used to test whether mentoring affected the retention rate of teachers based on ethnicity. The result of this analysis appears in Table 19. The mean rank for Caucasians was higher (82.23) than the mean rank for non-Caucasians (68.11); however, the Mann-Whitney U statistic of 848.500 had a p-value equal to .230. This large p-value indicated a non-statistically significant result. There was no statistically significant relationship between ethnicity and teacher retention. Therefore, the null hypothesis was accepted.
Table 19.

*Hypothesis 3: Mean Ranks for Ethnicity Concerning Teacher Retention*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean Rank</th>
<th>Sum of Ranks</th>
<th>Test Statistics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-Caucasian</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>68.11</td>
<td>953.50</td>
<td>Mann-Whitney U</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>82.23</td>
<td>12087.50</td>
<td>z</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>161</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Non-Caucasian teachers total 14 (11 African-Americans; 1 Hispanic; 1 Asian; 1 Other)*

**Research Question Four**

Research Question Four examined the relationship between the teacher's age-bracket at entry and teacher retention.

H₄. Null Hypothesis stated that there is no statistically significant relationship between the teacher's age-bracket at entry and retention.

A Kruskal-Wallis Test was utilized to test whether mentoring affected the retention rate of teachers based on age. The result of this analysis appears in Table 20, detailing the mean rank, sample size of each age bracket, the Chi-square value and the p value (.619). Using the alpha level of .05, the result of the Kruskal-Wallis Test Statistic showed that there was no statistically significant relationship between age and retention. Therefore, the null hypothesis was accepted.
Research Question Five

Research Question Five examined the relationship between the teacher’s initial mode of certification and retention.

H₅. Null Hypothesis stated that there is no statistically significant relationship between the teacher’s initial mode of certification and retention.

A Kruskal-Wallis Test was used to test whether mentoring affected the retention rate of teachers based on their initial mode of certification. The result of this analysis appears in Table 21, displaying the mean rank, sample size of each initial certification mode, the Chi-square, and, the $p$ value (.179). Using the alpha level of .05, initial certification mode had no statistically significant relationship to retention. Therefore, the null hypothesis was accepted.
Table 21.

_Hypothesis 5: Mean Ranks for Initial Certification Modes Concerning Teacher Retention_

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initial Certification Mode</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean Rank</th>
<th>Test Statistics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regular</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>81.57</td>
<td>Chi-square 4.907</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provisional</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>72.62</td>
<td>df 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out of area</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>88.95</td>
<td>Asymp. Sig. .179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waiver</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>161</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Research Question Six**

Research Question Six examined the relationship between the grade-level taught and teacher retention.

H₆. Null Hypothesis stated that there is no statistically significant relationship between the grade-level taught and teacher retention.

A Kruskal-Wallis Test was employed to determine whether mentoring affected the retention rate of teachers based on the grade-level taught. The result of this analysis is contained in Table 22, showing the mean rank, sample size of each grade-level, Chi-square value, and the p value (.257). Using the alpha level of .05, the grade level taught had no significant relationship to retention. Therefore, the null hypothesis was accepted.
Table 22.

Hypothesis 6: Mean Ranks for Grade-Level Taught Concerning Teacher Retention

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade-Level</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean Rank</th>
<th>Test Statistics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>86.97</td>
<td>Chi-square 2.719</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>75.06</td>
<td>df 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>76.68</td>
<td>Asymp. Sig. .257</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>161</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Research Question Seven

Research Question Seven examined the relationship between the mentor’s assistance and the mentee’s competency in teaching students with special needs, before and after mentoring.

H7. Null Hypothesis stated that there is no statistically significant relationship between the mentor’s assistance and the mentee’s competency in teaching students with special needs, before and after mentoring.

A paired samples t-test was conducted to compare the effect of the mentor’s assistance on the mentee’s competency in teaching students with special needs and mentee’s competency, pre-mentoring. There was a significant difference in the scores for post-mentoring (M=3.43, SD=1.09) and pre-mentoring (M=3.13, SD=0.97) competencies: t(160)=-3.51, p=0.001. The result of the analysis, which is contained in Table 23, suggests that mentoring had an effect on the mentee’s competency in teaching students with special needs. Therefore, the null hypothesis, which stated that there was
no statistically significant difference between the two means, was rejected, using the alpha level of .05.

Table 23.

Hypothesis 7: Pre- and Post-Mentoring Means for the Effect of Mentoring as Perceived by Teachers on the Teaching of Special Needs Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Teaching Special Needs Students</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>Std. Error Mean</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Mentoring</td>
<td>3.13</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>.969</td>
<td>.076</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-Mentoring</td>
<td>3.43</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>1.088</td>
<td>.086</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Paired Differences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
<th>LL</th>
<th>UL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>.30</td>
<td>1.101</td>
<td>-3.506</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>-.476</td>
<td>-.133</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Research Question Eight

Research Question Eight examined the relationship between the mentor’s assistance and the mentee’s competency in executing content standards, before and after mentoring.

H₈. Null Hypothesis stated that there is no statistically significant relationship between the mentor’s assistance and the mentee’s competency in executing content standards, before and after mentoring.

A paired samples t-test was conducted to compare the effect of the mentor’s assistance on the mentee’s competency in executing content standards and the mentee’s competency, pre-mentoring. There was not a significant difference in the scores for post-
mentoring (M=3.66, SD=1.04) and pre-mentoring (M=3.57, SD=0.96) competencies: t(159)= -0.93, p=0.353. The result, contained in Table 24, suggests that mentoring did not affect the mentee’s competency in executing content standards. Therefore, Null Hypothesis 8, which stated that there was no significant difference between the two means, was accepted using the alpha level of .05.

Table 24.

_Hypothesis 8: Pre- and Post-Mentoring Means for the Effect of Mentoring on Executing Content Standards as Perceived By Teachers_

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Execution of Content Standards</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Mentoring</td>
<td>3.57</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>.956</td>
<td>.076</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-Mentoring</td>
<td>3.66</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>1.039</td>
<td>.082</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paired Differences</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>1.273</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

_Research Question Nine_

Research Question Nine examined the relationship between the duration of mentoring (1-year versus 2-year) and teacher retention.

H_9_. Null Hypothesis stated that there is no statistically significant relationship between the duration of mentoring (1-year versus 2-year) and teacher retention.

A Mann-Whitney rank sum procedure was used to test whether mentoring affected the retention rate of teachers based on the duration of mentoring (1-year versus 2-year). The
result of this analysis appears in Table 25. Even though the mean rank for teachers in the 2-year program was higher (82.37) than the mean rank for the 1-year program (76.57), the Mann-Whitney U statistic of 2168.500 had a $p$-value equal to .457. This large $p$-value indicated a non-statistically significant result. There was no significant relationship between the duration of mentoring (1-year versus 2-year) and teacher retention. Therefore, the null hypothesis was accepted.

Table 25.

*Hypothesis 9: Mean Ranks for Duration of Mentoring Concerning Teacher Retention*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duration of Mentoring</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean Rank</th>
<th>Sum of Ranks</th>
<th>Test Statistics</th>
<th>Test Statistics Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-year</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>76.57</td>
<td>2909.50</td>
<td>Mann-Whitney U</td>
<td>2168.500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-year</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>82.37</td>
<td>10131.50</td>
<td>$Z$</td>
<td>-.744</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.457</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Research Question Ten**

Research Question Ten examined the relationship between the mentor’s assistance and the mentee’s competency on development of classroom management and student discipline skills, before and after mentoring.

$H_{10}$. Null Hypothesis stated that there is no statistically significant relationship between the mentor’s assistance and the mentee’s competency on development of classroom management and student discipline skills, before and after mentoring.
A paired samples $t$-test was conducted to compare the effect of the mentor’s assistance on the mentee’s competency in developing classroom management and student discipline skills, post-mentoring and the mentee’s competency, pre-mentoring. There was a significant difference in the scores for post-mentoring ($M=3.73$, $SD=1.10$) and pre-mentoring ($M=3.26$, $SD=0.99$) competencies: $t(160)=-4.70$, $p=0.001$. The result of this analysis is contained in Table 26. This result suggests that mentoring had an effect on the mentee’s competency in developing classroom management and student discipline skills. Therefore, the null hypothesis, which stated that there was no significant difference between the two means, was rejected, using the alpha level of .05.

Table 26.

*Hypothesis 10: Pre- and Post-Mentoring Means for the Effect of Mentoring on Development of Classroom Management and Student Discipline Skills as Perceived by Teachers*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paired Samples Statistics</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Management and Student Discipline Skills</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>Std. Error Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Mentoring</td>
<td>3.26</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>.997</td>
<td>.079</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-Mentoring</td>
<td>3.73</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>1.105</td>
<td>.087</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paired Differences</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$t$ M</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-4.698</td>
<td>-.47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Research Question Eleven

Research Question Eleven examined the relationship between the mentor’s assistance and the mentee’s competency in planning effective classroom and instruction skills, before and after mentoring.

H_{11}. Null Hypothesis stated that there is no statistically significant relationship between the mentor’s assistance and the mentee’s competency in planning effective classroom and instruction skills, before and after mentoring.

A paired samples *t*-test was conducted to compare the effect of the mentor’s assistance on the mentee’s competency in planning effective classroom and instruction skills post-mentoring and the mentee’s competency, pre-mentoring. There was not a significant difference in the scores for post-mentoring (M=3.80, SD=1.05) and pre-mentoring (M=3.61, SD=0.95) competencies: *t*(160)=-1.91, *p*=0.058. The results of this analysis are contained in Table 27. The result suggests that the mentor’s assistance did not affect the mentee’s competency in planning effective classroom and instruction skills. Using the alpha level of .05, the null hypothesis, which stated that there is no significant difference between the two means, was accepted.
Table 27.

Hypothesis 11: Pre- and Post-Mentoring Means for the Effect of Mentoring on Planning Effective Classroom Instruction Skills as Perceived by Teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Planning Effective Classroom Instruction Skills</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Mentoring</td>
<td>3.61</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>.950</td>
<td>.075</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-Mentoring</td>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>1.048</td>
<td>.083</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Paired Differences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-0.19</td>
<td>1.277</td>
<td>-1.93</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>0.058</td>
<td>-.391 to .006</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Research Question Twelve

Research Question Twelve examined the relationship between the mentor’s assistance and the mentee’s competency in communicating school and district culture, before and after mentoring.

H₁₂. Null Hypothesis stated that there is no statistically significant relationship between the mentor’s assistance and the mentee’s competency in communicating school and district culture, before and after mentoring.

A paired samples t-test was conducted to compare the effect of the mentor’s assistance on the mentee’s competency in communicating school and district culture and the mentee’s competency, pre-mentoring. There was a significant difference in the scores for post-mentoring (M=3.94, SD=1.00) and pre-mentoring (M=3.75, SD=1.07)
competencies: \( t(160) = -2.07, p = 0.040 \). The result suggests that the mentor’s assistance had an effect on the mentee’s competency in communicating school and district culture.

The result of this analysis is contained in Table 28. The \( p \) value (.040) indicated there was a statistically significant difference noted in the effect of the mentor’s assistance in communicating school and district culture, before and after mentoring. Therefore, using the alpha level of .05, the null hypothesis which stated that there is no statistically significant difference between the two means, was rejected.

*Table 28.*

*Hypothesis 12: Pre- and Post-Mentoring Means for the Effect of Mentoring on the Communication of School and District Culture as Perceived by Teachers*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paired Samples Statistics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communication of School and District Culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Mentoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-Mentoring</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paired Differences</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-0.19</td>
<td>1.181</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Research Question Thirteen

Research Question Thirteen examined the relationship between the mentor’s assistance and the mentee’s competency in communicating with parents, before and after mentoring.

H_{13}. Null Hypothesis stated that there is no statistically significant relationship between the mentor’s assistance and the mentee’s competency in communicating with parents, before and after mentoring.

A paired samples t-test was conducted to compare the effect of the mentor’s assistance on the mentee’s competency in communicating with parents and the mentee’s competency, pre-mentoring. There was not a significant difference in the scores for post-mentoring (M=3.57, SD=1.04) and pre-mentoring (M=3.58, SD=0.99) competencies: t(160)=.13, p=0.898. The result suggests that mentoring did not affect the mentee’s competency in communicating with parents. The result of this analysis is contained in Table 29. The p value (.898) indicated there was no significant difference noted in the effect of mentoring on the mentee’s competency in communicating with parents. Therefore, the null hypothesis, which stated that there was no statistically significant difference between the two means, was accepted, using the alpha level of .05.
Table 29.

**Hypothesis 13: Pre- and Post-Mentoring Means for the Effect of Mentoring on Communicating with Parents as Perceived by Teachers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communicating With Parents</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Mentoring</td>
<td>3.58</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>.993</td>
<td>.074</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-Mentoring</td>
<td>3.57</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>1.036</td>
<td>.082</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Paired Differences**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
<th>LL</th>
<th>UL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>.01</td>
<td>1.225</td>
<td>.129</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>.898</td>
<td>-.178</td>
<td>.203</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Research Question Fourteen**

Research Question Fourteen examined the relationship between the mentor’s assistance and the mentee’s competency in assessing student progress, before and after mentoring.

H$_{14}$. Null Hypothesis stated that there is no statistically significant relationship between the mentor’s assistance and the mentee’s competency in assessing student progress, before and after mentoring.

A paired samples $t$-test was conducted to compare the effect of the mentor’s assistance on the mentee’s competency in assessing student progress and the mentee’s competency, pre-mentoring. There was not a significant difference in the scores for post-mentoring (M=3.64, SD=1.03) and pre-mentoring (M=3.60, SD=0.88) competencies:
The result of this analysis is contained in Table 30. The result suggests that mentoring did not affect the mentee’s competency in assessing student progress. Therefore, the null hypothesis, which stated that there was no significant difference between the two means, was accepted, using the alpha level of .05.

Table 30.

*Hypothesis 14: Pre- and Post-Mentoring Means for the Effect of Mentoring on Assessing Student Progress as Perceived by Teachers*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessing Student Progress</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Mentoring</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>.883</td>
<td>.070</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-Mentoring</td>
<td>3.64</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>1.028</td>
<td>.081</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paired Differences</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>-0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>1.080</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t</td>
<td>-0.511</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>df</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.610</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LL</td>
<td>-.212</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UL</td>
<td>.125</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effectiveness of mentoring on beginning teacher retention in the Bossier Parish School System, which is located in northwest Louisiana. The research questions addressed teachers' self-evaluation of their perceived competence, pre-mentoring versus post-mentoring, in the performance of tasks relating to effective classroom management, and the ability to meet socio-cultural expectations of the teacher as a professional in the areas of communications with parents and adjusting to school and district cultures. The researcher hypothesized that there would be no difference in a teacher's self-evaluation of their competence before and after participating in a mentoring staff development program. The null hypotheses for this study were tested at the $p < .05$ level of significance. Respondents' level of job satisfaction was measured by asking about their future plans, Question 25 of the survey (see Appendix C.1). Findings from the descriptive and statistical analyses are reported in Chapter 4 and summarized in the second section of this chapter. Discussions about the statistical findings constitute the third section; conclusions that were derived from the statistical findings for the fourteen research questions form the fourth section of this chapter. Findings and recommendations are discussed in this chapter. The chapter concludes with a summary.
Summary of Results

The results that were learned from the descriptive and statistical data analyses of this study constitute the second section of this chapter.

Descriptive Data Analysis

The following is a summary of the findings from the descriptive data analysis:

1. The age at the time of enrolment in LaTAAP ranged from 22 to 60.

2. The ethnicity of respondents with completed responses was as follows: 91%, White non-Hispanic; 6.8%, African-American.

3. The majority of the participants in the 1-year mentoring program (70.3%) moved from the schools where they were initially assigned after completion of mentoring, while the other 29.7% stayed at their initial schools.

4. The teachers who participated in the 2-year mentoring program reported a higher level of stay at the school where they were initially assigned (59.8%), compared with 40.2%, who moved to other facilities within the school system.

5. The majority of participants (66%) rated their skill levels higher after mentoring, i.e., post-mentoring, in six areas identified in the *Louisiana Components of Effective Teaching* as vital, compared with the self-rating for the same skills prior to enrolment in the mentoring program. The weighted mean for pre-mentoring was 75.87%, compared with 102.34% for post-mentoring. The six skills that were rated higher by a 10% margin or more were disciplining and classroom management, teaching students with special needs, preparing for LaTAAP assessment, effectively planning and providing instruction, meeting expectations of LaTAAP, and adjusting to school and district cultures. Three other skills were
rated higher, post-mentoring, by between 2% and 5%: assessment of student progress, communicating with parents, and implementation of curriculum standards in contrast to pre-mentoring skill levels. The use of technology in instruction was the lone area where a majority of the mentees believed that their pre-mentoring skill levels were unchanged by the mentoring process.

6. Responders rated participation in “observation of classrooms of certified teachers” as the most helpful professional development activity during LaTAAP.

7. The majority of the responders, 83%, selected “other teachers at my school” as helpful sources of support during mentoring; followed by “assigned mentor,” 77%; and “school administrators,” 65%.

8. Teachers were asked to respond to a job satisfaction query, Question 25 (see Appendix C.1): “If you could go back to your college days and start over again, would you become a teacher or not?” The participants’ responses were divided into three groups: (a) “would become a teacher”; (b) “indeterminate, or chances are about even”; and (c) “would not become a teacher.” Seventy-seven percent of the responders selected “would become a teacher”; 15% marked “chances were about even”; and 8% indicated “would not become a teacher.”

9. Forty-eight percent of responders “agreed” with the proposition that the effectiveness of the assigned mentor was instrumental in their decision to stay in teaching. Twenty percent indicated a “somewhat agree” with the proposition while 32% “disagreed.”

10. A majority of the responders indicated that the mentor’s guidance positively impacted the following tasks and attributes: confidence in the classroom (79%);
classroom management skills (70%); self-assessment skills (69%); student achievement (69%); craft knowledge (65%); and test-taking skills (60%).

11. Sixty-five percent rated their mentors as “very responsive”; 31%, as “somewhat responsive”; and 4%, as “nonresponsive”; however, on the effectiveness rating of the mentor, 46% rated their mentors as “very effective”; 28%, as “effective”; 18%, as “somewhat effective”; and 8%, as “not effective.”

Statistical Data Analysis

Statistical analysis revealed that no significant differences were found in testing 10 of the 14 hypotheses. The findings are summarized below:

1. The results showed that there was a significant difference between males and females in their reporting of the effectiveness of mentoring on teacher retention. Females indicated, more strongly, that mentoring positively affected their decision to continue as a teacher in the school system. The mean rank for females was higher (84.78) than the mean rank for males (59.44), indicative of a higher retention rate for females than males. The Mann-Whitney U statistic was 1126.500, with a significant p-value equal to .006.

2. The results indicated that there was no significant difference between teachers teaching in schools classified as SES and non-SES in their reporting of the effectiveness of mentoring on teacher retention. The mean rank for non-SES was lower (75.96) than the mean rank for SES (85.73). The Mann-Whitney U statistic was 2844.000, with a p-value equal to .140. This is indicative of a non-statistically significant difference in the retention of teachers on the basis of students’ SES in the Bossier Parish Schools.
3. The results showed that there was no significant difference in the reported relationship between ethnicity and teacher retention. The Mann-Whitney rank-sum procedure was used to test whether mentoring affected the retention rate of teachers based on ethnicity. The result of this analysis appears in Table 19. The mean rank for Caucasians was higher (82.23) than the mean rank for non-Caucasians (68.11); however, the Mann-Whitney U statistic of 848.500 had a p-value equal to .230. This large p-value indicated a non-statistically significant result. There was no statistically significant relationship between ethnicity and teacher retention. Therefore, the null hypothesis was accepted.

4. The results indicated that there was no significant difference in the reported relationship between age-bracket (at the time of enrolment in LaTAAP) and teacher retention. A Kruskal-Wallis Test was utilized to test whether mentoring affected the retention rate of teachers based on age. The result of this analysis appears in Table 20, detailing the mean rank, sample size of each age bracket, the Chi-square value and the p value (.619). Using the alpha level of .05, the result of the Kruskal-Wallis Test Statistic showed that there was no statistically significant relationship between age bracket at entry and retention. Therefore, the null hypothesis was accepted.

5. The results indicated that there was no significant difference in the reported relationship between the initial mode of certification and teacher retention. A Kruskal-Wallis Test was used to test whether mentoring affected the retention rate of teachers based on their initial mode of certification. The result of this analysis appears in Table 21, displaying the mean rank, sample size of each
initial certification mode, the Chi-square, and, the $p$ value (.179). Using the alpha level of .05, initial certification mode had no statistically significant relationship to retention. Therefore, the null hypothesis was accepted.

6. The results indicated that there was no significant difference in the reported relationship between the grade-level taught and teacher retention. A Kruskal-Wallis Test was employed to determine whether mentoring affected the retention rate of teachers based on the grade-level taught. The result of this analysis is contained in Table 22, showing the mean rank, sample size of each grade-level, Chi-square value, and the $p$ value (.257). Using the alpha level of .05, the grade level taught had no significant relationship to retention. Therefore, the null hypothesis was accepted.

7. The results showed that there was a significant difference in the pre- and post-mentoring means. A paired samples $t$-test was conducted to compare the effect of the mentor’s assistance on the mentee’s competency in teaching students with special needs and mentee’s competency, pre-mentoring. There was a significant difference in the scores for post-mentoring (M=3.43, SD=1.09) and pre-mentoring (M=3.13, SD=0.97) competencies: $t(160)=-3.51$, $p=0.001$. The result of the analysis, which is contained in Table 23, suggests that teachers reported a positive effect of mentoring on their competency in teaching students with special needs. Therefore, the null hypothesis, which stated that there was no statistically significant difference between the two means, was rejected, using the alpha level of .05.
8. The results showed that there was no significant relationship between the mentor's assistance and the mentee's competency in executing content standards, before and after mentoring. A paired samples t-test was conducted to compare the effect of the mentor's assistance on the mentee's competency in executing content standards and the mentee's competency, pre-mentoring. There was not a significant difference in the scores for post-mentoring (M=3.66, SD=1.04) and pre-mentoring (M=3.57, SD=0.96) competencies: t(159)=-0.93, p=0.353. The result contained in Table 24 suggests that mentoring did not affect the mentee's competency in executing content standards. Therefore, Null Hypothesis 8, which stated that there was no significant difference between the two means, was accepted using the alpha level of .05. The t-test was -.932, with a significant p-value of .353.

9. The results indicated that there was no significant difference in the reported relationship between the duration of mentoring (1-year versus 2-year) and teacher retention. A Mann-Whitney rank sum procedure was used to test whether mentoring affected the retention rate of teachers based on the duration of mentoring (1-year versus 2-year). The result of this analysis appears in Table 25. The mean rank for teachers in the 2-year program was higher (82.37) than the mean rank for the 1-year program (76.57); however, the Mann-Whitney U statistic of 2168.500 had a p-value equal to .457. This large p-value indicated a non-statistically significant result. There was no significant relationship between the duration of mentoring (1-year versus 2-year) and teacher retention. Therefore, the null hypothesis was accepted.
10. The results showed that there was a significant difference in the reported relationship between the mentor’s assistance and the mentee’s competency on development of classroom management and student discipline skills, before and after mentoring. A paired samples t-test was conducted to compare the effect of the mentor’s assistance on the mentee’s competency on development of classroom management and student discipline skills, post-mentoring and the mentee’s competency, pre-mentoring. There was a significant difference in the scores for post-mentoring (M=3.73, SD=1.10) and pre-mentoring (M=3.26, SD=0.99) competencies: t(160)=-4.70, p=0.001. The result of this analysis is contained in Table 26. The t-test was -4.698 with a significant p-value of .001. This result suggests that mentoring had an effect on the mentee’s competency in developing classroom management and student discipline skills. Therefore, the null hypothesis, which stated that there was no significant difference between the two means, was rejected, using the alpha level of .05

11. The results indicated that there was no significant difference in the reported relationship between the mentor’s assistance and the mentee’s competency in planning effective classroom instruction skills, before and after mentoring. A paired samples t-test was conducted to compare the effect of the mentor’s assistance on the mentee’s competency in planning effective classroom and instruction skills post-mentoring and the mentee’s competency, pre-mentoring. There was not a significant difference found in the scores for post-mentoring (M=3.80, SD=1.05) and pre-mentoring (M=3.61, SD=0.95) competencies: t(160)=-1.91, p=0.058. The results of this analysis are contained in Table 27.
The $t$-test was -1.913, with a significant $p$-value of .058. The result suggests that the mentor's assistance did not affect the mentee's competency in planning effective classroom and instruction skills. Therefore, the null hypothesis, which stated that there was no significant difference between the two means, was accepted, using the alpha level of .05.

12. The results indicated that there was a significant difference in the reported relationship between the mentor's assistance and the mentee's competency in communicating school and district culture, before and after mentoring. A paired samples $t$-test was conducted to compare the effect of the mentor's assistance on the mentee's competency in communicating school and district culture and the mentee's competency, pre-mentoring. There was a significant difference in the scores for post-mentoring ($M=3.94$, $SD=1.00$) and pre-mentoring ($M=3.75$, $SD=1.07$) competencies: $t(160)=-2.07$, $p=0.040$. The result suggests that the mentor's assistance had an effect on the mentee's competency in communicating school and district culture. The result of this analysis is contained in Table 28. The $t$-test was -2.069, with a significant $p$-value of .040. The $p$ value (.040) indicated there was a statistically significant difference noted in the effect of the mentor's assistance in communicating school and district culture, before and after mentoring. Therefore, using the alpha level of .05, the null hypothesis which stated that there is no statistically significant difference between the two means, was rejected.
13. The results indicated that there was no significant difference in the reported relationship between the mentor's assistance and the mentee's competency in communicating with parents, before and after mentoring. A paired samples $t$-test was conducted to compare the effect of the mentor's assistance on the mentee's competency in communicating with parents and the mentee's competency, pre-mentoring. There was not a significant difference in the scores for post-mentoring ($M=3.57$, $SD=1.04$) and pre-mentoring ($M=3.58$, $SD=0.99$) competencies: $t(160)=-.13$, $p=0.898$. The result suggests that mentoring did not affect the mentee's competency in communicating with parents. The result of this analysis is contained in Table 29. The $p$ value (.898) indicated there was no significant difference noted in the effect of mentoring on the mentee's competency in communicating with parents. Therefore, the null hypothesis, which stated that there was no statistically significant difference between the two means, was accepted, using the alpha level of .05.

14. The results showed that there was no significant difference in the reported relationship between the mentor's assistance and the mentee's competency in assessing student progress, before and after mentoring. A paired samples $t$-test was conducted to compare the effect of the mentor's assistance on the mentee's competency in assessing student progress and the mentee's competency, pre-mentoring. There was not a significant difference in the scores for post-mentoring ($M=3.64$, $SD=1.03$) and pre-mentoring ($M=3.60$, $SD=0.88$) competencies: $t(160)=-0.51$, $p=0.610$. The result of this analysis is contained in
Table 30. The result suggests that mentoring did not affect the mentee’s competency in assessing student progress. Therefore, the null hypothesis, which stated that there was no significant difference between the two means, was accepted, using the alpha level of .05.

Discussion

A key goal of mentoring is the retention of quality teachers. Retention of quality teachers serves the dual purposes of enhancing student learning and achievement and fostering a stable, professional learning community that is conducive to promoting and fostering student learning and academic achievement. According to Carter and Francis (2001), the professional and social supports provided to first-year teachers are crucial to the tenor of both their current professional experiences and long-term professional growth. In this study, 14 hypotheses were tested to examine the relationship between mentoring and retention of beginning teachers (see Appendix D for summary). Hypotheses 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 9 dealt with teacher characteristics: gender, ethnicity, age, certification, grade-level taught; Hypothesis 2 dealt with the school characteristic of students’ socio-economic status (SES). Ingersoll and Strong (2011) reported that schools populated by low income students had a low teacher retention rate. Borman and Dowling (2008) suggested that “the personal characteristics of teachers ... are important predictors of turnover” (p. 397); however, they also presented that establishing a formalized mentoring program that is geared towards providing new teachers with a supportive system does actually improve teacher retention. Ingersoll and Smith (2004) found that new teachers who received quality mentoring and supports were less likely to leave their school after their first year.
Responders rated participation in “observation of classrooms of certified teachers” as the most helpful professional development activity during LaTAAP. Elliot, Isaacs, and Chugani (2010) suggested that exposing beginning teachers to the instructional practices of a veteran teacher, i.e., classroom observations, promotes teacher self-efficacy. This teacher self-efficacy produces effects in two areas: pedagogy and student learning. Beginning teachers who were provided with a combination of effective mentoring and professional development activities were less prone to leave teaching after the end of the first year (Smith and Ingersoll, 2004; Ingersoll and Strong, 2011). Participants from this study rated colleague teachers as the individuals providing the most helpful and regular supportive communication during mentoring (Table 12 and Table 13). Survey participants indicated that they were able to incorporate effective teaching techniques into their own repertoire from their observations of veteran teachers, as well as from engagement in collaborative and constructive feedback from other teachers. These findings were indicative of inclusion of new teachers in the teacher networking system. Targeted support that aids beginning teachers in meeting classroom and professional challenges helps the teachers to concentrate on professional growth rather than on survival (Johnson, 2011).

Research Question One examined the relationship between gender and teacher retention. Data analysis from this study confirmed that there is a relationship between a teacher’s gender and retention. Liu & Meyer (2005) contended that women tended to leave teaching more than their male counterparts for familial reasons (to give birth and to raise their own families), but they return to the profession. According to Billingsley (2003), “Teachers’ personal circumstances and priorities influence attrition and retention”
Kukla-Acevedo (2009) also found that while men and women leave the teaching profession at a comparable rate, women tended to move or change schools more than men. Thus, the finding that there was a significant difference in the reported relationship between gender and retention supports the contention of prior researchers: teacher retention methodology should control for female teachers of child-rearing and child-bearing age, particularly since the majority of teaching professionals are women in the age-range of 30-39 years old (Kukla-Acevedo, 2009).

Research Question Seven examined the relationship between the mentor’s assistance and the mentee’s competency in teaching students with special needs, before and after mentoring. The data analysis from this study supported the assertion of a relationship between the mentor’s assistance and the mentee’s competency in teaching students with special needs. Billingsley (2002) offered that while mentoring did not deter beginning special education teachers from leaving teaching, beginning teachers “with higher levels of induction support were more likely than those with lower levels of support to stay in teaching” (p. 21).

When testing Research Question Seven, the researcher found that there was a significant difference in the reported relationship between the mentor’s assistance and the mentee’s competency in developing classroom and student discipline skills, before and after mentoring. Teachers equipped with strong discipline skills are less likely to leave teaching is in accord with previous research linking student discipline problems to teacher attrition. According to Ingersoll (2001), two of the four often cited factors underlying teacher attrition are student discipline problems, and lack of support from the school administration. Borman and Dowling (2008) reported that the provision of
prescribed organizational devices in tandem with mentoring tended to facilitate teacher retention.

Research Question Twelve examined the relationship between the mentor’s assistance and the mentee’s competency in communicating school and district cultures, before and mentoring. The researcher found that there was a significant difference in the reported relationship between the mentor’s assistance and the mentee’s competency in communicating school and district cultures, before and after mentoring. Ingersoll and Alsalam (1997) found that teacher commitment, i.e., retention, increased if new teachers were effectively assisted in matters of discipline, instruction, and, adjustment to the school environment.

The study tested to find if there was a relationship between effective teacher retention and job satisfaction. The researcher used Question 25 of the survey as a proxy for testing the mentee’s intention to quit by measuring the mentee’s level of job satisfaction. A teacher with an optimal level of job satisfaction creates stability in instruction and fosters staff cohesion. Mor Barak et al. (2001) viewed the employee’s intention to quit as a key predictor of turnover. Billingsley (2003) proffered that there was a significant correlation between job satisfaction and teacher retention. Seventy-seven percent of the respondents selected the “would become a teacher” response. This was indicative of positive job satisfaction. This finding is important because a teacher’s level of job satisfaction proportionately affects the quality of instruction that the students receive. Additionally, a teacher who is satisfied with teaching is less likely to exit the profession.
Conclusions

The following can be concluded on the basis of the key findings from this study. First, the formalized mentoring program in the parish was successful. Secondly, three of the four Null Hypotheses (Numbers 7, 10, and 12) that were rejected on the basis of their p-levels were in accord with four areas of concern which had been identified by earlier research studies on first-year teachers as problem areas for retention: adapting to students' needs and abilities – Null Hypothesis 7 (Fox & Singletary, 1986); classroom management – Null Hypothesis 10 (Coats & Thoressen, 1978); isolation – Null Hypothesis 12 (Rosenholtz, 1989). Third, the school district’s personnel exhibited a keen interest in this research study, as evidenced by the response rate. Fourth, the self-reported level of job satisfaction in the district was high. Fifth, the district’s formalized mentoring program for new teachers fostered beginning teacher retention.

Billingsley (2003) reported teacher’s age as “the only demographic variable that is consistently linked to attrition in the special education literature” (p. 13). According to Billingsley, youth and inexperience produce an attrition linkage among special education teachers, presumably in the absence of a formalized and supportive mentoring program. This study found a significant relationship between gender and retention (Hypothesis 1), which is consistent with the literature research; however, this study found no significant relationship between retention and the following teachers’ and students’ characteristics: ethnicity, age, initial mode of certification, grade-level taught, duration of mentoring and students’ SES.

Null Hypotheses 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, and 14 pertained to the resources provided beginning teachers during mentoring and their impact on retention. Three of these were
found to have significant relationships to a mentee’s competency: Hypothesis 7, mentoring the mentee on teaching students with special needs; Hypothesis 10, mentoring the mentee on classroom management and student discipline; and Hypothesis 12, mentoring the mentee on school and district culture. These findings were in accordance with three of the six factors cited by Chapman and Green (1986) as teacher commitment determinants. Those six factors are as follows: (a) educational preparation, (b) teachers’ personal characteristics, (c) initial commitment to teaching, (d) quality of first teaching experience, (e) professional and social integration, and (f) external influences such as employment climate. An effective mentoring program positively impacts three of the factors discussed by Chapman and Green: the initial commitment to teaching, the quality of first teaching experience, and professional and social integration. Stockard and Lehman (2004) identified mentoring (social supports) as a key factor in promoting the retention of first-year teachers. Ingersoll and Alsalam (1997) found that provision of approved mentoring programs did not necessarily foster teacher commitment; however, the average commitment of teachers increased if the teaching staff perceives that new teachers were being effectively assisted in matters of discipline, instruction, and adjustment to the school environment, whether from a mentor or some other mechanism.

Implications for Practice

As the results of this study indicate, 58% of all respondents chose the “observation of classrooms of certified teachers” option as the most helpful professional development activity during LaTAAP. This type of professional activity should be amplified and extended to struggling teachers in order to boost the quality of instruction,
particularly in low performing schools. The use of highly skilled and successful teachers in modeling prescribed skills and effective teaching methods in the areas of student instruction, classroom management, student discipline, and other skills identified in the *Louisiana Components of Effective Teaching* would serve as a boon to student learning and academic achievement. It would also result in an increase in organizational stability.

A teacher's level of competency and job satisfaction enormously affect the quality and reliability of classroom instruction, which directly impacts students' learning. Therefore, observation of the classrooms of effective teachers should be made a standard professional development activity for new teachers, as required by the Louisiana Department of Education (2006), and for the rehabilitation of the skills of teachers deemed ineffective to avail them of opportunities to improve their skills. Additional resources of time and personnel would be needed to resuscitate real behavior change in tenured teachers with low performing students.

There are negative, albeit, subtle economic and socio-organizational costs associated with teacher attrition: the economic cost relates to the expenses incurred, at the school- and district-level, in recruiting and hiring teachers to replace the leavers who exited the system; and the socio-organizational costs associated with the effects of teacher attrition is an attenuation of a school's core mission which is the provision of a stable environment for transmitting quality instructions to students. Consideration should be given to the following suggestions aimed at lessening costs associated with teacher attrition: (a) the institution of a screening program for teacher recruitment and hiring functions based on objective criteria, (b) the provision of new teachers with organizational supports through a formalized mentoring program, and (c) the surveying
of new teachers at periodic intervals during the first and second years of service in order
to assess the effectiveness of the mentoring program in acculturating new teachers into
the teaching profession.

**Recommendations for Further Research**

The results of the statistical analysis for this study indicated that mentoring
positively impacted the competencies of mentees in three areas identified by the
*Louisiana Components of Effective Teaching*: (a) teaching students with special needs,
(b) classroom management and student discipline, and (c) communicating school and
district cultures. While no significant relationship was found between mentoring and the
mentee’s competency in planning effective classroom instruction, a correlation might be
probable if a study were to be conducted with data disaggregated at the school level.
Further study is needed to compare the effectiveness of new teachers in schools
populated by students hailing from low-income households in contrast with schools
populated by students from the middle- and upper-class strata.

Additionally, further study should be conducted on the competency of a new
teacher to communicate with parents, although no significant relationship was found
between mentoring and the mentee’s competency, pre- and-post-mentoring. NCLB
confers rights on parents with which new and veteran teachers need to be conversant
because a perceived breach could be costly to the teacher, specifically, and the
organization, in general. Rather than using the mean score from surveyed teachers and
other relevant school personnel, efforts should be made to disaggregate the scores at the
school level to assure awareness and knowledge of NCLB’s pronouncement on parents’ rights. This effort will ensure compliance with the spirit of the law.

This study found a high level of reported job satisfaction (77%) among the respondents; however, 8% of the respondents indicated dissatisfaction, while 15% were indeterminate. The researcher recommends further study using disaggregated data to examine sources of teacher dissatisfaction and possible ways to ameliorate the dissatisfied. This exercise would help to maintain an effective teaching corps and school community, which inevitably redound to the students’ learning and academic achievement.

This study did not address the interplay between effective mentoring of new teachers and effectual instructional climate for student instruction and achievement. Future research should focus on the absence or presence of this interplay in low performing schools.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effectiveness of mentoring on beginning teacher retention in the Bossier Parish School System, which is located in northwest Louisiana. Results indicated that mentoring had a positive effect on beginning teachers’ pedagogy, self-efficacy, and retention. Participants reported that their mentors’ guidance positively impacted the skills and attributes deemed essential for student learning and achievement as enumerated in the five domains of the Louisiana Components of Effective Teaching: planning, management, instruction, professional development, and commitment to school community.
This study found that the majority of Bossier Parish beginning teachers who participated in the state mentoring program (LaTAAP) benefitted from the experience. This study justified a strong consideration for the reestablishment of a uniform induction-with-mentoring program for beginning teachers in Louisiana. Kukla-Acevedo (2009) affirmed that mentoring new teachers provided “a more cost-effective means of reducing turnover” (p. 444). Existing research on induction-with-mentoring suggests that placing highly effective teachers in the classroom increases student learning and academic achievement. A re-instatement of a statewide induction-with-mentoring program would assure that beginning teachers focus not only on their professional growth but also on the growth of their students.
REFERENCES


Short, P. M., & Greer, J. T. (2002). Leadership in empowered schools: Themes from innovative efforts (2nd ed.). Columbus, OH: Merrill Prentice Hall.


APPENDIX A

HUMAN USE APPROVALS
A.1 MEMORANDUM

TO: Mr. Fred Ogunyemi and Dr. Carrice Cummins

FROM: Barbara Talbot, University Research

SUBJECT: HUMAN USE COMMITTEE REVIEW

DATE: February 8, 2011

In order to facilitate your project, an EXPEDITED REVIEW has been done for your proposal study entitled:

"The Relationship between Mentoring and Beginning Teacher Retention in Bossier Parish Schools"

HUC 830

The proposed study's revised procedures were found to provide reasonable and adequate safeguards against possible risks involving human subjects. The information to be collected may be personal in nature or implication. Therefore, diligent care needs to be taken to protect the privacy of the participants and to assure that the data are kept confidential. Informed consent is a critical part of the research process. The subjects must be informed that their participation is voluntary. It is important that consent materials be presented in a language understandable to every participant. If you have participants in your study whose first language is not English, be sure that informed consent materials are adequately explained or translated. Since your reviewed project appears to do no damage to the participants, the Human Use Committee grants approval of the involvement of human subjects as outlined.

Projects should be renewed annually. This approval was finalized on February 8, 2011 and this project will need to receive a continuation review by the IRB if the project, including data analysis, continues beyond February 8, 2012. Any discrepancies in procedure or changes that have been made including approved changes should be noted in the review application. Projects involving NIH funds require annual education training to be documented. For more information regarding this, contact Office of University Research.

You are requested to maintain written records of your procedures, data collected, and subjects involved. These records will need to be available upon request during the conduct of the study and retained by the university for three years after the conclusion of the study. If changes occur in recruiting of subjects, informed consent process or in your research protocol, or if unanticipated problems should arise it is the Researchers responsibility to notify the Office of Research or IRB in writing. The project should be discontinued until modifications can be reviewed and approved.

If you have any questions, please contact Dr. Mary Livingston at 257-4315.
A.2 HUMAN SUBJECTS CONSENT FORM

The following is a brief summary of the project in which you are asked to participate. Please read this information before signing the statement below.

TITLE OF PROJECT: The relationship between mentoring and beginning teacher retention in Bossier Parish Schools.

PURPOSE OF STUDY/PROJECT: To fulfill doctoral dissertation requirements.

PROCEDURE: Approximately 499 teachers in Bossier Parish Schools will be solicited for voluntary participation in an online survey for an evaluative assessment of the mentoring component of Louisiana Teacher Assistance and Assessment Program (LaTAAP). Data will be analyzed to determine the relationship between mentoring and beginning teacher retention.

INSTRUMENTS: A 28-item questionnaire will be employed. All information will be collected over the internet via Survey Monkey website. All collected information will be held confidential and viewed only by the doctoral committee and me.

RISKS/ALTERNATIVE TREATMENTS: There are no risks associated with participation in this study. It requires participants to access and complete the survey questionnaire via Survey Monkey website on the internet; however, participants were advised of the potential risk concerning "cookies" in a memo accompanying the survey instrument: the server may collect information and your IP address indirectly and automatically via "cookies" while using online survey tools.

BENEFITS/COMPENSATION: None

I attest that I have read and understood the following description of the study, "The relationship between mentoring and beginning teacher retention in Bossier Parish Schools", and its purposes and methods. I understand that my participation in this research is strictly voluntary and my participation or refusal to participate in this study will not affect my relationship with Louisiana Tech University. Further, I understand that I may withdraw at any time or refuse to answer any questions without penalty. Upon completion of the study, I understand that the results will be freely available to me upon request. I understand that the results of my survey will be confidential, accessible only to the principal investigators, myself, or a legally appointed representative. I have not been requested to waive nor do I waive any of my rights related to participating in this study.

CONTACT INFORMATION: The principal experimenter(s) listed below may be reached to answer questions about the research, subjects' rights, or related matters.

Fred O. Ogunyemi, Doctoral Student
fred.ogunyemi@bossierschools.org Phone: 318-549-6798
Dr. Carrice Cummins (Major Professor) 318-257-2676

Members of the Human Use Committee of Louisiana Tech University may also be contacted if a problem cannot be discussed with the experimenters:

Dr. Les Guice (257-3056)
Dr. Mary M. Livingston (257-2292 or 257-4315)
A.3 BOSSIER PARISH SCHOOLS APPROVAL

From: Myra Odum
Sent: Monday, December 06, 2010 5:17 PM
To: Fred Ogunyemi
Subject: RE: RE: MENTORING QUESTIONNAIRE
Importance: High

I have reviewed your questionnaire and I like the format and questions that you have chosen to use.

I understand from Mrs. Pace that you were given a list of teachers that had participated in LATAAP and that would be the group that you will be targeting with this questionnaire. I believe you told me you would be using Survey Monkey for this process. Before you send out the survey a letter will need to go out to the principals from this office letting them know that this will be sent to their teachers that participated in LATAAP. Please let me know that you still have the list of names of the teachers from Mrs. Pace and when you will be ready to send out the survey. Contact me about a week in advance, so I can notify the principals. If you could give me one paragraph that tells about the Research Project and how the results will be utilized, I would greatly appreciate it. I would use that in the email I send to the principals.

I will be out of the office some of the day on Tuesday, so I can not commit at this time to meeting with you on Tuesday. If you would like to contact the HR Dept. at 5019 or 5020 they can let you know if I am in the office when you are passing through Benton.

If we are not able to talk on Tuesday, get back with me about the items above.

Thanks,

Myra Odum, Director Human Resources
Bossier Parish School System
PO Box 2000, Benton, LA 71006
318-549-5021
myra.odum@bossierschools.org
Good Morning Fred,

Attached, per your request, is a Microsoft Word document with two tables. The first table includes the numbers of Region 7 teachers, by LEA, who successfully completed the 1-Year Louisiana Teacher Assistance and Assessment Program (LaTAAP) beginning school year 1998-99, and ending in fall of 2001. The second table includes the numbers of Region 7 teachers, by LEA, who successfully completed the 2-Year LaTAAP program beginning fall 2001 to the end of 2006-07 school year.

Please note that mentors were added to the new teachers team starting school year 1998-99; therefore, all teachers included in the 1st worksheet received the services of a mentor for 2 semesters, and all teachers included in the 2nd worksheet received the services of a mentor for 4 semesters.

I tried to send the attachments as Excel Worksheet, but the e-mail was not deliverable.

Thanks,

Shamsy

Shamsy Mirhosseini, Ph.D.
Professional Accountability
Division of Professional Development
Office of Educator Support
Louisiana Department of Education
P.O. Box 94064
Baton Rouge, LA 70804-9064
Phone: (225) 219-0504
Fax: (225) 219-4508
E-mail: shamsy.mirhosseini@la.gov
Department's Toll-Free Number 1-877-453-2721
### B.2 Number of Participants That Completed LaTAAP

**Louisiana Teacher Assistance and Assessment Program**

Region 7 Number of Teachers Completing the 1-Year LaTAAP from 1998-99 to end of Fall 2001

<table>
<thead>
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<th>LEA Code</th>
<th>LEA</th>
<th>No of Teachers</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Bienville Parish</td>
<td>35</td>
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<tr>
<td>008</td>
<td>Bossier Parish</td>
<td>234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>009</td>
<td>Caddo Parish</td>
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<td>Claiborne Parish</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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**Louisiana Teacher Assistance and Assessment Program**

Region 7 Number of Teachers Completing the 2-Year LaTAAP from 2001-02 to end of 2006-07

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEA Code</th>
<th>LEA</th>
<th>Number of Teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>007</td>
<td>Bienville Parish</td>
<td>40</td>
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<td>008</td>
<td>Bossier Parish</td>
<td>265</td>
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<td>009</td>
<td>Caddo Parish</td>
<td>650</td>
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<td>014</td>
<td>Claiborne Parish</td>
<td>60</td>
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<td>016</td>
<td>DeSoto Parish</td>
<td>70</td>
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<tr>
<td>041</td>
<td>Red River Parish</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>060</td>
<td>Webster Parish</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>1,213</strong></td>
</tr>
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</table>
APPENDIX C

SURVEY INSTRUMENTS
C.1 QUESTIONNAIRE
Teacher Mentoring Survey

(On Louisiana Teacher Assistance and Assessment Program (LaTAAP)

I. GENERAL INFORMATION and LaTAAP ASSIGNMENT:

1. Do you wish to participate?*
   □ Yes
   □ No

2. Did you enroll in the One or Two-year LaTAAP Program?
   □ One-Year
   □ Two-Year

3. In what school year did you enroll in LaTAAP?

   __________________________________________________________

4. Name of the SCHOOL where you enrolled in LaTAAP?

   __________________________________________________________

5. Name of the SCHOOL to which you are currently assigned?

   __________________________________________________________

6. Which of the following best describes the teaching certificate you held at the time you enrolled in LaTAAP?
   □ Regular or standard state certificate
   □ Provisional certificate
   □ Out of Area/Temporary certificate
   □ Waiver or emergency certificate

7. How do you classify your position at your CURRENT school, that is, the activity at which you spend most of your time during the 2010-2011 school year?
   □ Regular teacher
   □ Itinerant teacher
   □ Administrator (e.g., principal, assistant principal, director)
   □ Library media specialist or librarian
   □ Other professional staff (e.g., counselor, curriculum coach, coordinator, social worker)

8. How many years have you worked as a full-time teacher in the parish school system?

   __________________________________________________________
II. MENTORING: APPRAISAL and PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:

9. Looking back, during my FIRST MONTH of teaching, I was well prepared to do these tasks:

   a. Effectively plan and provide instruction
      Strongly Agree  Agree  Somewhat Agree  Disagree
      Somewhat Disagree

   b. Student discipline and classroom management
      Strongly Agree  Agree  Somewhat Agree  Disagree
      Somewhat Disagree

   c. Use technology in classroom instruction
      Strongly Agree  Agree  Somewhat Agree  Disagree
      Somewhat Disagree

   d. Assess student progress
      Strongly Agree  Agree  Somewhat Agree  Disagree
      Somewhat Disagree

   e. Communicate with parents
      Strongly Agree  Agree  Somewhat Agree  Disagree
      Somewhat Disagree

   f. Implement content standards
      Strongly Agree  Agree  Somewhat Agree  Disagree
      Somewhat Disagree

   g. Teach students with special needs
      Strongly Agree  Agree  Somewhat Agree  Disagree
      Somewhat Disagree

   h. Meet expectations of LaTAAP
      Strongly Agree  Agree  Somewhat Agree  Disagree
      Somewhat Disagree

   i. Adjust to the school and district culture
      Strongly Agree  Agree  Somewhat Agree  Disagree
      Somewhat Disagree

   j. Prepare for LaTAAP Assessment
      Strongly Agree  Agree  Somewhat Agree  Disagree
      Somewhat Disagree
10. During LaTAAP, did you participate in any of the following professional development activities or course work? **MARK ALL THAT APPLY.**
   - Louisiana Components of Effective Teaching
   - University course(s) for professional development
   - University course(s) towards certification
   - Observations of classrooms of certified teachers
   - Workshops
   - Conferences
   - In-Service training for beginning teachers

11. Which professional development activity/coursework was the most helpful to you during your first two years of teaching? **MARK ONLY ONE.**
   - Louisiana Components of Effective Teaching
   - University course(s) for professional development
   - University course(s) towards certification
   - Observations of classrooms of certified teachers
   - Workshops
   - Conferences
   - In-Service training for beginning teachers

12. Were you assigned a mentor during your FIRST year of teaching?
   - Yes
   - No

13. Was your mentor based at your school?
   - Yes
   - No

14. Did your mentor teach the same grade level?
   - Yes
   - No

15. How responsive was your mentor to your needs as a new teacher?
   - Not Responsive
   - Somewhat Responsive
   - Very Responsive

16. How often did your mentor engage in activities and communication(s) with you during your LaTAAP year(s)?
   - Never
   - 1-2 times per Grading Period
   - 3-5 times per Grading Period
   - 6 or more times per Grading Period
17. I received regular supportive communication while enrolled in LaTAAP from:

☐ My principal
☐ Other administrators
☐ Other teachers

18. The following sources of support were available to me during LaTAAP: **MARK ALL THAT APPLY.**

☐ The mentor assigned to me
☐ External Assessor
☐ School Administrators
☐ School-based mentor
☐ Lead Teacher
☐ Other teachers at your school

19. During LaTAAP, how often did your mentor observe you teach and give you feedback on improving your teaching during an average Grading Period?

☐ Never
☐ 1 - 2 times
☐ 3 - 5 times
☐ 6 or more times

20. My mentor provided me with useful strategies and prepared me well to handle these tasks:

   a. Effectively plan and provide instruction
      
      | Strongly Agree | Agree | Somewhat Agree | Disagree | Somewhat Disagree |
      |----------------|-------|----------------|---------|-------------------|

   b. Student discipline and classroom management
      
      | Strongly Agree | Agree | Somewhat Agree | Disagree | Somewhat Disagree |
      |----------------|-------|----------------|---------|-------------------|

   c. Use technology in classroom instruction
      
      | Strongly Agree | Agree | Somewhat Agree | Disagree | Somewhat Disagree |
      |----------------|-------|----------------|---------|-------------------|

   d. Assess student progress
      
      | Strongly Agree | Agree | Somewhat Agree | Disagree | Somewhat Disagree |
      |----------------|-------|----------------|---------|-------------------|

   e. Communicate with parents
      
      | Strongly Agree | Agree | Somewhat Agree | Disagree | Somewhat Disagree |
      |----------------|-------|----------------|---------|-------------------|
f. Implement content standards
   - Strongly Agree
   - Agree
   - Somewhat Agree
   - Disagree
   - Somewhat Disagree

g. Teach students with special needs
   - Strongly Agree
   - Agree
   - Somewhat Agree
   - Disagree
   - Somewhat Disagree

h. Meet expectations of LaTAAP
   - Strongly Agree
   - Agree
   - Somewhat Agree
   - Disagree
   - Somewhat Disagree

i. Adjust to the school and district culture
   - Strongly Agree
   - Agree
   - Somewhat Agree
   - Disagree
   - Somewhat Disagree

j. Prepare for LaTAAP Assessment
   - Strongly Agree
   - Agree
   - Somewhat Agree
   - Disagree
   - Somewhat Disagree

21. Overall, my mentor provided guidance that positively impacted my:

a. Craft Knowledge
   - Strongly Agree
   - Agree
   - Somewhat Agree
   - Disagree
   - Somewhat Disagree

b. Student Achievement
   - Strongly Agree
   - Agree
   - Somewhat Agree
   - Disagree
   - Somewhat Disagree

c. Confidence in the Classroom
   - Strongly Agree
   - Agree
   - Somewhat Agree
   - Disagree
   - Somewhat Disagree

d. Teaching of Test-Taking Skills
   - Strongly Agree
   - Agree
   - Somewhat Agree
   - Disagree
   - Somewhat Disagree

e. Classroom Management Skills
   - Strongly Agree
   - Agree
   - Somewhat Agree
   - Disagree
   - Somewhat Disagree

f. Self-Assessment Skills
   - Strongly Agree
   - Agree
   - Somewhat Agree
   - Disagree
   - Somewhat Disagree
22. The effectiveness of my mentor was instrumental in my decision to stay in teaching.

  Strongly Agree  Agree  Somewhat Agree  Disagree
  Somewhat Disagree

23. The following sources of support were helpful to me during LaTAAP?

  a. Assigned Mentor
     Strongly Agree  Agree  Somewhat Agree  Disagree
     Somewhat Disagree

  b. External Assessor
     Strongly Agree  Agree  Somewhat Agree  Disagree
     Somewhat Disagree

  c. School Administrators
     Strongly Agree  Agree  Somewhat Agree  Disagree
     Somewhat Disagree

  d. School-Based Mentor
     Strongly Agree  Agree  Somewhat Agree  Disagree
     Somewhat Disagree

  e. Lead Teacher
     Strongly Agree  Agree  Somewhat Agree  Disagree
     Somewhat Disagree

  f. Other Teachers at my School
     Strongly Agree  Agree  Somewhat Agree  Disagree
     Somewhat Disagree

24. Overall, I would rate my LaTAAP mentor as:

  Very Effective  Effective  Somewhat Effective  Not Effective

25. If you could go back to your college days and start over again, would you become a teacher or not?

  □ certainly would become a teacher
  □ probably would become a teacher
  □ chances about even for and against
  □ probably would not become a teacher
  □ certainly would not become a teacher
III. BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

26. Please indicate your age at the time you were enrolled in LaTAAP:
   - □ 24-29
   - □ 30-40
   - □ 41-50
   - □ 51-60
   - □ 60+

27. What is your gender?
   - □ Female
   - □ Male

28. What is your ethnic background?
   - □ African-American
   - □ Asian
   - □ Caucasian
   - □ Hispanic
   - □ Native American
   - □ Other
C.2 BOSSIER PARISH SCHOOLS HR MEMO TO PRINCIPALS

From: Myra Odum  
Sent: Wednesday, January 12, 2011 10:53 AM  
To: All-Principals; All-AsstPrincipals  
Cc: Fred Ogunyemi  
Subject: Research Survey of LaTAAP- Please forward to teachers  
Importance: High

Principals,

I have attached a letter about a research project that is evaluating the mentoring experience of LaTAAP participants between 1997 and 2009. The research project is being conducted by Fred Ogunyemi, who is employed with Bossier Parish School Board.

The attached letter explains to the teacher the purpose and the website for survey monkey, where the short survey can be completed. This survey is only for Bossier Parish teachers who were enrolled in LaTAAP between September 1997 and May 2009.

Please forward to your teachers, so only the teachers who were enrolled in LaTAAP during the specific timeframe can choose to participate or not participate.

Thank you for your help with this matter.

Myra Odum  
Director Human Resources  
Bossier Parish School System  
PO Box 2000  
Benton, LA 71006  
318-549-5021  
myra.odum@bossierschools.org
Dear Colleague:

The purpose of this research is to explore the effectiveness of mentoring, which was a significant part of the Louisiana Teacher Assistance and Assessment Program (LaTAAP), in promoting professional development, competency, and commitment to the field of education.

I know that your time is extremely valuable; however, your evaluation of the mentoring experience with LaTAAP is important to the success of this research. There is no right or wrong answer to any of the questions. My research population is Bossier Parish teachers who enrolled in LaTAAP between September 1997 and May 2009.

While your participation in this research is voluntary, your answers will be kept strictly confidential. You cannot and will not be individually identified with your responses. Your answers will be studied in an aggregated form with responses from other professionals like yourself. Use of the data will be limited to this research. My major professor at Louisiana Tech, Dr. Carrice Cummins, and I are the only individuals with access to the data provided through this survey. Should you have any questions regarding this research, please feel free to contact me at (318-549-6798) or Dr. Cummins at (318-257-2676).

Please review SurveyMonkey’s privacy policies prior to completion of the survey. SurveyMonkey may collect information via “cookies” or your IP address while you are responding to the survey.

If you wish to participate in this survey, please access: http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/XDCBF95
Go to the first question and press the “Yes” button to begin. If you do not wish to participate, please indicate so by pressing the “No” button.

Thank you in advance for taking part in this research.

Sincerely,

Fred Ogunyemi
C.3 BOSSIER PARISH SCHOOLS HR MEMO TO PRINCIPALS – 2ND
REQUEST TO PARTICIPATE IN SURVEY

From: Myra Odum
Sent: Wednesday, February 02, 2011 2:26 PM
To: All-Principals; All-Asst. Principals
Cc: Fred Ogunyemi
Subject: FW: Research Survey of LaTAAP- Please forward to teachers
Attachments: SURVEY - COVER LETTER 2010-Revised (2).doc
Importance: High

Principals,

I spoke to Fred Ogunyemi today and the response from the LaTAAP participants in Bossier has only been about 25%. Please encourage your teachers who were new during the years of 1997 to 2009 to complete the survey. The responses must all be received by February 14, 2011.

Thank you for taking time to forward this to your teachers.

Myra Odum

Director Human Resources
Bossier Parish School System
PO Box 2000
Benton, LA 71006
318-549-5021
myra.odum@bossierschools.org
APPENDIX D

SUMMARY of NULL HYPOTHESES
## Summary of Null Hypotheses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Null Hypotheses Statements</th>
<th>Statistical Method</th>
<th>Calculated p-value</th>
<th>Accept/Reject</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>There is no significant relationship between the teacher’s gender and teacher retention.</td>
<td>Mann-Whitney U</td>
<td>.006</td>
<td>Reject</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>There is no significant relationship between the students’ socio-economic status (SES) and teacher retention.</td>
<td>Mann-Whitney U</td>
<td>.140</td>
<td>Accept</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>There is no significant relationship between the teacher’s ethnicity at entry and teacher retention.</td>
<td>Mann-Whitney U</td>
<td>.230</td>
<td>Accept</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>There is no significant relationship between the teacher’s age-bracket and teacher retention.</td>
<td>Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA</td>
<td>.619</td>
<td>Accept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>There is no significant relationship between the teacher’s initial mode of certification and teacher retention.</td>
<td>Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA</td>
<td>.179</td>
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<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>There is no significant relationship between the grade-level taught and teacher retention</td>
<td>Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA</td>
<td>.257</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>There is no significant relationship between the mentor’s assistance and mentee’s competency in teaching students with special needs, before and after mentoring.</td>
<td>Correlated t-Test</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>Reject</td>
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<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>There is no significant relationship between the mentor’s assistance and mentee’s competency in executing content standards, before and after mentoring.</td>
<td>Correlated t-Test</td>
<td>.353</td>
<td>Accept</td>
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<tr>
<td>#</td>
<td>Null Hypotheses Statements</td>
<td>Statistical Method</td>
<td>Calculated p-value</td>
<td>Accept/Reject</td>
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<td>----</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>There is no significant relationship between the duration of mentoring (1-year versus 2-year) and teacher retention.</td>
<td>Mann-Whitney U</td>
<td>.457</td>
<td>Accept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>There is no significant relationship between the mentor’s assistance and mentee’s competency in developing classroom management and student discipline skills, before and after mentoring.</td>
<td>Correlated t-Test</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>Reject</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>There is no significant relationship between the mentor’s assistance and mentee’s competency in planning effective classroom instruction skills, before and after mentoring.</td>
<td>Correlated t-Test</td>
<td>.058</td>
<td>Accept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>There is no significant relationship between the mentor’s assistance and mentee’s competency in communicating school and district culture, before and after mentoring.</td>
<td>Correlated t-Test</td>
<td>.040</td>
<td>Reject</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>There is no significant relationship between the mentor’s assistance and mentee’s competency in communicating with parents, before and after mentoring.</td>
<td>Correlated t-Test</td>
<td>.898</td>
<td>Accept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>There is no significant relationship between the mentor’s assistance and mentee’s competency in assessing student progress, before and after mentoring.</td>
<td>Correlated t-Test</td>
<td>.610</td>
<td>Accept</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX E

VITA
Ogunyemi attended Wake Forest University in Winston Salem, North Carolina, where he received a Bachelor of Arts, Cum Laude. He worked in product research before enrolling at the University of Louisiana at Monroe (formerly Northeast Louisiana University). He earned a Master’s degree in Business Administration. He, thereafter, worked as an auditor (business and governmental). Ogunyemi currently works in the Child Welfare and Attendance department for the Bossier Parish School System in Benton, LA. He will receive a Doctorate of Educational Leadership from the Louisiana Education Consortium (Grambling State University, Louisiana Tech University, and the University of Louisiana at Monroe) in 2013. Ogunyemi is an Episcopalian. He attends the Church of The Holy Cross parish in Shreveport, Louisiana.