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PEER INVOLVEMENT IN TEACHER EVALUATION: A MULTIPLE CASE STUDY

A DISSERTATION

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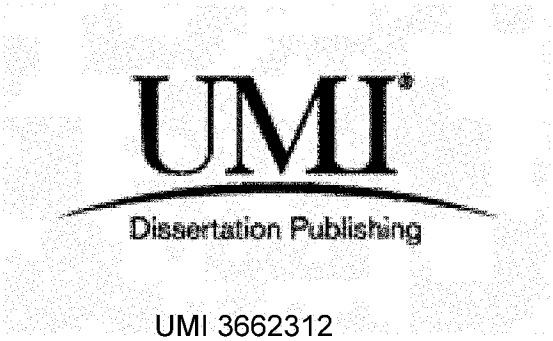

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ABSTRACT

Traditional teacher evaluation procedures involve the school leader providing feedback in a summative form to the classroom teacher (Tuytens & Devos, 2011). The function of the administrator to be both supervisor and evaluator is a contrasting role. There are four main purposes of teacher evaluation: improvement, accountability, staff development, and personnel decisions (Darling-Hammond, Wise, & Pease, 1983; Tuytens & Devos, 2011). Administrators are already constrained for time and resources. Therefore, fulfilling all four purposes through the current evaluation process in California is becoming increasingly difficult.

Using peers in the evaluation process is an alternative evaluation method being explored across the country, specifically in the form of Peer Assistance and Review (PAR; Goldstein, 2004; Matula, 2011; Weems & Rogers, 2010). The problem this research addressed was the efficacy of teacher evaluation systems and how evaluative practice can be improved from the perspectives of principals and Consulting Teachers (CTs) with experience in the PAR program.

The study found principals and CTs had mixed reactions regarding the inclusion of PAR as a multiple measure for teacher evaluation. All participants' perceptions of the role of the CT included the common language of supporter, helper, coach, and mentor, which matched the PAR documents from each district. The data showed that subjectivity, fear, and lack of time, negatively

impacted the traditional teacher evaluation process and that involving peers in the process could be beneficial.

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To my loving and supportive family, especially my father, John, and my daughters, Mina and Kaia

and

To my amazing husband, Matthew, without whom this would not have been possible

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter is an introduction to and overview of the dissertation. The chapter begins with the background of the problem, including recent teacher evaluation policies, problems with traditional evaluation methods, and alternative methods of evaluation, focusing on Peer Assistance Review (PAR). The problem statement, the purpose of the research, and an explanation of the study's significance, the research questions, the definition of terms, and the limitations of the study follow the background of the problem. The chapter concludes with an overview of the study.

Background of the Problem

Traditional evaluation procedures involve the school leader providing feedback in a summative form to the classroom teacher (Tuytens & Devos, 2011). Although the teacher evaluation process was designed to be formative, research shows it is often summative. Summative evaluation is used to ensure the quality of the teacher in order to "license, hire, give tenure to, promote, denote, or dismiss teachers" (Namaghi, 2010, p. 1504). The traditional evaluation process entails the principal supervising and evaluating teachers, to ensure that the goals of the school are being met through the required curriculum (Range, Scherz, Holt, & Young, 2011), and writing reports "based on one or two classroom visits using a checklist, rating form, or anecdotal record" (Peterson,

2004, p. 60). This process also includes formulating goals in a preconference setting and reviewing those goals following the observation. The evaluation process described here follows regulations set forth through collective bargaining in the State of California.

In the State of California in 1995, it was agreed upon through collective bargaining that tenured teachers are to be evaluated every 5 years. Nontenured teachers are to be evaluated every year until they reach the point of tenure (California Educ. Code § 44664 (a)(3)). In most cases, collective bargaining agreements include the stipulation that a principal or other administrator will perform the rating of each evaluated teacher (Jacob & Walsh, 2011). These agreements between unions and school districts establish the specific procedures of the evaluation process. The establishment of evaluation procedures in collective bargaining agreements was originally designed to protect teachers from subjective evaluations by administrators. However, these procedures have become a way for the teacher to "perform" to the evaluator's expectations (Hazi & Rucinski, 2009). It is a contradiction for an administrator to function as both supervisor and evaluator, especially because of the legal requirement for using evaluation in formal due process dismissal procedures (Darling-Hammond, Wise, & Pease, 1983; Hazi & Rucinski, 2009; Peterson, 2004).

There are four main goals of teacher evaluation: improvement, accountability, staff development, and personnel decisions (Darling-Hammond et al., 1983; Taut, Santelices, Araya & Manzi, 2010; Tuytens & Devos, 2011;

Weems & Rogers, 2010). The traditional evaluation system leaves all four of these goals in the hands of the administrator. Administrators are already constrained for time and resources; therefore, achieving all four goals through the current evaluation process in California is increasingly difficult (Darling-Hammond et al., 1983). In order for students to succeed and to meet the standards set forth in the No Child Left Behind (NCLB; 2002) piece of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA; 1965), teachers must be effective in the classroom. The practice of traditional teacher evaluation is most often summative and subjective in nature and does not improve the effectiveness of teachers (Darling-Hammond et al., 1983; Tuytens & Devos, 2011; Range et al., 2011).

Research shows that principals express frustrations with the traditional evaluation system due to lack of time, dissatisfaction with the evaluation instrument, and the poor reception of feedback by teachers (Darling-Hammond et al., 1983; Namaghi, 2010; Ramirez, Lamphere, Smith, Brown, & Pierceall-Herman, 2011; Range et al., 2011). Principals often lack the time to effectively perform the roles of both supervisor and evaluator, which leads to summative evaluations of teacher performance that can be based on insufficient data. Studies found that most evaluation instruments are not current, do not contain a comprehensive scope of information, and employ ratings that do not effectively improve teacher skills (Darling-Hammond et al., 1983; Namaghi, 2010; Ramirez et al., 2011; Range et al., 2011). Teachers often react poorly to feedback from administrators because they view the administrator solely as an evaluator. Poor

reception of feedback leads to a lack of further professional development or improvement in teaching practice (Tuytens & Devos, 2011).

Since the passage of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) in 2001, America's public school teachers have been under increased pressure to perform (Weems & Rogers, 2010). Teacher evaluation is an important part of this legislation, and has become a hotly debated topic nationwide. The NCLB has instituted the requirement that teachers be highly qualified, meaning credentialed and achieving satisfactory evaluation scores. Therefore, each state has implemented policy procedures intended to achieve these goals (Hazi & Rucinski, 2009). The design of Race to the Top (RTTT; American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, 2009) a federal funding incentive policy, was based on the assumption that the effectiveness of teachers is measured by student growth on test scores and by teacher evaluations. This legislation established the link between teacher evaluation and teacher effectiveness (Silva, 2011).

School districts are currently considering alternative methods of evaluation, including the use of multiple measures in evaluating the effectiveness of the classroom teacher (Hazi & Rucinski, 2009; Namaghi, 2010; New Teacher Project, 2010). These multiple measures could include classroom observations, student-learning measures, portfolios, and student and parent feedback. The assumption underlying these changes is that they would give a better picture of a teacher's effectiveness in the classroom than does the traditional evaluation process.

Using peers in the evaluation process is another alternative evaluation method being explored across the country, specifically in the form of Peer Assistance and Review (PAR). One of the aspects of the PAR legislation passed in California in 1999 (California Educ. Code § 44500-44508) is that each teacher who receives an unsatisfactory evaluation from his or her administrator has the opportunity to improve through a peer-coaching model. The use of peers in evaluations allows for the support and enhancement of classroom instruction and an increase in the collaborative nature of the profession of teaching. Although it is not commonly used, PAR may be a way to increase the effectiveness of teachers where traditional evaluation methods fall short (Goldstein, 2004; Matula, 2011; Silva, 2011; Weems & Rogers, 2010).

Problem Statement

The problem this study addresses is the efficacy of teacher evaluation systems and how evaluative practice can be improved from the perspectives of principals and CTs with experience in the PAR program. This study will explore the perspectives of principals and teachers who participated in the PAR program.

Deficiencies in the literature include a minimal amount of empirical studies regarding peer evaluation through PAR as a supplement to or replacement for traditional teacher evaluation methods. There is also a need to explore the experiences of CTs and administrators to compare their perspectives on the teacher evaluation process.

The problems with traditional evaluations include possible inflated ratings, limited feedback for improvement, scant professional development alignment

with goals, and reluctance of administrators to assume responsibility for negative evaluations (Range et al., 2011; Tuytens & Devos, 2011). These problems may harm the education profession in general, causing principal and teacher burnout, greater teacher turnover due to lack of support, tenure status granted to ineffective teachers, and adversarial relationships between administrators and teachers (Peterson, 2004).

Purpose Statement

This study examines CTs' and administrators' experiences with both traditional evaluation processes and PAR. A study of the ways peer evaluators may affect evaluation systems is important for several reasons. First, understanding the perspective of teachers can help district administrators and teachers' association members consider the methods being used for teacher evaluation. Second, personnel and professional development decisions based on teacher evaluation have implications nationwide. Third, researchers have studied each method of teacher evaluation separately, but their findings have not included a comparison of peer evaluators' and administrators' perspectives on teacher evaluation processes. The purpose of this multiple case study was to explore how teacher evaluation is affected by the involvement of peer evaluators in three Southern California school districts from the perspectives of principals and CTs with experience in the PAR program. Based on the findings, recommendations were made regarding improving evaluation practices.

Research Questions

The following three research questions guided this multiple case study:

1. What are principals' and CTs' perspectives with regard to the inclusion of PAR as a multiple measure for teacher evaluation?
2. How do CTs, principals, and districts perceive the role of the CT in the PAR program?
3. What do CTs and principals see as the benefits of and drawbacks to traditional teacher evaluation as compared with incorporating PAR into the process?

Significance

This research is important and will make a significant contribution to educational leadership because national legislation (ESEA and RTTT) regarding educational accountability emphasizes the importance of effective teachers in the classroom. Therefore, teacher evaluation remains a topic of significance. This study contributes to the theory associated with peer evaluation that involvement of peers in the evaluation process will positively impact the evaluation system. The findings address (a) whether or not peer evaluators influence the professional development of teachers; (b) if they do, in what way; and (c) whether or not changes occurred that improved teacher effectiveness. A significant problem in the research regarding peer evaluators is a dominant belief that involving peers in the evaluation process will promote fear among teachers and an unwillingness to be transparent (Eisenbach & Curry, 1999). The findings of this study also contribute to the discussion regarding whether peers and administrators can work side by side to evaluate teachers, and if so, in what capacity.

The findings of this study can add to a national conversation about the understanding of PAR processes by teachers' unions. Unions can use the findings to further the discussion about how peer evaluators can affect the experience of teachers within the evaluation process. Districts can understand how best to support CTs in their role, while school sites can explore the role of peer evaluators within individual school contexts.

This study adds to the scant body of literature addressing the PAR program, especially the perceptions and experiences of CTs and administrators in Southern California. The literature on PAR contributes to understanding by union and district leaders, administrators, the PAR panel, CTs (particularly new CTs), and teachers in general. This study hopes to build trust in the PAR process by clarifying what the process entails.

Scope of the Study

This study will consider participants with experience in the PAR program: both CTs and administrators in charge of evaluation. The study does include some assumptions on my part as researcher, purposeful delimitations, and limitations beyond my control.

Assumptions of the Study

I have assumed participants spoke candidly in the interview process and were truthful with regard to their experiences in the PAR program. I have also assumed that multiple measures of evaluation, including the use of peers as evaluators, could contribute to the increased effectiveness of classroom teachers.

Study Delimitations

This study was purposefully conducted in Los Angeles and Orange County, California, in PAR districts at the kindergarten through 12th-grade level. Administrators and CTs were the only participants included. Participating Teachers (PTs) were not included due to the sensitivity and confidentiality of the topic.

Study Limitations

There were only six individual perceptions included in this study. Therefore, the findings cannot be generalized. I could not control the degree to which the participants were open and honest about their perceptions. Another limitation was the degree to which the interview instrument was valid and reliable.

Definitions of Key Terms

Consulting Teacher (CT). CT refers to master or expert teachers in the PAR program.

Multiple measures, Multiple measures of data are used to determine teacher effectiveness, such as student growth, classroom observation, artifacts, and multiple evaluators (Looney, 2011).

No Child Left Behind. The No Child Left Behind Act refers to national education legislation as part of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965 that mandates an effective teacher in every classroom (Department of Education, 2002).

PAR panel. PAR panel refers to a group of union members (teachers and union leaders) and district and site administrators to whom the CTs report and

who are responsible for recommendations regarding personnel decisions for the PTs.

Participating Teacher (PT). PT refers to teachers that the CTs support.

Peer Assistance Review (PAR). PAR refers to a joint endeavor by a school district and its teachers union to focus resources on the comprehensive support, development, and assessment of teachers (California Educ. Code § 44500-44508).

Probationary status. A teacher who does not have a permanent contract and can be terminated at any time has been assigned probationary status.

Race to the Top (RTTT). The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA), Section 14005-6, Title XIV, (Public Law 111-5) is a national policy stating that the effectiveness of teachers is measured by student growth on test scores and observation in evaluations which established the link between teacher evaluation and teacher effectiveness.

Tenured status. A teacher who has been granted a contract of permanent status in a district and is protected by the teachers' union has achieved tenured status.

Traditional teacher evaluation. In the performance of a traditional teacher evaluation, an administrator or supervisor conducts a number of observations and determine a rating for teacher effectiveness (Jacob, 2011; Jacob & Walsh, 2011; Namaghi, 2010; Strong, Gargani, & Hacifazlioglu, 2011).

Organization of the Dissertation

Chapter 1 introduces the problem statement and research questions, discusses the significance and scope of the study, and provides definitions for relevant terms. Chapter 2 presents a critical review of the literature pertaining to the research questions. Chapter 3 contains the research design, including data collection and analysis methods. Chapter 4 presents the analysis of the data. Chapter 5 discusses the findings of the research.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The problem that this study addresses is the efficacy of teacher evaluation systems and how evaluative practice can be improved from the perspectives of principals and CTs with experience in the PAR program. This study will explore the perspectives of principals and teachers who participated in the PAR program. The purpose of this multiple case study was to explore how teacher evaluation is affected by the involvement of peer evaluators in three Southern California school districts from the perspectives of principals and CTs with experience in the PAR program.

Chapter 2 is divided into two parts. At the beginning of this chapter, I review the philosophical and theoretical foundations of this study. Next, I provide an extensive review of the empirical research related to the dissertation topic. I conclude with a chapter summary.

Philosophical Foundation

This study is framed in a social constructivist worldview. People use experiences to gain knowledge and that knowledge is constructed from individuals' perspectives of their natural and cultural environment (Ultanir, 2012).

"Social constructivists hold assumptions that individuals seek understanding of the world in which they live and work. . . .The goal of the research is to rely as much as possible on the participants' views of the situation

being studied" (Creswell, 2007, p. 8). The purpose of this study was to explore perspectives of CTs through a social constructivist lens to discover their ideas and experiences with teacher evaluation in the PAR program.

Social constructivist theory assumes people develop meaning from their experiences with the world. In the world of public education, a specific culture exists and within that culture are social constructs. Evaluation is one of these constructs, and people involved in making evaluative decisions create meaning of what effective teaching means based on their experiences in the evaluation process.

Another assumption of the social constructivist worldview is "humans engage with their world and make sense of it based on their historical and social perspectives – we are all born into a world of meaning bestowed upon us by our culture" (Creswell, 2009, p. 8). The public school system has a deeply ingrained culture, which includes how teachers are evaluated. Historically, administrators are the sole evaluators of teachers (Darling-Hammond et al., 1983). Administrators are viewed as judges of effective teaching and teachers are expected to fit the administrator's view of what constitutes an effective teacher. Alternative methods of teacher evaluation are often discouraged. Currently, including peers in the evaluation process is controversial.

Finally, constructivists believe social interaction is key to building meaning (Ultanir, 2012). Through interactive experiences, teachers and administrators determine what effective teaching means to them. Teaching is a social process, involving daily formal and informal human interaction. Relationships are

important and affect perspectives in diverse ways. Because of the tremendous amount of social interaction inherent in teaching, evaluation is highly personal. My research will include the social side of the evaluation issue, focusing on teachers evaluating other teachers in the PAR program.

Review of the Scholarly Empirical Literature

This study is grounded in a conceptual framework of four major areas of research literature around the topic of teacher evaluation.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study is drawn from four bodies of literature: (a) traditional teacher evaluation methods, (b) problems with traditional evaluation methods, (c) alternative methods of evaluation, and (d) PAR evaluations. The review of relevant literature begins with an overview of teacher evaluation and its purpose. The second section addresses the literature that identifies the issues with the current evaluation system. A third section of the review of the literature provides an overview of the research literature on alternative evaluation methods. The fourth section explores the PAR program as a specific alternate to traditional teacher evaluation methods.

Traditional Teacher Evaluation Methods

There are four main purposes of teacher evaluation: "improvement, accountability, staff development, and personnel decisions" (Darling-Hammond et al., 1983, p. 302). Teacher evaluation is directly linked to state education policy. In 1983, *A Nation at Risk* was published, a landmark national report by the National Commission on Excellence in Education that was a catalyst for

educational change. Focus shifted from local control to state control for the responsibility of ensuring quality teachers, and states began to implement requirements for teacher evaluation in response to national education reports. These requirements included guidelines for evaluation instruments, evaluator training, and criteria checklists. The evaluation procedure in most states was negotiated through collective bargaining, which allowed teachers and teacher unions to feel protected and participative in the evaluation process (Hazi & Rucinski, 2009).

Collective bargaining. Stemming from the National Labor Relations Act of 1935, a majority of states require bargaining between school districts and teachers unions on a variety of issues (Hazi & Rucinski, 2009). Issues subject to collective bargaining include evaluation procedures and forms, tenure, and dismissal procedures.

In California, the Public School Employee Relations Act (1975) provided terms of collective bargaining between public schools and union representatives, including conditions of teacher employment. Teacher status is determined through the evaluation process. Teachers are classified as either probationary or tenured, and their evaluation cycles are determined from there. Probationary status means the teacher has a probationary contract and can be terminated at any time. Probationary terms are important because they determine whether or not the teacher is redesignated to tenured status within the district. If they are not made permanent, they are not rehired.

Although California law states that tenured teachers may be dismissed for incompetency (Teachers' rights. (n.d.), dismissal of tenured teachers can be extremely difficult. Often, tenured teachers being considered for dismissal are put on paid leave while waiting for a hearing, costing districts thousands of wasted dollars. Although incompetency is most often determined through administrator evaluations, PAR CTs' records can also be submitted to court for the dismissal hearing (Matula, 2011). The evaluation process is subject to grievance procedures as dictated by collective bargaining, meaning a complaint of violation of the contract can be brought to court (Matula, 2011). Bargaining can create an adversarial relationship between district and union leaders due to the sensitive nature of bargaining subjects, especially in teacher dismissal and evaluation.

Accountability policy. Hazi and Rucinski (2009) and Silva (2011) have discussed the impact that NCLB and RTTT legislation have had on teacher evaluation. NCLB and RTTT both mandate that teachers must be "'highly qualified' to ensure that all students learn and demonstrate academic proficiency" (Silva, 2011, p. 42). NCLB defines highly qualified teachers in terms of input, including proper training and certification. However, there is currently a shift to considering output in defining highly qualified teachers in RTTT, including standardized test scores and student portfolios (Hazi & Rucinski, 2009). Teacher evaluation is now used to meet the mandates in the laws requiring a highly qualified teacher in every classroom in order to improve student learning. States have determined teacher evaluation is a major target in educational policy. With

the reauthorization of the NCLB policy pending, continued emphasis on highly qualified teacher evaluation is expected (Hazi & Rucinski, 2009).

Traditional teacher evaluation typically involves an administrator or supervisor conducting a number of observations and determining a rating for teacher effectiveness (Jacob, 2011; Jacob & Walsh, 2011; Namaghi, 2010; Strong et al., 2011). Research has addressed many issues impacting traditional evaluation procedures, including the subjectivity of teacher ratings (Jacob & Walsh, 2011; Namaghi, 2010; Tuytens & Devos, 2011), the limited amount of time to conduct evaluations (Jacob & Walsh, 2011; Namaghi, 2010; Ramirez et al., 2011; Range et al., 2011; Tuytens & Devos, 2011), a failure to link evaluation with targeted professional development (The New Teacher Project, 2010; Ramirez et al., 2011; Tuytens & Devos, 2011), the reluctance of evaluators to assume responsibility for their evaluations (Conley & Glasman, 2008; Jacob, 2011; Tuytens & Devos, 2011), and faulty evaluation tools (Namaghi, 2010; The New Teacher Project, 2010; Ramirez et al., 2011; Range et al., 2011).

Problems with Traditional Evaluation Methods

While the traditional teacher evaluation process was intended to be formative, in actuality it is highly summative, where ratings are high stakes and used for teacher dismissal and remediation (Matula, 2011). These summative ratings hold high consequences due to the new accountability measures teachers are responsible for in the current educational policy climate.

Subjectivity of teacher ratings. Traditional evaluation methods are subjective by nature. One person evaluating another can lead to

recommendations based on an individual opinion. In a study of 27,886 teacher evaluation documents, Jacob and Walsh (2011) found frequency of principal observations and ratings of teachers did not follow language negotiated in the bargaining agreement. In a separate study, Jacob and Walsh found that principals did not evaluate teachers as often as was specified in the teacher contract. Teacher ratings increased in conjunction with years of experience up through the first 10 years of teaching, then declined after 10 years. Therefore ratings of first-year teachers paralleled those of teachers with more than 10 years of experience. The majority of teachers in the Jacob and Walsh (2011) study were rated as excellent; however, the excellence ratings did not seem to relate to observable instructional characteristics of the teachers. Instead, ratings correlated with education credentials, years of experience, and attendance at work. Teachers in higher performing schools also tended to receive higher ratings. The study found that when one administrator or supervisor evaluates teachers, the ratings are subject to the opinion of that one person, one of the major flaws in the current traditional evaluation system (Jacob & Walsh, 2011).

Limited amount of evaluation time. There are overwhelming demands placed on administrators in the current public education system. One of their most important responsibilities is to evaluate teachers to determine their effectiveness in the classroom. However, evaluation is often given low priority due to the large number of tasks accorded administrators in a small amount of time (Ramirez et al., 2011; Range et al., 2011; The New Teacher Project, 2010).

The New Teacher Project (2010) published a guide based on research that proposed six standards for teacher evaluation design and implementation. The report stated that evaluation results should form the foundation of teacher development and recommended that tenured teachers be evaluated at least annually. Evaluations should also include frequent observation and corrective feedback. These recommendations stemmed from the current evaluation system, where veteran teachers are evaluated once every 5 years and administrators spend a limited amount of time in classrooms. This, along with the infrequency of the evaluation cycle, poses serious problems in the traditional teacher evaluation model (The New Teacher Project, 2010).

Ramirez et al. (2011) conducted a quantitative study to explore the relationship between policy and practice in teacher evaluation. Their participants were 30 Colorado districts serving kindergarten through 12th grade. Participants reported that the minimal amount of time spent on the evaluation process rendered it meaningless. Administrators were overwhelmed by all of their responsibilities, including teacher evaluations. Evaluations were conducted in a rote way unrelated to context, using a checklist to determine ratings.

Range et al. (2011) conducted a quantitative study of 143 principals in Wyoming with an average of 10.95 years of experience. The authors wanted to examine the beliefs and actions of Wyoming principals and their role in supervising, evaluating, and improving teacher practice. Findings indicated that one of the principals' greatest frustrations with the evaluation process was lack of time.

Validity of teacher ratings. Validity exists when operational instruments measure what they are intended to measure (Yin, 2009). Instruments used in teacher evaluation processes are supposed to measure teacher effectiveness. Jacob and Walsh (2011) analyzed administrative data from a sample of all teachers in the Chicago Public Schools (CPS) system from 2002-2003 to 2005-2006 school years (27,886 CPS teachers) to examine "the relationship between the formal ratings that principals give teachers and a variety of observable teacher characteristics" (p. 434). Teachers that worked in high-performing schools tended to receive higher ratings by their administrators (Jacob & Walsh, 2011). In a separate study of 16,246 elementary and 7,764 high school teachers in CPS, Jacob (2011) found that even when evaluation findings were similar, less experienced teachers were more likely to be dismissed than tenured teachers, and bias in dismissals existed in terms of gender, race, and age. The researcher posited that the results from the Chicago study mirrored results from most large districts in the rating system used. A majority of teachers were given satisfactory ratings, perhaps due to the reluctance of principals to dismiss them. The findings of these large-scale studies speak to the issue of the validity of the evaluation process. The evaluation of teachers seemed to be unrelated to the purposes of evaluation.

In a grounded theory study of 12 probationary and tenured practitioners, Namaghi's (2010) findings supported the charge of subjectivity in that ratings tended to be affected by time of year and time of day they were conducted. These factors should have no influence on the determination of teacher

effectiveness and add to the evidence that evaluation tends to be subjective. The study of evaluation data of 30 grade 4 teachers by Strong et al. (2011) found that evaluation of teachers was affected by teacher confidence, energy, sense of humor, and engaging personality. Instruction and student engagement were secondary factors in evaluation.

Link to professional development. One purported focus of teacher evaluation is teacher improvement through targeted professional development. However, in a study of evaluation data from 30 Colorado school districts, Ramirez et al. (2011) found that teacher evaluation processes did not result in teacher development. The study stated that traditional evaluation processes do not lead to teaching skill improvement. Part of the issue is the summative nature of administrator-led evaluation. To promote professional growth, evaluation needs a formative element as well. For example, teachers should be given short-term goals for improvement and support to make changes in practice. Professional growth opportunities should be given often and with purpose, individualized for the needs of the teachers.

According to Tuytens and Devos (2011) teachers are ostensibly evaluated to determine professional development needs and to ensure teacher quality and effectiveness. Tuytens and Devos conducted a survey of 414 secondary teachers to measure on a Likert scale their perceptions of the supervisory and evaluative process. They reported most teachers found feedback from their supervisor helpful, but this feedback did not result in professional development (Tuytens & Devos, 2011).

Although most of the research literature found problems with the traditional evaluation process, Tuytens and Devos (2011) conducted a quantitative study of 414 secondary teachers and reported that teachers do receive professional learning activities linked to feedback from administrator evaluations. The data from this study indicated that a majority of teachers perceived school leader feedback as useful. However, the findings showed a link between teachers' positive interpretations of evaluation feedback and the amount of supervision afforded them, the perception of the charisma of the leader, and the perceived content knowledge of the evaluator. The evidence from this study contradicted most of the literature, but it also supported the idea that social perception is involved in evaluation, even though it is designed to be an objective and purposeful process.

Reluctance of evaluators to take responsibility for decisions. Conley and Glasman (2008) discussed the element of fear and reluctance involved in the evaluation process on the part of the teachers, but also on the part of the administrators. The authors suggested administrators may feel the weight of evaluation is too great to bear, leading to inflated teacher scores. Because the evaluation process does not result in any significant change, its merit is diminished in the eyes of teachers and administrators (Conley & Glasman, 2008).

Silva (2011) examined literature regarding teacher evaluation systems in low-income, minority-dominated schools. The author stated that principals and administrators often receive minimal to no training in conducting teacher evaluations, negatively affecting their confidence in their ratings. As a result,

principals rarely gave teachers negative evaluations in order to avoid conflict. Peterson (2004) reinforced this concept in his literature review on teacher evaluation systems. When researching educators' views and roles in teacher evaluation, he found that dealing with bad teachers was crushing to the morale and effectiveness of many principals. Therefore, principals found it difficult to give negative ratings.

Faulty evaluation tools. The New Teacher Project (2010) posited that current evaluation systems are unfocused, while Ramirez et al. (2011) found that district policy utilizes narrowly defined terms and checklists to determine teacher effectiveness. Range et al. (2011) took this a step further, stating that "most evaluation instruments are outdated, lack proper breadth, and do not provide meaningful, constructive feedback" (p. 258).

Namaghi (2010) added that evaluation tools are too general, with too many items included in each category. Specifically, the tool used in current teacher evaluation systems reduces effective teaching to a simplistic checklist in a one-size-fits-all way. Just as teachers are expected to differentiate classroom instruction and determine student goals based on need, so should administrators base evaluation on the same determining factors. The author suggested administrators should consider teachers' background and experience, as well as professional development opportunities they have had, in the evaluation process.

Issues with traditional teacher evaluation seem to be related in a cyclical nature because administrators do not have enough time to spend in classrooms, the tool they use is faulty, and they have a fear of giving an unsatisfactory

evaluation. This leads to an evaluation that is devoid of meaning and professional development opportunities.

Alternative Methods of Evaluation

The research literature indicates alternatives to traditional evaluation methods could include multiple measures (Donaldson & Donaldson, 2012; Looney, 2011; Matula, 2011; Silva, 2011; Sullivan & Glanz, 2000; Weems & Rogers, 2010), peer review, monitoring, and mentoring (Bernstein, 2008; Peterson, Kelly, & Caskey, 2002; Sullivan & Glanz, 2000; Van Zant, Razska, & Kutzner, 2001; Weems & Rogers, 2010), peer coaching (Black, Molseed, & Sayler, 2003; Eisenbach & Curry, 1999), and action research (Sullivan & Glanz, 2000). These studies showed that alternative methods of evaluation and support for teachers can lead to improved teacher effectiveness, especially in areas where traditional evaluation falls short, such as time spent on evaluation, clarity of methods and tools, and support for improvement.

Multiple measures of evaluation. Matula (2011), a former superintendent in the state of Illinois, conducted a mixed methods study of 40 school districts in Illinois to discover views on teacher evaluation. The study found through interviews and document collection that utilizing multiple data sources to evaluate teachers presented a more complete and fair picture of a teacher's performance. The study's recommendations include basing evaluation ratings on student growth, classroom observation, artifacts, and multiple evaluators.

Looney (2011) supported increased clarity in evaluation tools used, and multiple measures of data to determine teacher effectiveness. Looney (2011) provided an overview of research on teacher evaluation for improvement and suggested directions for policy and research to strengthen teacher evaluation systems. One suggestion from the research was for evaluations to include peer and supervisor ratings, student ratings, school-level evaluations, and measures of student outcomes.

One measure proposed as a multiple measure for teacher evaluation is the use of a portfolio. Portfolios can be utilized for different purposes and can include a variety of items, depending upon the objective. Examples of portfolio use include: the development of best instructional practices, self-reflection and analysis, teacher resources, professional articles, and communication between peers and/or administration (Sullivan & Glanz, 2000). This last item can serve as a valuable tool for feedback in the evaluation of teachers. Rather than limiting feedback to one observation in a classroom, portfolios can serve as an ongoing discussion around effective classroom teaching. Sullivan and Glanz (2000) found in a case study of administrators in the New York and New Jersey areas, that portfolios offered a powerful aid to collaboration and conversation around best practices between administration and teachers.

Donaldson and Donaldson (2012) authored an article on strengthening teacher evaluation systems aimed toward district leaders. The authors suggested to include teachers in designing performance evaluation systems, a notion echoed by Matula (2011) and Looney (2011). Involving teachers in the evaluation

process is a recurring theme in the literature on improving teacher evaluation. However, the degree of teacher involvement varies across studies.

Peer review, monitoring, and mentoring. Bernstein (2008) defined peer review as "peer interaction that provided expert feedback to colleagues on the content and goals of a course, the design and delivery of course activities and assignments, and the quality of student work generated" (p. 49). Peer review can serve as targeted professional development in the evaluation process, a major purpose of evaluation. One aspect of peer review is peer monitoring, where teacher opinion provides a balance or counterpoint to administrator opinion of teacher effectiveness. Involving peers in the supervisory side of teacher evaluation processes can overcome the obstacle of lack of administrator time and confidence (Peterson et al., 2003).

Weems and Rogers (2010) have proposed a framework for teacher evaluation and professional growth based on peer review, peer monitoring, and supported instruction, especially for new teachers. The authors posited that peer review allows teachers to improve in their instructional techniques and reinforces excellence in the profession.

An article on peer review and monitoring by Van Zant et al. (2001) stated that evaluation and support should be tailored to meet the individual needs of teachers. Teachers who are lacking skill or experience in certain areas of instruction are seen as having a need. Teachers are specialized by nature, and can offer individualized professional development for faculty according to these gaps in knowledge or experience. Involving teachers in the evaluation process,

whether as mentor, reviewer, or contributor, increases their personal view of themselves as professionals. Another step on the continuum of peer involvement in teacher evaluation is peer coaching.

Sullivan and Glanz (2000) conducted a case study of several schools in New York and New Jersey, interviewing principals and assistant principals on alternative methods of evaluation. The researchers defined one method, peer mentoring, as "a process that facilitates instructional improvement wherein an experienced educator agrees to provide assistance, support, and recommendations to another staff member or faculty member" (Sullivan & Glanz, 2000, p. 217). The study found mentoring was successful in achieving the goals of teacher evaluation, particularly improved teacher effectiveness. Although mentoring is not an evaluative procedure in current practice, it could be used as a viable contribution to alternative methods of teacher evaluation in the future.

Peer coaching. Black et al. (2003) interviewed four middle school math teachers in South Dakota to describe their experience in the peer-coaching model. The teachers reported the professional dialogue that developed allowed for discussion of teaching issues not normally discussed in the daily interactions of peers in a school setting. New insights into practice were discovered that positively impacted student behavior and learning and resulted in changes to teaching styles.

Silva (2011) took the concept of peer coaching further, discussing a distributed leadership model for teacher evaluations in which teachers and administrators serve as evaluators. The author suggested that the ability to

monitor their own profession increases teachers' expectations for one another. Teaching is traditionally behind closed doors in an individual classroom setting. Peers do not usually provide instructional support through observation or feedback to their colleagues. Peer coaching is a concept being explored in the literature as a possible springboard into the distribution of instructional leadership in the evaluation model.

Peer Assistance and Review (PAR)

PAR programs look different across states and districts. Originated in 1981 in Toledo, Ohio, the PAR program was created by Dal Lawrence, then-president of the Toledo Federation of Teachers, to improve the teacher evaluation system in that city (Sawchuk, 2009). Teachers were utilized as supporters and evaluators of other teachers. The three school districts in urban cities that implemented the PAR program in Ohio showed the most success on standardized tests in the state in 1999 (California State University Institute for Education Reform, 2000).

The original system created in Toledo involved teachers as evaluators. Currently, however, PAR programs look different nationwide. Some PAR programs are used for teacher assistance without evaluation, some serve veteran teachers who struggle, while others are for beginning teachers. For the purpose of this study, the focus will be on PAR programs where teachers are evaluating other teachers, a major shift away from traditional administrator evaluation processes.

PAR differs from traditional evaluation. Goldstein (2007b) conducted a case study of an urban California district that described key differences of teacher evaluation in PAR. The study found six key factors that separated PAR as a unique evaluation process: (a) the amount of time spent on evaluation, (b) professional development opportunities resulting from evaluation procedures, (c) transparency of the evaluation process, (d) the nature of labor relations, (e) confidence levels in personnel decision-making, and (f) degree of accountability.

Numerous studies speak to the issue of insufficient time administrators spend evaluating teachers (The New Teacher Project, 2010; Ramirez et al., 2011; Range et al., 2011). Research identified one of the main reasons for the lack of evaluation time is the overwhelming number of responsibilities given to administrators. Because administrators are so overwhelmed with all of the expectations placed on them, evaluation does not receive the time and attention it deserves. Some models of PAR offer a solution to this issue in that CTs are released full time to focus on their PT caseload. Therefore, teacher support and evaluation becomes their only job, and they are able to perform evaluation in a thorough way.

One purpose of teacher evaluation is to provide targeted professional development. Targeted professional development is training and coaching that is directly related to a teacher's gaps in knowledge and/or experience. Traditional evaluation methods offer a binary rating—a choice of satisfactory or unsatisfactory—and most teachers fall under the general category of satisfactory. These ratings determine personnel decisions. Teachers are retained or given

suggested measures to improve performance. PAR offers a solution to this issue in that CTs offer formative on-going assessments and have the expertise to assist when necessary. They are knowledgeable of the content areas, grade levels, and performance standards of the instruction they evaluate, because they are matched to PTs according to these characteristics (Goldstein, 2007b; Goldstein & Noguera, 2006; Moir & Bloom, 2000; Rogers & Threatt, 2000; Stroot et al., 1999). Therefore the process of evaluation is clear and known to all parties involved, and professional development is provided to offer the chance of increased effectiveness in the classroom.

The lack of transparency in traditional evaluation is an area that is addressed by the PAR process. There is secrecy, fear, and isolation inherent in the teaching profession, especially when it comes to judging performance (Conley & Glasman, 2008). The fear resides not only with teachers being evaluated, but also with principals giving the ratings. As mentioned previously, studies showed principals feared giving teachers negative ratings due to possible repercussions in the personal and professional lives of teachers (Conley & Glasman, 2008; Jacob, 2011; Jacob & Walsh, 2011; Tuytens & Devos, 2011). PAR creates a collaborative spirit around performance, where teachers work with teachers in a professional manner. PAR can also alleviate the fear surrounding evaluation due to labor relations (Moir & Bloom, 2000).

Changes in labor relations due to PAR. Traditionally, labor unions and management are at odds regarding personnel procedures, especially retention and dismissal of teachers. Studies showed PAR can alleviate many of the

tensions in labor relations by involving all stakeholders (teachers, administrators, and union leaders) in the design, development, and implementation of peer review (Goldstein, 2007b; Johnson, Papay, Fiarman, Munger, & Qazilbash, 2010; Kumrow & Dahlen, 2002; Moir & Bloom, 2000; Qazilbash, Johnson, Fiarman, Munger, & Papay, 2009). Moir and Bloom (2000) discussed labor relation improvement through PAR, and asserted that PAR offered a cultural shift in labor/management relations by building a high level of trust between labor and management surrounding teacher quality. The legislation of PAR requires a joint decision between teachers' unions and administration; therefore, entering into a PAR program builds support toward a common goal.

Johnson et al. (2010) conducted a multiple case study of seven districts nationwide that implemented PAR programs. They interviewed 155 individuals, approximately 25 per district, including important union and district officials, members of the PAR panel, current and former CTs, and principals. In discussing the labor relation aspect of the program, the study showed that labor and management can come together to develop the program and then collectively bargain toward the final plan. This piece of development proved successful in the districts studied, and offered a buy-in to the program by both parties. The study also found that districts and unions that implemented PAR share several characteristics: labor-management collaboration, union leaders who spearheaded and fostered PAR through initial implementation, and structures that allowed for new interactions between union members and administrators.

Traditionally, teachers are rarely dismissed for poor performance (Goldstein, 2007b; Silva, 2011; Tuytens & Devos, 2011). Due to positive interaction between labor and management, dismissal of ineffective teachers within the PAR program became a shared decision. PAR offers a distribution of power in personnel decision-making, where CTs, principals, and the PAR panel (composed of union members and leaders and administrators) make decisions. Principals gain confidence in their ratings and union members are involved in the dismissal process, rather than set against it (Goldstein, 2007b).

Distributed leadership in PAR. Goldstein (2004) conducted a case study of educators involved in PAR in an urban district in California. The study included interviews with nine PAR panel members, 10 PAR CTs, and mentees and principals from the district. Although not all interviewed supported the PAR program, especially the aspect of teachers evaluating other teachers, the principals tended to give positive feedback regarding the collaborative shift toward distributed instructional leadership. Additional findings from the study indicated all stakeholders held each other accountable for the ratings of teachers, and hence dismissal or retention decisions. CTs held PTs accountable for effective teaching, the PAR panel held the principals and CTs accountable for the decisions feedback and support provided, and the PAR panel held its own members accountable for personnel decisions made jointly by union and district leaders (Goldstein, 2007a).

Distributing accountability and leadership through the PAR process increases the professionalization of teaching (Goldstein, 2007a; Rogers &

Threatt, 2000; Stroot et al., 1999). Teachers are held accountable by each other, a major change from the traditional accountability system. Conversations around practice are conducted teacher to teacher, teacher to administrator, and administrator to union leader. Hence, all are responsible for a shared vision of effective teaching, and all are involved in high-stakes decisions regarding retention and dismissal.

Principals' reactions to PAR. An area of research that has been minimally explored is the viewpoint of principals regarding PAR. Munger, Johnson, Fiarman, Papay, and Qazilbash (2009) conducted a multiple case study of two districts implementing the PAR program. The purpose of the study was to explore how principals responded to PAR. The study found that principals were initially skeptical of the PAR program, but over time, came to value the process. The principals reported that the CTs had more time to effectively evaluate teachers. Involving CTs in evaluation also freed the principals to attend to other responsibilities, although the principals stated that they remained instructional leaders in their school. The leadership model in PAR was distributed and collaborative between the principal and the CT.

In addition, Munger et al. (2009) found that principals appreciated the in-depth and on-going professional development support that CTs were able to offer to low-performing teachers. Principals remained involved in the support provided PTs by delegating and checking in with the CTs on a continuous basis. Principals felt teachers received more support and expertise through the PAR evaluation program than under the traditional structure.

CTs' experiences with PAR. Goldstein (2010) conducted a case study of the PAR program in a school district in California. Included in the data were some transcriptions of interviews with 10 CTs in which their perspectives as peer evaluators were discussed. The interview transcriptions showed that CTs felt they were both supporters and evaluators. The CTs in this study used the strategy of support to build trust and rapport with the PTs to facilitate meaningful discussions around teaching and learning. They advocated for PTs to obtain resources, including time, for improvement of instruction.

In general, the CTs interviewed in Goldstein's (2010) study expressed positive feelings about their experiences in the PAR program. They felt they had time to get to know the needs of the PTs and individualize support. They were able to use their mastery of the art of teaching in creative ways to draw out the best from the PTs. Principals tended to support the opinions of the CTs when it came to evaluation, and they learned from the in-depth observations and reports CTs provided. CTs felt legitimated with all parties involved in PAR: the PTs, the panel, and the administrators. "Put simply, [CT] coaches' ongoing assessment of PT practice was perceived by many of those involved to improve PTs' teaching" (p. 69).

Chapter Summary

Traditional teacher evaluation typically involves an administrator or supervisor conducting a number of observations and determining a rating for teacher effectiveness (Jacob, 2011; Jacob & Walsh, 2011; Namaghi, 2010; Strong et al., 2011). The four main purposes of teacher evaluation are

"improvement, accountability, staff development, and personnel decisions" (Darling-Hammond et al., 1983, p. 302). Research has found problems with traditional teacher evaluation models, including possible inflated ratings, limited feedback for improvement, scant professional development alignment with goals, and reluctance of administrators to assume responsibility for negative evaluations (Range et al., 2011; Tuytens & Devos, 2010).

Alternative methods of teacher evaluation are being explored in the research. These methods include the use of multiple measures in evaluating the effectiveness of the classroom teacher (Hazi & Rucinski, 2009; Namaghi, 2010; The New Teacher Project, 2010) and using peers in the evaluation process, specifically in the form of PAR (Goldstein, 2004; Matula, 2011; Silva, 2011; Weems & Rogers, 2010). The PAR program uses peers in evaluation, which allows for the support and enhancement of classroom instruction and the increase in the collaborative nature of the profession of teaching. Although it is not common, PAR may be a way to increase the effectiveness of teachers where traditional evaluation methods fall short.

There is limited research on the PAR program, especially on the role of CTs within PAR. The gap in the research impacted this study's research design in that a multiple case study would allow for exploration and rich description of perceptions. Goldstein (2004, 2007a, 2007b, 2010), as a seminal researcher of the PAR program, was a specific influence on this study. The instruments for data collection along with my focus on CTs' and administrators' perspectives

came from reading Goldstein's (2004, 2007a, 2007b, 2010) research and personal communication.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this multiple case study is to explore how teacher evaluation is affected by the involvement of peer evaluators in three Southern California school districts from the perspectives of principals and CTs with experience in the PAR program. In this chapter, I first present the methodology for this study including a discussion of its philosophical foundations. Next, I provide a description of the research design within the selected methodological approach that I will use in this study. Following the research design, I detail the specific research methods used in this study. This description includes information about the setting, sample, and data collection, including instrumentation and procedure, and data analysis, including validity/trustworthiness and the role of the researcher. I conclude with a chapter summary.

Qualitative Methods Research

Case studies are used to explore in-depth perspectives and describe experiences of participants in depth. Case study allows for a more individualized approach to qualitative research, and the researcher is able to limit the number of participants to maximize the depth of information (Yin, 2009).

This study utilizes a multiple case study design. Involving multiple cases allows for explorations as to why peer involvement in teacher evaluation may

have different effects in different school districts and different contexts. Multiple case studies offer opportunity for multiple perspectives, therefore adding strength to the study. Use of this design will allow me to explore a broad context from the findings of multiple cases (Yin, 2009). In other words, the general phenomena of peer evaluation of teachers will be examined as perceived through different lenses of experience. The research explored the unique position CTs are in as the evaluators of their peers. Investigating peer involvement in teacher evaluation through the perspectives of multiple CTs sheds light on the process. Principals' perspectives provide insight through the lens of the traditional sole evaluator. The purpose of this study was to explore how teacher evaluation is affected by the involvement of peer evaluators in three Southern California school districts from the perspectives of principals and CTs with experience in the PAR program.

Research Design

The research design used in this study is a multiple case study. The research design is qualitative due to the data collection methods and analysis used. The design aligns with the research methodology.

Research Methods

In this section, I will describe the specific research methods I utilized to apply a qualitative multiple case study design in this study. Specifically, I will discuss the setting, sample, data collection, data analysis, and steps taken to ensure validity or trustworthiness of the data.

Setting

The context for this study was the Peer Assistance and Review program (PAR). The PAR program refers to a joint endeavor by a school district and its teachers union to focus resources on the comprehensive support, development, and assessment of teachers (California Educ. Code § 44500-44508). The PAR program is utilized in schools to offer support to teachers with an unsatisfactory administrative rating. Tenured teachers given unsatisfactory job performance ratings by their administrator become PTs in the PAR program. CTs are identified as exemplary by the school district and are hired to offer individualized support to one or more PTs. CTs are often paired with PTs that teach the same grade level or subject area. Districts release CTs from their classrooms on a part-time or full-time basis. Part-time CTs are released for a minimum of one day per week to work with the PT and full time CTs are released for an entire school year.

Participants in this study were PAR CTs and administrators in public schools in Los Angeles and Orange County, California. Two of the participants worked in District 1, a unified public school district serving 47,960 students in 47 elementary schools, 10 intermediate schools, seven high schools, two continuation schools, two Special Education schools, and two Adult Education schools. The median household income was $55,508, and the student population included 18,831 English Learners. There were 1,946 teachers and the student-teacher ratio was 25.90. Two participants worked in District 2, a unified public school district serving 83,691 students in 57 elementary schools, 16 middle schools, nine high schools, one K-12 school, three alternative schools, one

continuation school, and one community day school. The median household income was $55,287, and the student population included 18,680 English Learners. There were 3,464 teachers and the student-teacher ratio was 24.90. Two participants worked in District 3, a unified public school district serving 25,747 students in 21 elementary schools, four middle schools, one junior high school, four high schools, two alternative schools, one special education school, and one continuation school. The median household income was $86, 064, and the student population included 3,170 English Learners. There were 1,061 teachers and the student-teacher ratio was 25.40. (Ed-data, 2013).

Sample

Participants, found through professional connections, were CTs or administrators in a PAR program working at a public school. I emailed the CTs and administrators requesting their participation in the study. Individual interviews were conducted with CTs who had supported at least one PT and administrators that had participated in the PAR program.

The sample for this study was both purposeful and convenient. Districts where PAR was operational and involved CTs were purposefully selected. Geographical placement and willingness of the participants contributed to the convenience of the sample. Creswell (2007) stated that convenience sampling includes studying individuals who are available. Sampling involved requesting participants from existing PAR CTs and administrators.

Pseudonyms were used to protect participants' identities and ensure confidentiality. Participants signed a letter of consent that stated that participation

was strictly voluntary, could be terminated at any time by the participant, and identities would be kept confidential (Appendix B). The Institutional Review Board (IRB) process was completed before research began and followed throughout, which ensured there would not be risk or harm to the participants through their involvement in the study, and offered proof of participants' consent (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007).

Data Collection and Management

Data collection and management procedures for this study included instrumentation for participant interviews, document collection from each school district regarding PAR programs within those districts, and the management of the data to serve two purposes: objective analysis and protection of participants' confidentiality.

Instrumentation. I used interview protocols gleaned from the research literature for individual interviews. I organized the information from the documentation regarding the PAR program in each district where the participants worked.

Interview protocol. Semistructured interviews included an interview protocol (Appendix A) with predetermined questions but which allowed for flexibility based on the participants' responses (Creswell, 2007). Interviews took place at the work sites of the participants and were approximately 30 to 45 minutes in length.

Twelve questions for the CTs protocol and 13 questions for the principals' protocol were selected from Goldstein's (2010) interview protocol as they were

found to be relevant to the research questions of this study. Questions were narrowed down from the original protocol based on the research questions of this study. Additional questions were then added which addressed the research questions. Questions were open-ended and included anticipated probes to gather as much insight as possible into the experiences of the CTs and administrators in the PAR program. The protocols included questions regarding CTs' and administrators' background, specifics about the context of the PAR program in their district, and their perceptions of CTs' roles in PAR (Appendix A).

Document review. Document collection can add depth to a research study (Creswell, 2007). Documents involving the PAR programs in the participating school districts in the study were collected. These included collective bargaining agreements that described the structure of the PAR program in each district and the role of the CTs and administrators within that structure. These documents are relevant to the study because they help to complete the picture of the PAR process as a supplement or alternative to traditional evaluation. In addition, they provide a source of comparison to participants' view of the process.

It was important to the research to gain an understanding of the official description of the role of the CTs from the districts' points of view to better interpret the perspectives of the CTs and principals. The documents offered a point of comparison between the districts and the participants with regard to the role of the CT.

Procedures. In order to collect data, participants were solicited from school districts utilizing the PAR program. I requested participation from principals and CTs that I connected with through professional contacts. I then developed two separate interview protocols–one for principals and one for CTs–that aligned with my research questions. The protocols were semistructured and included probes in order to develop an in-depth understanding of each case. I conducted six total interviews: three with principals and three with CTs, one principal and one CT from each of three districts. Each interview lasted approximately 40 minutes.

Table 1

Participant Information

District	Participant	Years of Experience
1	CT 1	12 years teaching; 3 years as a CT
	Principal 1	14 years as a principal
2	CT 2	35 years teaching; 4 years as a CT
	Principal 2	8 years as a principal
3	CT 3	16 years teaching; 5 years as a CT
	Principal 3	14 years as a principal

I also collected documents from each district that included descriptions of the PAR program and the role of the CT. These documents were collective bargaining agreements between the district and the teachers' union.

Data management. All interviews were recorded on a digital recorder. I transcribed the interview data. I ensured that no identifying information was

recorded. All digital data were organized in files on my personal computer. Creswell (2007) stresses the importance of backing up all work, keeping master lists of data collected, and developing a data matrix to identify information easily. All participants, sites, and districts were given pseudonyms because of the confidential nature of the topic. Data were archived in digital files on my personal computer and were protected by passwords.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Creswell (2007) and Yin (2009) suggest developing codes that relate to the context and the description of the case to reduce and organize raw data. Transcriptions were coded and organized by theme. I coded and organized themes by hand. Coding began on a macro level, using the research questions that formed the basis for the data collection. As patterns became apparent and detailed levels of codes were developed and organized, I identified the emergent themes which formed the basis for further reduction of data.

Data analysis. For this qualitative research study, I reduced the raw data into key words and phrases (preliminary data analysis) and conceptual categories (interim data analysis).

Procedures to ensure validity and/or trustworthiness. Validity determines "whether the account provided by the researcher and the participants is accurate, can be trusted, and is credible" (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007). Data were triangulated through individual interviews and documents. Triangulation allows the researcher to confirm findings by using data from several sources (Creswell, 2007). The sources used for triangulation in this study were PAR

documents from each district, interview transcriptions from CTs, and interview transcriptions from principals.

Role of the researcher. The researcher is the primary instrument in a qualitative study. The continuum of participant to observer ranges from full participant within the context of the study to total outside observer.

Nonparticipant observer role. I acted as an outside observer in this study. An outside observer does not interject personal thoughts or biases into the data collection or analysis. I remained nonjudgmental throughout the process of the study (Creswell, 2007).

Biases. I entered this study with biases. One bias was that traditional teacher evaluation is insufficient in meeting the purpose of evaluation. The four main purposes of teacher evaluation are "improvement, accountability, staff development, and personnel decisions" (Darling-Hammond et al., 1983, p. 302). One administrator performing evaluations, along with all other administrative tasks required of him or her, is not enough to reach the goals of the evaluation process.

Another bias was that involving peers in teacher evaluation will better serve the purposes of teacher evaluation: improvement, accountability, staff development, and personnel decisions (Darling-Hammond et al., 1983). Goldstein (2007a) argued that distributing accountability for the evaluation process leads to increased professionalization of teaching. I assumed that the involvement of peer evaluators has a positive impact on teacher evaluation. One

way to combat bias is to consciously look for arguments to the contrary and build these into the data collection process. Such was my intent.

Trust is crucial to qualitative research (Creswell, 2007). To build trust, I met participants at locations and times convenient to them. Respect for their position was conveyed throughout the data collection. Multiple perspectives were honored. Participants were assured of the authenticity of the research. I explained that participant voices would be unaltered and data analysis would reflect the honesty of the data.

Chapter Summary

The context for this study was the PAR program in three public unified school districts in Los Angeles and Orange County, California. The research design was a multiple case study design, allowing for multiple perspectives. The research explored the perspectives of CTs and administrators with regard to the PAR program. Three CTs and three administrators from districts with PAR programs were included in the study. These participants were selected to address a gap in the literature regarding the perspectives of administrators and CTs in PAR. The multiple case study design allowed for depth of description with a small number of participants.

I acted as an outside observer for the study to remain nonjudgmental and to describe the experiences of the participants through their viewpoints. Data were gathered using semistructured interviews and document collection. I transcribed all interview data and used the literature to organize data into

themes. Analysis of the data allowed for interpretations and patterns used to inform the findings. Validity was established through triangulation.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

The purpose of this multiple case study was to explore how teacher evaluation is affected by the involvement of peer evaluators in three Southern California school districts from the perspectives of principals and CTs with experience in the PAR program. A multiple case study design was used to offer a close look at the perspectives of both CTs and principals regarding the PAR process. The methodology was based on a social constructivist philosophical foundation. Multiple cases were studied using semistructured interviews and document collection. The study was conducted in three Southern California school districts. The participants, a total of six, included one CT and one principal from each district.I collected, transcribed, and analyzed the data to find themes that connected back to the research literature. I acted as an outside observer during the data collection process.

The problem this study addresses is the efficacy of teacher evaluation systems and how evaluative practice can be improved from the perspectives of principals and CTs with experience in the PAR program. This study explores the perspectives of principals and teachers who participated in the PAR program. In this chapter, I present the findings for each of my research questions, including reference to the conceptual framework of the study. I conclude with a chapter summary.

Description of Participants

District 1

Principal 1 had been a principal for 13 years at three different sites in District 1, while CT 1 had been a CT for 3 years, supporting a total of two PTs. CT 1 remained in the classroom full time while supporting the PTs and was given one day a week of release time for that support. Both participants described District 1 as having great leadership in the Superintendent and Director of Elementary Education positions. They both perceived District 1 as promoting a culture of working together to ensure the success of all teachers. They felt they received a lot of support and that everyone wanted everyone to be successful. However, both described District 1 as very centralized without a lot of opportunity for autonomy. CT 1 mentioned that teachers can tend to feel "suffocated" because it is difficult to take initiative and think about instructional practices that are not district mandated.

District 2

Principal 2 reported having been a principal for eight years, all in District 2. CT 2 had been with the district since 1996 and worked with the PAR program for 11 years as a full-time support provider. Previously, CT 2 had worked in both public and private schools as an instructional aide and reading specialist. Both participants described District 2 as being nationally recognized for the professional development support it provides to teachers and administrators. Principals have a group of district-level support providers and direct access to all district personnel. Principal 2 noted that because of the size of the district, which

served over 80,000 students, the uniqueness of individual school sites can be lost; what might be good for many schools may not be what's best for each individual school.

District 3

Principal 3 had been a principal for over 14 years at three sites within District 3. CT 3 was an Educational Specialist who worked with both voluntary and referred PAR teachers full time. Both reported that working in District 3 was a positive experience and that the district prided itself on hiring and retaining high-quality people. Both participants felt the district also made it a priority to support personnel and to give leaders a lot of say in decision making. Principal 3 described the district as being centralized.

PAR as a Multiple Measure for Teacher Evaluation

This section addresses the first research question: What are principals' and CTs' perspectives with regard to the inclusion of PAR as a multiple measure for teacher evaluation? The question is related to the problem statement regarding the efficacy of traditional teacher evaluation systems. Findings were determined based on interview data from principals and CTs in Districts 1, 2, and 3. The interview questions addressing this research question were as follows:

- What would be your reaction to PAR being included as a multiple measure in teacher evaluation? (CT Protocol, Q3; Principal Protocol, Q3)
- What do you think about teachers evaluating other teachers? (CT Protocol, Q6; Principal Protocol, Q6)

- How is it different having a teacher do evaluations compared to a principal? (CT Protocol, Q18)

One main conceptual category that emerged from analyzing the data was that of mixed emotions. Participants expressed mixed feelings regarding the inclusion of PAR as a multiple measure for teacher evaluation. Three of the participants, Principal 1, Principal 3, and CT 1, felt positively about including PAR as a multiple measure in teacher evaluation. Principal 1 felt that PAR could be included as a multiple measure if certain parameters were put in place, such as training in performing evaluations. Principal 3 stated "to have a multiple measure from a different set of eyes . . . I think that would be a great benefit because everybody . . . works with different people differently." CT 1 felt that teachers evaluating other teachers would be less intimidating than an administrator evaluating teachers. She also stated that CTs have actual current classroom practice, therefore having a deep knowledge about daily classroom life, which would help PTs be held more accountable in that type of evaluative relationship. PTs' buy-in for CTs' guidance is increased because PTs know that the CTs are practicing their own advice with their students.

The other three participants felt that PAR should be a support system, not an evaluative measure. CT 2 stated, "I don't think it would be an ideal situation to have it be a part of teacher evaluation," while Principal 2 replied, "I don't know that that would get the most honest feedback because teachers are on the same side of the bargaining table . . . it would not be a valid measure."

Positive reactions to including PAR as a multiple measure in teacher evaluation came from both participants in District 1, although Principal 1 stated that certain parameters would need to be in place to make it fair. CTs 2 and 3 did not think that CTs should be put into a role of evaluator. Principals 2 and 3 thought it would be a good idea to include CTs in the evaluation process, but Principal 2 was concerned that because CTs and PTs are in the same union, that it might not hold validity.

Participants' Perceptions of the Role of the CT in the PAR Program

This section addresses the second research question: How do CTs, principals, and districts perceive the role of the CT in the PAR program? This question relates to the purpose of the research in that the role of the CT can be an option to include in improving the efficacy of the traditional teacher evaluation system. Findings were determined based on PAR documents collected from Districts 1, 2, and 3, and interview data from principals and CTs in Districts 1, 2, and 3. The first part of this section addresses documentation findings from each district that included descriptions of the PAR program and the role of the CT. These documents were collective bargaining agreements between the district and the teachers' union. Subsequent parts compare the documentation findings with the interview data. The interview questions addressing this research question were as follows:

- Describe the PAR program in your district. What do you think about it? (CT Protocol, Q8; Principal Protocol, Q8)

- Reflect on your role as a Consulting Teacher. How would you describe your role to an outsider who knows nothing about PAR? (CT Protocol, Q9)
- What aspects of the Consulting Teacher role have you enjoyed or found rewarding, if any? (CT Protocol, Q10)
- What aspects of the Consulting Teacher role have you found particularly challenging or difficult, if any? (CT Protocol, Q11)

The main conceptual category that emerged from analyzing the data was that of support. Terms that identified this category included *supporter*, *helper*, *coach*, and *mentor* in the descriptions of the role of the CT from both participant interviews and district PAR documents. Not once was the term *evaluator* or *supervisor* mentioned by the participants in response to the above questions or the district documents.

PAR Process Defined

The research literature stated that collective bargaining agreements in California will include defining the PAR process in each district (California Educ. Code § 44500-44508; Matula, 2011) Common language was found among districts in the documents defining the role of the CT. One commonality was that CTs were required to be permanent, certificated teachers who were selected for their positions by the PAR panel. However, this contrasted with participants' accounts of how they were hired. In addition, the composition of the panel in all three participating districts was similar, requiring between five and nine members. Members needed to include union leaders, teachers, and

administrators, with the documents stating that the majority should be certificated teachers. The documents were also in agreement with regard to the manner in which the PAR panels should select the certificated teachers: teachers were to be selected by the union and the administrators determined by the district.

An interesting finding that arose from an analysis of the districts' documentation, as compared to the information garnered from the interviews, pertained to the process of CT selection. When asked to describe the PAR program in their districts and what they thought about it, participants commented on the selection of the CTs. Only three participants seemed to be familiar with the process, and to varying degrees. None of the CTs mentioned being selected by the PAR Panel, which is in direct contrast to the documentation from all three districts. CT 1 explained that the Director of K-6 Instruction interviewed potential CTs and chose teachers who demonstrate effectiveness in the classroom with instruction, behavior, and time management. Principal 3 explained that the BTSA (Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment) coordinator chose the CTs and matched them with appropriate PTs after conferring with the PT's supervising principal. CT 3 had a very vague knowledge of the process, only stating that each PT is assigned a CT. Principal 3's description of the PAR program in District 3 summed up the commonalities found in the data between all three districts' PAR programs: "[PAR] is a program to support teachers who are struggling with the teaching profession. . . . [It] gives teachers an opportunity to work with someone . . . who's knowledgeable and has a lot of experience."

CT Position Requirements

Common descriptors of the role of the CT in the PAR documents across all three districts included *support* and *assistance*. However, documents from District 3 were the only ones that provided qualifications for the CT, which included "exemplary teaching ability, effective communication skills, subject matter knowledge and mastery of a range of teaching strategies necessary to meet the needs of pupils in different contexts." District 3 was also the only district that set terms and limits on the time frames in which full-time CTs could remain in their roles: no more than 3 years in a term, and no more than two consecutive terms.

From the principals' point of view, Principal 1 and Principal 2 both listed qualifications that they felt were necessary for the CT role. Both included strong instructional knowledge, people skills, and the ability to remain nonjudgmental. Principal 2 emphasized the point that the CT "can't be seen as another administrator," while Principal 1 stated that CTs need to be reflective of their own practice.

Referral Process

Analysis of district documents showed that all districts had a process where teachers were referred to PAR by receiving an unsatisfactory evaluation by their principal. However, CTs 2 and 3 both stated that teachers in their districts (District 2 and 3, respectively) could choose to be in PAR voluntarily. New teachers or teachers who realized they needed support in certain areas could seek support from a CT on their own, still within a confidential process.

Collaboration

In addition, the documents directed stakeholders with regard to collaboration. Districts 2 and 3 promoted collaboration between the CT and their PTs' supervising principal, while District 1 only provided for an initial goal-setting meeting with the principal, CT, and PT. After that initial meeting, CTs in District 1 were to have no more contact with the principal.

Role of CT in Personnel Recommendations

Documentation analysis showed that all three districts utilized a PAR panel within their PAR process. Both District 1 and District 2 included language indicating that the CTs reported progress of the PT to the PAR panel. However, in District 1, the CT was seen as an evaluator; the CT's report was taken as part of personnel recommendations. In District 2, the CT was not seen as an evaluator. The PAR panel in District 2 made personnel recommendations based on their interpretation of the CT reports; the CT did not actually make personnel recommendations themselves to the panel. The documentation from District 3 did not explicitly state a requirement for the CT to report to the PAR panel. CT 3 stated that if the PAR panel wanted to see documentation from PT reports, they were entitled to that information.

Participant Perceptions of CT Role

Comparison of the interview data and PAR documents collected from all three districts found that participants' perceptions of the role of the CT aligned with the language of support from the documentation but contradicted the language of evaluator. The same theme of support was found across CTs and

principals interviewed. As previously stated, reporting to the PAR panel on PTs' progress toward a specific goal is required of Districts 1 and 2, as dictated by their PAR documents, while the documents from District 3 allowed for CTs to submit documentation upon request of the PAR panel. While an interpretation of the document language in all three districts is that CTs are nonevaluative, it appeared that in District 2, those reports were taken into consideration for personnel decisions. Both CT 2 and 3 did mention having a collaborative relationship with the principal, which did match the documentation.

Contradictions in Role Interpretation

Both CT 2 (District 2) and 3 (District 3) stated interpretations of their role that were contradictive to the PAR documentation from their districts. District 2's document specifically stated that the CT reports to a panel and that the panel even selects the teachers that are hired as CTs. Documentation from District 3 revealed that the CT reported to a panel.

CT 2 and 3 both stated that they were in a role of supporter only. CT 3 from District 3 insisted, "I'm a peer. I'm not an administrator. I'm a peer to help someone meet their individualized needs to improve their teaching performance," even though District 3 stated in their bargaining agreement that CTs report to the PAR panel regarding the progress of the PT and this could be interpreted as evaluative. CT 3 provided objective field notes to the principal supervising the PT they worked with, but did not present to a PAR panel.

CT 2 echoed CT 3's statement, saying their role is "nonjudgmental, nonevaluative, but just teacher support," even though the bargaining agreement

in District 2, where CT 2 worked, stated that CTs report PTs' progress to the panel as well. CT 2 went on to clarify that the PAR process in District 2 was designed for the CT to provide assistance only; it was not structured for CTs to be evaluators. CT 2 had conversations with her PTs regarding targeted areas of improvement, which often came from the principal's evaluation form. She then had monthly meetings with the principal and the PT where she shared the progress that she was seeing with the PT and the principal shared whether or not they had seen improvement in those areas as well. However, according to CT 2, there was no presentation to a PAR panel.

Only one CT saw herself as being put in both roles of supporter and evaluator, which contrasted with the role stated in the documentation. CT 1 stated that, along with providing support to her PT on classroom practices, she also gave evaluative feedback, both to the PT and in her quarterly reports to the PAR panel.

Positive Aspects of the Role of the CT

Participants had much to say about the positives of the CT role. CT 1 stated, "I really love the role of CT because it's an opportunity for me to demonstrate my knowledge and my expertise in curriculum and instruction, and it's rewarding to see when your PT grows from the experience and gets to demonstrate aspects of a more effective teacher." Principal 3 mentioned she had good experiences working with CTs. She stated, "teachers helping other teachers makes a difference and I think it can be a positive relationship." CT 2

and 3 both mentioned they really enjoyed helping and supporting teachers who were struggling.

Challenges Associated with the Role of CT

According to the documents from all three districts, CTs can be assigned to a PT, defined as a tenured teacher who has received an unsatisfactory evaluation from their administrator. Participants' perceptions of challenges within the CT role as reported during the interviews varied, but comments focused on perceptions of support, PT progress, and supporting unfamiliar content. One commonality was working with PTs who did not receive the support well. These PTs were either angry that they were referred, feeling it was personal rather than professional criticism, or they were unmotivated to improve despite the CTs' best efforts. Besides the potentially negative attitude of the PTs, CT 1 also mentioned that it can be frustrating when the PT makes no progress after the CT has put in so much effort and hard work in supporting that PT. CT 2 discussed the difficulty in supporting content that she was not familiar with as a classroom teacher and having to seek support from district curriculum specialists to make sure she was supporting correctly. Principal 3 mentioned that at times she felt the CTs were "stretched too thin–not able to give full support and time needed for the PT," while Principal 1 spoke about the importance of matching personalities between CTs and PTs so the PT would not feel that the CT was condescending.

Benefits and Drawbacks to Traditional Evaluation and the PAR Process

This section addresses the third research question: What do CTs and principals see as the benefits of and drawbacks to traditional teacher evaluation

as compared with incorporating PAR into the process? This question relates to the purpose of the study in regard to the effects of involving peer evaluators in the teacher evaluation process. Findings were determined based on interview data from principals and CTs in Districts 1, 2, and 3. The interview questions addressing this research question were as follows:

- Do you (CTs) find yourself being put in both assistance and review roles? If so, how has that been for you? (CT Protocol, Q12)
- Describe the traditional evaluation process in this district. What do you see as the benefits of the PAR process as compared to traditional evaluation? (CT Protocol, Q13)
- What do you see as the problems of the PAR process as compared to traditional evaluation? (CT Protocol, Q14)

The interview data supported the findings from the research literature regarding the drawbacks to the traditional evaluation process, including the issues with one principal evaluating every teacher at each site. According to all participants, the traditional teacher evaluation process across districts matched the process described in the literature, with teachers being evaluated by the principal every 5 years in one or two scheduled observations.

The main conceptual categories that emerged from analyzing the interview data were subjectivity, fear, and time. The language supporting these categories were: subjectivity of ratings, the association of fear with evaluation on both the part of the teacher and the part of the principal, and the lack of sufficient

time principals have to provide the support teachers need and to have a true picture of the teachers' effectiveness in the classroom.

The benefits of incorporating the PAR process into teacher evaluation had some common themes across interviews and the research literature. The findings most common from the interview data were having a fresh set of eyes for the PT's practice, the quantity of time CTs have to support the teachers in their improvement areas, and the opportunity for conversation and collaboration across PTs, CTs, and principals.

Traditional Teacher Evaluation

The research literature stated four main purposes of teacher evaluation: "improvement, accountability, staff development, and personnel decisions" (Darling-Hammond et al., 1983, p. 302). Traditional evaluation typically involves an administrator or supervisor conducting a number of observations and determining a rating for teacher effectiveness (Jacob, 2011; Jacob & Walsh, 2010; Namaghi, 2010; Strong et al., 2011). Most districts in the State of California agreed through collective bargaining that tenured teachers are evaluated every 5 years based on a satisfactory performance rating (Hazi & Rucinski, 2009).

Before discussing the findings regarding this question, it should be noted that there were variations in evaluation processes among the participating districts. In discussing the formal teacher evaluation process during the interview, CT 2 spoke about a "multi-part evaluation system," where teachers chose between the old, union-approved evaluation form scored with a satisfactory or unsatisfactory score, or a new form that the district was piloting at the time of the

interview. This new form was tied to the California Standards for Teaching Performance, six standards that take into account a range of effective classroom practices. With the new form, the principals did not simply rate the teacher as satisfactory or unsatisfactory; they had to specify which components of the California Standards for Teaching Performance they were observing in the teachers' lessons. Teachers at each site chose which form they wanted for their evaluations, so principals could be evaluating several teachers at the same site using different evaluation forms.

In addition, P1 and P2 clarified that, although Districts 1 and 2 had an evaluation cycle of 5 years, principals could pull teachers into a cycle sooner if needed. This decision would need to be preceded by conversations with that teacher forewarning them of the improvements that needed to be made according to observational data, and principals must have already offered support to that teacher to give the teacher a chance to improve.

Drawbacks to traditional teacher evaluation. The research literature revealed many issues regarding traditional evaluation procedures, including subjectivity of teacher ratings (Jacob & Walsh, 2010; Namaghi, 2010; Tuytens & Devos, 2011), limited amount of time to conduct evaluations (Jacob & Walsh, 2010; Namaghi, 2010; Ramirez et al., 2011; Range et al., 2011; Tuytens & Devos, 2011), failure to link evaluation with targeted professional development (The New Teacher Project, 2010; Ramirez et al., 2011; Tuytens & Devos, 2011), and reluctance of evaluators to assume responsibility for their evaluations

(Conley & Glasman, 2008; Jacob, 2011; Tuytens & Devos, 2011). The data supported these issues from the literature.

The research literature presented examples of subjectivity of teacher ratings that existed within the traditional teacher evaluation model. Teachers that worked in high-performing schools tended to receive higher ratings from their administrators (Jacob & Walsh, 2011). Even when evaluation findings were similar, less experienced teachers were more likely to be dismissed than tenured teachers, and bias in dismissals existed in terms of gender, race, and age (Jacob, 2011). A majority of teachers were given satisfactory ratings, perhaps due to reluctance of principals to dismiss. A study of evaluation data of 30 fourth-grade teachers by Strong et al. (2011) found that evaluation of teachers was affected by teacher confidence, energy, sense of humor, and engaging personality. Instruction and student engagement were secondary factors in evaluation. The findings of these large-scale studies speak to the issue of the validity of the traditional evaluation process.

Subjectivity. Administrators may feel the weight of evaluation is too great to bear, leading to inflated teacher scores (Conley & Glasman, 2008). Silva (2011) stated that principals and administrators often receive minimal to no training in conducting teacher evaluations, negatively affecting their confidence in their ratings. As a result, principals rarely gave teachers negative evaluations in order to avoid conflict. Principal 3 admitted, "I've met colleagues in my profession, other principals, who . . . don't want to rock the boat. . . . They'll be nice to the teacher and . . .won't come out and tell them the truth." Peterson

(2004) reinforces this concept in his literature review on teacher evaluation systems. When researching educators' views and roles in teacher evaluation, he found that dealing with bad teachers was crushing to the morale and effectiveness of many principals. Therefore, principals found it difficult to give negative ratings.

The research data supported the literature regarding the subjectivity that is present within the traditional teacher evaluation system. Principal 2 wondered if principals tend to focus on the negatives when they are put in a documentation role. This principal stated, "when you're evaluated by one person sometimes that can be subjective even though we have professional standards." CT 2 spoke about seeing personal conflicts between teachers and administrators, which led her to believe that the teachers she worked with were put into PAR because of personal likes and dislikes on the part of the administrator.

Fear. The research literature found themes of fear and reluctance on the part of administrators and teachers within the traditional teacher evaluation process, indicating that teachers are fearful of opening up their practice to administrators and to peers alike (Eisenbach & Curry, 1999). Because CTs are technically teachers, they may feel that they would not want to be evaluated by one of their peers.

CT 1 also spoke about teachers' perspectives of principals creating a sense of uncertainty when it comes to evaluation. Principal 3 stated that teachers are fearful of the evaluation process because they are intimidated by the principal, just because of the title alone. Principal 2 also spoke about the difficulty

of being both an evaluator and a supporter: "Where do you find that balance between support and the hammer?"

Principal 3 stated, "many times I think that teachers are afraid of a principal just because they sit in that seat. And that's unfortunate because it doesn't . . . lend itself to the teacher growing and learning to be the best professional they can be because they're frightened of what might happen on their evaluation."

Time. The research literature indicated that principals did not have enough time to conduct teacher evaluations that linked to the purposes of evaluation. Ramirez et al. (2011) conducted a quantitative study to explore the relationship between policy and practice in teacher evaluation. Their participants were 30 Colorado districts serving kindergarten through 12th grade. Participants reported that the minimal amount of time spent on the evaluation process rendered it meaningless. Administrators were overwhelmed by all of their responsibilities, including teacher evaluations. Evaluations were conducted in a rote way unrelated to context, using a checklist to determine ratings. A study by Range et al (2011) indicated that one of principals' greatest frustrations with the evaluation process was lack of time.

The data from the study supported the literature in this claim. Principal 2 admitted that "sometimes we are so critical in doing evaluations because we don't have . . . time." CT 3 stated that because evaluation observations are scheduled ahead of time, it turns into a "dog and pony show." CT 2 also stated that District 2 had cut off the funding for the PAR program at the time of the

interview, which left principals alone to provide support for teachers who were given an unsatisfactory evaluation. When asked if she felt if that was sufficient support, she stated what was found in the literature: principals do not have time to provide the support that teachers need.

The research literature found that traditional teacher evaluation failed to fulfill the intended purpose of targeted professional development in areas where teachers struggled because administrator's did not have time to provide this support. Ramirez et al. (2011) found that teacher evaluation processes do not result in teacher development and traditional evaluation processes do not lead to teaching skill improvement. Tuytens and Devos (2011) reported most teachers did find feedback from their supervisor helpful, but this feedback did not result in professional development. The research data from this study supported the literature in the failure to link professional development to teacher evaluation. CT 1 mentioned the disconnect that principals may have with instructional practices in the classroom because of all of the other responsibilities on administrators' plates.

Peer Assistance and Review

Benefits of PAR. Although participants disagreed on the inclusion of PAR as a multiple measure, they all reported positive effects of the PAR program on teacher quality in their districts. Most spoke of the targeted individualized support PTs received along with the strengthening of teacher accountability and reflection. All three principals reported appreciation for having a second set of eyes included in their support for the PT. Principal 3 stated that having the CT

involved in supporting the PT was an "affirmation of what I've been seeing . . .[and] gives us more information with which to help that teacher."

Participants spoke of the benefits of the PAR process as compared to the traditional evaluation process in their districts. The main finding among all CTs interviewed was the quantity of time they were given to provide support as compared to a principal doing it alone. CT 1 and 2 stated that they worked with their PTs on a weekly basis. CT 1 added that because she is an actual practitioner, she has a deeper understanding of what happens in the classroom compared to the principal. CT 3 stated that she felt the PAR experience was more real than the traditional evaluation process because it occurred over time. She claimed, "one is a snapshot in time and one is a motion picture."

CT 2 stated that being from the outside of the school site was a benefit because she was able to see both the principal's and the PT's perspectives when it came to the PT's practices. She stated that she was able to develop a trusting rapport with the PT, which allowed the PT to develop a different perspective and reflection on his or her own practice, perhaps feeling that he or she could do a better job in the classroom and working with students. Principal 2 supported this idea when she claimed that working with the PAR CT "makes me a better person because it's a fresh set of eyes on an issue that she has more knowledge about . . . listening to me regurgitate it to say how can we make this work better? How can it be more positive for everybody?"

Drawbacks to PAR as part of the evaluation process. Although all participants had positive things to say about the PAR program, some drawbacks

were found in the data. Participants discussed how PTs improved under the guidance of the CT. However, as soon as the PT was out of PAR, they generally went back to their old ways and ineffective practices. Principal 3 stated, "when I recommend someone who's really drowning, what I see is many times they get better the year they're on PAR because they're having that support meet with them on a regular basis and really putting things into place for them. The minute that PAR [CT] steps back and they get off . . . PAR they fall back into old ways." Principal 1 agreed, stating, "the teachers will do what they can to get through PAR and get out successfully and then they go back to their old practices."

Another perceived downside to the PAR program that the participants observed was the issue of time: not enough time on the part of the CTs to provide enough support to their PTs, and too much time given to PTs to improve. Principal 3 thought that "CT[s] [were] spread too thin . . . and not able to give full support and time needed for the PT–they need less PTs and more time." On the other hand, CT 1 felt that PTs were given too much time to improve and that the process for both recommending teachers to PAR and giving them time to improve in the PAR process should be shortened. Principal 1 agreed with the latter, stating "I do think all teachers can improve . . . but the question is, can they improve fast enough? Because kids are only in third grade once, they're only in fourth grade once, and so that's the concern." A final drawback was provided by CT 1, who stated that because PTs do not view CTs as administrators, it gave the CT less authority as an evaluator.

Chapter Summary

The most significant findings from the district documentation on the PAR programs and the participants' interviews follow. Regarding principals' and CTs' perspectives on the inclusion of PAR as a multiple measure for teacher evaluation (Research Question 1), there were mixed reactions. The positive reactions came from both participants in District 1, although Principal 1 stated that certain parameters would need to be in place to make it fair. CT 2 and 3 did not think that CTs should be put into a role of evaluator, even though the PAR documents from Districts 2 and 3 implied that PAR CTs were evaluators, as they reported progress to the PAR panel. It was significant to this study that although the documents stated this, both CTs from these districts clarified that they did not present any findings to the PAR panel, only to the principals and PTs themselves. Principals 2 and 3 thought it would be a good idea to include CTs in the evaluation process, but Principal 2 was concerned that, because CTs and PTs are both in the same union, it might not hold validity.

All participants' perceptions of the role of the CT (Research Question 2), aligned with the descriptions of support regarding the CT role found in the documentation but contradicted any language regarding the CT as an evaluator in the documentation. The common language of supporter, helper, coach, and mentor were found across both the documentation and interview data. Not once was the term *evaluator* or *supervisor* mentioned in the interview data. In fact, CT 1 was the only CT that felt that she was put in both roles of evaluator and supporter.

When asked about the benefits and drawbacks to traditional teacher evaluation as compared to incorporating PAR into the process (Research Question 3), common themes emerged from the participant interviews. First, the traditional teacher evaluation process across districts matched the process described in the literature, with teachers being evaluated by the principal every 5 years in one or two scheduled observations.

The benefits of incorporating the PAR process into teacher evaluation had some commonalities across interviews and the research literature. The findings most common from the data were the benefits of having a fresh set of eyes for the PT's practice, the quantity of time CTs have to support the teachers in their improvement areas, and the opportunity for conversation and collaboration across PTs, CTs, and principals.

The drawbacks to this process emphasized the point made in the research literature regarding the issues, with one principal evaluating every teacher at one site, subjectivity of ratings, the association of fear with evaluation on both the part of the teacher and the part of the principal, and the lack of sufficient time principals have to provide the support teachers need and also to have a true picture of the teachers' effectiveness in the classroom.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

The problem that this study addresses is the efficacy of teacher evaluation systems and how evaluative practice can be improved. The purpose of this multiple case study was to explore how teacher evaluation is affected by the involvement of peer evaluators in three Southern California school districts from the perspectives of principals and CTs with experience in the PAR program. The following three research questions guided this multiple case study:

1. What are principals' and CTs' perspectives with regard to the inclusion of PAR as a multiple measure for teacher evaluation?
2. How do CTs, principals, and districts perceive the role of the CT in the PAR program?
3. What do CTs and principals see as the benefits of and drawbacks to traditional teacher evaluation as compared with incorporating PAR into the process?

The methodology was based on a social constructivist philosophical foundation. Multiple cases were studied using semistructured interviews and document collection. The study was conducted in three Southern California school districts, with one CT and one principal from each district interviewed. The data was collected, transcribed, and analyzed to find themes that emerged from the findings.

Interpretations

There were four major findings from the interview and documentation data that merit interpretations of meaning. First, there were mixed reactions from both principals and CTs to the inclusion of PAR as a multiple measure in teacher evaluation. Second, the role of the CT was perceived by all participants as that of a supporter, mentor, helper, and coach. Only one CT felt that she had been placed in the roles of both supporter and evaluator. Third, the data analysis showed that all participants perceived the PAR program as beneficial for struggling teachers, although in varied ways. Finally, the participants' perceptions of the drawbacks of the traditional teacher evaluation system mirrored the issues that were found in the research literature, including lack of time on the part of the principal to provide proper support for struggling teachers and trepidation regarding the responsibility for teachers' careers being placed on the shoulders of one evaluator.

Inclusion of PAR as a Multiple Measure for Teacher Evaluation

The first research question this study addressed was what are principals' and CTs' perspectives with regard to the inclusion of PAR as a multiple measure for teacher evaluation? The interview data found that there were mixed reactions. Both participants from District 1 thought that it would be valuable to include PAR as a multiple measure in the teacher evaluation system. From the interview and documentation data, it seemed that District 1 had the strongest PAR program in place. District 1's documentation was the most explicit and clear regarding CTs' requirements and the role of the PAR panel. CT 1's description of her role and

both the CT's and principal's descriptions of the PAR program matched the description of the PAR program found in District 1's bargaining agreement. Therefore, it may be that when the PAR program is clearly defined and implemented in a fashion that is consistent across the district, CTs and principals within that program find the inclusion of the peer evaluation piece successful.

Another significant finding from Research Question 1 was that principals viewed the inclusion of PAR as a multiple measure for teacher evaluation more positively than CTs did. All three principals thought it would be a good idea to include PAR in the evaluation process, although two of the three principals suggested that some parameters should be in place to ensure fairness and validity of the measurement. This finding relates to the research literature, where principals enjoyed working with peer coaches and PAR CTs because it allowed them to feel the responsibility for evaluation was shared (Munger et al., 2009). The literature also described principals feeling less alone and more confident in the personnel and professional decisions they made based on their evaluations when they had someone else who was participating in observations of the PT along with them (Munger et al., 2009). Principals 2 and 3 spoke of having a collaborative relationship with the CTs in their district, which perhaps created even more of a positive perspective on the inclusion of the PAR process into teacher evaluation as a multiple measure.

CTs 2 and 3 did not express positive reactions to including PAR as a multiple measure in teacher evaluation. They were both insistent that they were not evaluators or administrators but simply there as help and support for

struggling teachers. Involving teachers in the evaluation of one another is a relatively new idea. PAR is the only program where this type of peer evaluation–where peers actually have an effect on the personnel decisions of others–can be found. Therefore, for the CTs to express hesitation with regard to this idea was not surprising.

Two CTs (2 and 3) stated that they did not present their findings in any formalized way to the PAR panel. Even though the documentation from both of their districts (2 and 3) showed that the PAR CT was required to submit reports and present to a panel, neither CT participated in panel presentations. They did have to report data back to the principal, but both CT 2 and 3 made it sound like this was more of an informal conversation they would have among themselves, the PTs, and the principals. It seemed like they enjoyed the mentor coaching role but would not want to be a part of a true evaluation process in which decisions were made based on their recommendations. CT 1 stated that formal reports were presented to the PAR panel four times a year.

The Role of the CT

The second research question this study addressed was how do CTs, principals, and districts perceive the role of the CT in the PAR program? In analyzing the documentation from each district that described the role of the CT, that role was described as that of a supporter, helper, coach, and mentor. All participants' perceptions of the role of the CT directly aligned with the description from the documentation. This finding was significant because, although the documentation described part of the role as presenting findings and data to a

PAR panel, not once was the word *evaluator* used or any word like it, when describing the CT role. That finding matched the interview data for CT 2 and 3; only CT 1 mentioned the description of the role as an evaluator.

Perhaps the documentation did not use the term *evaluator* to describe the role of the CT because of the bargaining issues that often surround teacher evaluation within districts. This was also referred to in the research literature: teacher evaluation can often be a point of contention between unions and district administrators (Matula, 2011). Therefore, perhaps it is safer or more neutral to describe the CT role as that of a coach who provides support to struggling teachers rather than a supervisor. Avoiding the term could also be due to the fact that teachers are not administrators and therefore legally do not have the authority to evaluate for personnel decisions. However, within the PAR model of all three districts' documentation, teachers do make recommendations to the PAR panel regarding personnel decisions.

The findings from the interviews regarding participants' perceptions indicated the role of the CT matched the role of peer coaches within the research literature (Eisenbach & Curry, 1999). These teachers are described as teacher leaders who work with their peers to improve practice, which was the description given by all of the participants as well.

CTs 2 and 3 did not seem to want a supervisory element included in their role, and so their perception of their role was one in which teachers would benefit from their intervention. Perhaps they are concerned that if an evaluative piece were included in their job description, they would become less effective in

working with their PTs. All three CTs stated they were able to build a relationship of trust with their PTs because they were seen as support providers. It would be a huge shift in pedagogy and practice for teachers to become comfortable working with someone who is there to both support and evaluate. This idea mirrors the research literature as well, where teachers appreciated the credibility that master teachers as coaches had to offer, but did not value the support of their principal (Conley & Glasman, 2008).

The Benefits of the PAR Program

Part of the third research question in this study was what do CTs and principals see as the benefits to traditional teacher evaluation as compared to incorporating PAR into the process? The perceptions of the principals regarding this research question directly aligned with the findings from the research literature (Goldstein, 2004). All principals indicated they enjoyed being able to have a "fresh set of eyes" involved in the PTs' practice. They seemed to find confidence in their own abilities to evaluate teacher effectiveness when it was reiterated by a master teacher who was closer to daily classroom practice than they may be. They felt the CT was on their side and also on the side of the PT– that it was a nice balance for them to have that support for themselves and for the PT. All principals truly seemed to want the PTs they supervised to improve, and it almost seemed like a relief to them to be able to shoulder the responsibility of support with an expert teacher. They expressed a lot of confidence in and praise for the CTs they worked with, and said they enjoyed having another professional they could collaborate with toward goals of improvement for the PT.

Principals and CTs also commented on the benefit of time that is incorporated into the PAR process. Two out of the three CTs were in the classrooms of their PTs on a weekly basis; however, the third CT did not have a specific time to work with her PT. The third pair worked on specific goals rather than just participating in general observations, which tended to make their conversations about practice rich and meaningful.

Not only did the CTs express enjoyment at helping others improve their practice, but two specifically spoke of the reflective process they went through themselves to improve their own practice. All participants spoke of the benefits of collaboration embedded within the PAR process, whether it be CT to PT, CT to principal, or PT to principal.

Drawbacks of Traditional Teacher Evaluations

The second part of the third research question this study addressed was what do CTs and principals see as the drawbacks to traditional teacher evaluation as compared to incorporating PAR into the process? The main drawbacks found in the data mirrored the issues found in the research literature, namely, subjectivity of ratings, association of fear with evaluation for both principals and teachers, and lack of sufficient time for principals to meet the purposes of teacher evaluation effectively for all teachers (Tuytens & Devos, 2011).

One principal spoke about colleagues, other principals, who were "too nice" to their teachers and who feared giving an unsatisfactory evaluation. Therefore, those teachers were given a false impression that they were doing

their jobs well, when they really lacked effectiveness. Another part of the theme of subjectivity affecting teachers' ratings was found in the data when principals spoke of not having a deep understanding of instruction at all grade levels they evaluated. For example, one principal shared that because of having upper elementary school experience as a teacher, they felt uncertain when evaluating what was happening in a kindergarten classroom. Rather than give an unsatisfactory rating that could not be confidently backed up, the teacher would receive a satisfactory rating. The research literature stated the issues with one person evaluating an entire staff of teachers, noting that subjective ratings were found to be the case in many instances (Jacob & Walsh, 2010). However, inflated ratings were not solely due to inexperience or the desire to be seen as "nice." Superficially high ratings also resulted out of fear and hesitation on the part of the administrator to shoulder the responsibility of negatively impacting a teacher's career.

The issue of fear was common in the literature, both on the part of the principal as a sole evaluator and on the part of the teachers, who were not used to opening up their practice (Conley & Glasman, 2008). The data indicated the principals appreciated having another expert to back up their interpretation of effective instruction: It lessened their fear and anxiety regarding "Am I doing my job correctly?" When a master teacher who practices effective classroom techniques daily supports the opinions of the administrator, it brings confidence to the administrator. According to the literature, teachers also have a general fear of their practice being evaluated (Conley & Glasman, 2008). Therefore, when

there is no PAR program, or when administrators are left to evaluate on their own, that relationship of fear between the teacher and the administrator does not lead to productive conversations about practice.

The issue of time was significant in both the literature and the research data (Ramirez et al., 2011), which revealed that principals did not feel they had enough time to effectively support the teachers who were struggling. This study's participants, both principals and CTs, also expressed this concern. According to their descriptions of the traditional teacher evaluation system, principals evaluated their teachers based on one or two preplanned visits per year. No one felt that this was enough time to get a clear picture of what was going on in the classroom. There was so much responsibility put on administrators' plates that the support and professional development of teachers often fell by the wayside, replaced by paperwork and management issues. This finding was common in the literature as well, where administrators found it difficult to play all of the parts they were expected to play in an effective way (Range et al., 2011).

Overall, the findings from the data supported the idea that the traditional evaluation system is flawed and requires adjustments. Although the PAR process was not found to be the fix for the system, parts of the PAR process were perceived by the participants to be beneficial for all stakeholders. Teachers supporting and coaching one another and working together with administrators toward improvement of teaching practices were commonly suggested as a supportive for teacher evaluation.

Implications

The findings of this study suggest implications for educational policy, practice, and theory. Educational policy regarding teacher evaluation can be improved upon by including multiple measures, such as peer support like that found in the PAR program. Classroom practice is directly linked to the purposes of teacher evaluation: improvement, accountability, staff development, and personnel decisions (Darling-Hammond et al., 1983). Because the findings of this study suggest that classroom practice can improve when peers are supporting one another as mentors and/or coaches, including peers in the teacher evaluation process could help to support the purposes of teacher evaluation better than the traditional evaluative practices.

The findings of this study that contribute to collaboration between teachers and administrators and between teachers and teachers suggest that the approach to teaching as an isolated practice may be waning. Implications for future research from this study include exploring the perspectives of PTs regarding the inclusion of PAR as a multiple measure in teacher evaluation and examining the PTs' careers in the years following their support from PAR to see how successful they remain in the future.

Implications for Policy

This study found that principals and CTs had mixed reactions to including PAR in the teacher evaluation process as a multiple measure. However, most participants agreed that including peers in the evaluation process could be beneficial in helping improve the practice of ineffective teachers. Two participants

agreed wholeheartedly that peer evaluators could be an effective multiple measure, two participants agreed only if parameters for fairness were put in place, and two participants did not agree that peers should be used in an evaluative way.

These findings suggest that educational policy regarding teacher evaluation can be improved upon. Perhaps including multiple measures, such as peer support like that found in the PAR program, could be a way to improve the traditional evaluation process. Including peers in the support, coaching, and mentoring of peers that are struggling provides a piece of professional development that is sorely lacking within traditional teacher evaluation. If the teacher evaluation process is intended to provide formative support for teachers, including peers in the process could help to carry out that intent in practice.

Implications for Practice

This study found that all study participants enjoyed the collaborative aspect of the PAR process. Administrators enjoyed being able to collaborate with expert teachers on instructional practices, especially when they were unsure of what they are seeing in the classroom. CTs enjoyed collaborating with the administrators and with the PTs. Opening up the practice of teaching to allow for open dialogue around instruction and classroom management was beneficial to CTs and principals and produced feelings of satisfaction, confidence, and respect for one another.

Classroom practice is directly linked to the purposes of teacher evaluation: improvement, accountability, staff development, and personnel decisions

(Darling-Hammond et al., 1983). Because the findings of this study suggest that classroom practice can improve when peers are supporting one another as mentors and/or coaches, including peers in the teacher evaluation process could help to support the purposes of teacher evaluation better than the traditional evaluative practices.

Implications for Theory

Education has traditionally been an isolated practice. Even the configuration of classrooms and school buildings suggest individual spaces that do not lend themselves to collaborative practices. Teachers are used to coming to work and teaching by themselves all day every day. The findings of this study suggest that it may be time for this isolation in education to change. Models such as coteaching, lesson study, and Professional Learning Communities support the movement toward collaboration in practice.

All study participants indicated that opening up the practice of teaching to one another, administrators and teachers alike, benefits all involved in education. Education is a service–a service provided for students. All students deserve to have the best learning environment and the best access to opportunity. Therefore, opening up the practice of teaching to allow for collaboration and dialogue among the adults who affect our students' future can improve effectiveness for all.

Implications for Future Research

The findings of this study suggest that some administrators and CTs view including PAR as a multiple measure in teacher evaluation as a possibility in

meeting the purposes and intent behind teacher evaluation. However, the participants in this study did not include PTs. Future research may benefit from exploring the perspectives of PTs regarding their involvement in the PAR process. These teachers offer a unique perspective because they have participated in traditional evaluation and the PAR process as the teachers that are being evaluated. Perhaps their perspectives may shed more light on how all educators would feel by including peers as a collaborative part of their practice.

Another implication for future research involves PTs as well. Participants in this study suggested that once PTs stop receiving support from the CTs, many of them fall back into their old, ineffective ways. It would be interesting to conduct a longitudinal study of PTs during and after they participate in the PAR process to see how many improved, if they dropped back after CT support was taken away, and what happened to them as a result. This type of study could clarify whether or not intensive peer support is truly effective in a lasting way.

Recommendations

In light of what I learned from my review of the literature and my study's findings, I would make two recommendations for policy and practice. First, I would recommend further investigation into including peer support as a multiple measure in educational policy regarding teacher evaluation. Second, I recommend that classroom practice be opened up to include a collaborative piece, where teachers hold each other accountable for effective practices and administrators are viewed as collaborators in the dialogue.

Multiple Measures in Teacher Evaluation

Research literature and the findings from the study interview data show that traditional teacher evaluation involving one administrator responsible for the evaluation of all teachers at their site can be an ineffective practice when considering the purposes and intent behind evaluation. Including multiple measures in evaluating teachers can help to distribute the accountability for effective practice among peers. Peer evaluators can be included as a multiple measure in teacher evaluation in order to improve the connection between the intent behind evaluation and the practice of it. I recommend that educational policy be changed to include peer evaluators as a multiple measure.

Collaborative Teaching Practice

Traditionally, teachers have participated in professional development opportunities and then carried out those learnings by themselves with their students in one classroom. I recommend that professional development become more collaborative in both the learning and the practice. Administrators should be involved in dialogue with teachers about improvements of practice, and teachers should be held accountable for one another being the best they can be for the benefit of the students. Educators can all benefit from sharing ideas, planning lessons together, observing each other teaching, and reflecting on their own practices from the shared learnings.

Educational Theory of Collaboration

With the expectations for students to communicate and collaborate in the classroom growing ever stronger, it makes sense that our theory behind teaching

should transform as well. There are already movements toward collaborative practices in teaching, including coteaching, lesson study, and Professional Learning Communities. Teaching is slowly moving away from an individualized practice. I recommend that the school of thought and the culture of teaching continue to shift to one of collaboration and communication among teachers, but also including administrators. When we truly take responsibility for sharing best practices and communicating with our leaders in ways that are productive and open, only then can our students truly shift their practices to model those of our own.

Summary of the Dissertation

The problem this study addressed was the efficacy of teacher evaluation systems and how evaluative practice can be improved from the perspectives of principals and CTs with experience in the PAR program. The findings suggested that principals and teachers alike agree that including PAR as a multiple measure in teacher evaluation could improve the effectiveness of the intent behind evaluation practice. Traditional teacher evaluation was found to have many drawbacks, including lack of time and confidence on the part of the principal, and fear and uncertainty on the part of the teacher. The PAR process was seen as having the benefits of improving instructional practice among teachers, reducing fear, and improving collaborative practices between teachers and administrators.

First, I would recommend that educational policy regarding teacher evaluation be changed to include peer support as a multiple measure. Second, I recommend that classroom practice be opened up to include a collaborative

component, where teachers hold each other accountable for effective practices and administrators are viewed as collaborators in the dialogue. Finally, I recommend that the school of thought behind educational theory change from one of isolation to one of collaboration. Only when we are able to communicate, collaborate, and develop a common understanding of effective classroom practices will our students truly have equal access and opportunity in education.

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APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Research Question	Consulting Teachers	Principals
Background Information	1. Can you tell me a bit about your career history? 2. What's important for me to understand about this district as a place to work? Tell me about teaching in (district). What's it like for teachers here? PROBE for special positives and negatives.	1. Can you tell me a bit about your career history? 2. What's important for me to understand about this district as a place to work? Tell me about being a principal in (district). What's it like for principals here? PROBE for special positives and negatives.
1. What are Principals' and Consulting Teachers' perspectives with regard to the inclusion of PAR as a multiple measure for teacher evaluation?	3. What would be your reaction to PAR being included as a multiple measure for teacher evaluation? 4. What (if anything) are the positive effects you are seeing from PAR?	3. What would be your reaction to PAR being included as a multiple measure for teacher evaluation? 4. What (if anything) are the positive effects you are seeing from PAR?

	5. What (if anything) are you seeing that is problematic about PAR? 6. What do you think about teachers evaluating other teachers? 7. How was the decision made about which teachers would be in PAR? Do you think that should be done any differently? How so?	5. What (if anything) are you seeing that is problematic about PAR? 6. What do you think about teachers evaluating other teachers? 7. How was the decision made about which teachers would be in PAR? Would you do that any differently? How so?
2. How do Consulting Teachers, Principals, and Districts perceive the role of the Consulting Teacher in the PAR program?	8. Describe the PAR program in your district. What do you think about it? 9. Reflect on your role as a CT. How would you describe your role to an outsider who knows nothing about PAR? 10. What aspects of the	8. Describe the PAR program in your district. What do you think about it? 9. How do you perceive the role of the Consulting Teacher? 10. What has it been like working with the CT?

	CT role have you enjoyed or found rewarding, if any? 11. What aspects of the CT role have you found particularly challenging or difficult, if any? 12. Do you find yourself being put in both assistance and review roles? If so, how has that been for you?	
3. What do Consulting Teachers and Principals see as the benefits and drawbacks to traditional teacher evaluation as compared to incorporating PAR into the process?	13. Describe the traditional evaluation process in this district. What do you see as the benefits for of the PAR process as compared to traditional evaluation? 14. What do you see as the problems of the PAR process as compared to traditional evaluation?	11. Let's say I'm a principal from out of state, and I say to you I've heard you have this PAR program, how would you describe it to me? 12. How do you feel about the PAR program? 13. How, if at all, is your relationship with your teachers in PAR different

	15. What do you think about teachers evaluating other teachers? 16. How, if at all, has PAR affected teacher accountability in (District)? 17. How, if at all, has PAR improved the quality of decisions about employment continuation? Not improved? In other words, do you find that the quality of teachers has improved overall or do you feel there are still the same amount of ineffective teachers now as when PAR was implemented? Can you give me an example (that	than your relationship with your other teachers? 14. Fast-forward 2 or 3 years. Best case scenario: the district has a PAR program successfully in place. (District) is lauded as having a model PAR program for the state. Take a moment to visualize what life for educators in the district looks like. Can you tell me how things are different than they are now? PROBE: For teachers? For principals? For recruitment of teachers to the district? For retention of new teachers? For teachers

	helps me understand what this looks like in practice)? 18. How is it different having a teacher do evaluations compared to a principal?	performing below standard? What will the role of the principal look like?
Closing	19. Is there anything more you would like to tell me?	15. Is there anything more you would like to tell me?

APPENDIX B

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Dear:

My name is Kristin Hartloff. I am a graduate student under the direction of Dr. Erica Bowers at California State University, Fullerton.

I am conducting a study to explore how teacher evaluation is affected by the involvement of peer evaluators. I will be studying the perspectives of Peer Assistance and Review (PAR) Consulting Teachers and elementary principals who have participated in the PAR program. My study aims to add to the understanding of the PAR process, where peers and evaluators work side by side to evaluate teachers, and to inform districts regarding the use of Consulting Teachers within their district. I hope that my study can lead to understanding of the role of peer evaluators within individual school contexts, and how teachers experience the evaluation process at that level.

Your participation will involve one interview of approximately 45 minutes in length. I would also appreciate the opportunity to follow up via phone or email if I have any questions or clarifications needed as I investigate my findings. You will not be required to answer any questions that make you feel uncomfortable.

Results of this study may be published, but no names or identifying information will be included for publication. Results will be reported in a confidential format, using pseudonyms to protect the identities of the participants. Research records will be kept confidential to the extent allowed by law. Data will be stored on the researcher's personal password-protected computer and will be destroyed after one year. Only the researcher will have access to collected data.

Your participation is voluntary and you are free to withdraw from participation at any time without suffering penalty or loss of benefits or services you may otherwise be entitled to.

If you have additional questions, please contact Kristin Hartloff at (714) 470-1691 or kristinhartloff@gmail.com. You may also contact my faculty advisor Dr. Erica Bowers at (657) 278-4530 or ebowers@fullerton.edu. If you have any questions about the rights of human research participants contact the CSUF IRB Office at (657) 278-7640 or irb@fullerton.edu.

There is no conflict of interest on the part of the researcher relating to the results of this study.

I have carefully read and/or I have had the terms used in this consent form and their significance explained to me. By signing below, I agree that I am at least 18 years of age and agree to participate in this project.