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Mentoring Experience Perceptions of Career Changing Teachers on Guam

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Abstract

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Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

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Abstract

Teacher attrition continues to impact public schools that seek to retain teachers in the classroom and meet rising enrollment rates. The recruitment of experienced career changing professionals into the educational workforce is a viable option to address teacher shortages. In addition, while the use of mentorship may support teacher retention and job satisfaction for novice teachers, inconsistencies in mentoring practices have limited the effectiveness of mentoring programs and support systems. The problem of limited research that examines the needs of career changing teachers (CCTs) and their initial mentoring experiences was addressed in this study. The social learning theory and Maslow's hierarchy of needs frameworks were used in this phenomenological study to explore perceptions of 15 novice CCTs from the middle or high school levels, who had completed 1 to 5 years of teaching service. The research questions focused on CCTs' perceptions of their mentoring experience, and the support they needed as novice teachers. Data collected from 2 rounds of semistructured interviews were analyzed with a multilevel coding approach to identify patterns and emergent themes. Emergent themes revealed CCTs' experiences and skills as viable teaching candidates, perceptions of their mentoring experiences, and support and retention needs. The findings revealed CCTs' desire for support in mentorship availability and quality, improvement in instructional pedagogy, and the promotion of emotional resiliency and job satisfaction. Recommendations point to the need for mentorship as ongoing practice, the personalization of mentorship programs, and the leveraging of professional development practices to provide mentoring support. The major implications for social change are the improvement of mentoring program design and the implementation for the development and retention of highly effective teachers to impact student achievement.

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Dedication

I dedicate this study to my family. To my loving wife Aileen. We started this journey together and this accomplishment is as much yours as it is mine. You've always pushed me to achieve more than I have ever thought I could or even deserved. Your patience and belief in me has helped me to continue this journey despite the many days of uncertainty and nights of doubt. All that I have accomplished is a direct result of your love and support. To my son Connor. I hope you may look back at this as something that may inspire and encourage you. I know you don't know all the details of a doctoral study nor the research contained within at this point, but I hope that one day, by reading this, you understand that it was not just a body of work, but a promise to provide you with a better future. To my daughter Ava. I started this before your were born, and your life seemed to run parallel to this experience as well. It didn't start off as we had planned and there were some delays before we got ourselves up and running, but here we are. Ready. Bright. Beautiful. I also dedicate this study to my parents, who instilled in me the values of finishing what I set out to do and most importantly doing it the right way; no matter how long it takes. Finally, I dedicate this study to all our newest teachers whose voices are seldom heard and whose struggles may go unrecognized. May your sacrifices lead you to success and your influence bloom to be a positive force in the life of a child.

Acknowledgments

I am thankful and incredibly humbled to have been given an opportunity to fulfill a lifelong dream. In this journey, I received the unwavering support of my family, friends, and mentors. I want to acknowledge my Walden instructors, support staff, advisers, and most especially my doctoral committee for their encouragement and guidance as I navigated the challenges and successes of my journey. I want to first acknowledge my doctoral study chairperson, Dr. Rachel Pienta, whose patience and encouragement kept me moving forward despite the many nights of wanting to give up. You pointed me in the right direction. You stood by my side despite my doubts. You saw in me what I could accomplish rather than point out what I could not. Your guidance and support was integral to my success, and I am forever blessed and eternally grateful to have had you as my mentor. Dr. Daniel Baer, you gave me much needed insight and perspective. I am thankful for your support, especially in ensuring that I was looking at my study with fresh eyes. You helped me see some of the intracacies of research that I either missed or took for granted. Thank you for helping me maintain a sense of professionalism that sometimes gets forgotten as I was grinding through the work. I am also thankful for the support and guidance of Dr. Dan Cernusca. You have helped me understand the value of research. You helped me see that the research process done the right way, may impact not just the problem we are trying to solve, but also the professional we intend to be. I am both humbled and inspired by the opportunity that Walden University provided for me. I hope to continue to work towards and impact social change, and carry forth the values that Walden University has instilled in me.

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Section 1: Introduction to the Study

Teachers are the most important factor in influencing student achievement in the classroom. As such, the need for highly qualified teachers has been the driving force for schools seeking improvements in student achievement (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2016). Furthermore, the Alliance for Excellent Education (2016), a Washington, DC–based national policy and advocacy organization, added that "to achieve a fundamental transformation of education and help students meet the higher performance set by the common core standards, the very culture of how teachers are supported must change" (p. 1). The need for qualified teachers in the classroom is underpinned by the need for quality instruction for students.

In 2014, the United States Department of Education and the National Center for Education (NCES) reported that the number of public elementary and secondary school teachers is projected to increase by 13% between the years of 2011 and 2022 (NCES, 2014). Additionally, the NCES further projects that new teacher hires are expected to increase 29% between the years 2011 and 2022. The projection results in an influx of 367,000 new teachers over the course of the next 11 years and merits a renewed focus on new teacher support and retention. The National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (2016) has identified high quality induction and mentoring programs as necessary practices to support teacher retention. Peske, Liu, Johnson, Kauffman, and Kardos (2017) further added that teacher shortages are the result of districts failing to retain rather than recruit teachers.

Yet, despite nearly 3.8 million teachers who work in various schools across the nation and its territories, there is still a need for highly certified teachers. The need for highly qualified teachers is especially felt in districts serving underprivileged and high minority student populations (Kelly & Northrop, 2015; Tricarico, Jacobs, & Yendol-Hoppey, 2015). Teacher attrition impacts schools as teachers who leave the profession or move from school to school leave behind a need for continuity in the classroom, financial costs for rehiring and training new personnel, and the loss of knowledge and experience that may be beneficial to schools in the long term (Buchanan, Prescott, & Schuck, 2013; Goldhaber & Cowan, 2014; Howes & Goodman-Delahunty, 2015). As a result of high teacher attrition rates in underserved areas of the nation and its territories, school districts have continued practice of limited term hires or emergency hires in order to fill classroom vacancies (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2016; Wilkins & Comber, 2015).

While traditional teacher preparation programs continue to provide training for prospective teachers, many potential new teachers with experience in fields outside of education are seeking to change their careers by taking advantage of alternative certification routes to help fill the needs of schools seeking certified professionals (Anderson, Fry, & Hourcade, 2014; Koehler, Feldhaus, Fernandez, & Hundley, 2013). The move of career professionals into the field of education has had implications on the quality of novice teachers (Fontaine, Kane, Duquette, & Savoie-Zajc, 2012; Lynch, 2012). New career changers, many of whom take advantage of alternative certification routes, provide transitional skills and work experiences that may benefit their transition to

education. Additionally, the alternate certification routes available to candidates help to increase the diversity, professionalism, and applicable experiences of these candidates for school districts' selection pools (Nielson, 2016).

Career changers provide an untapped potential workforce that may help address the growing need for qualified teachers in the classroom (Williams, 2013). In a study conducted by Marinell and Johnson (2013), the researchers reviewed 20 years of school staffing data and found that first time career changer employment doubled between the years of 1998-2008. Marinell and Johnson further projected that "If the percentage of midcareer entrants grows at the same average annual rate that it has over the past 20 years, this subgroup of exceptions might soon comprise nearly one half of the new teacher workforce" (p. 767). Researchers agreed that career changers may provide the necessary pool of talent and source of recruitment needed to address teacher shortages especially in hard to staff fields of study or school districts (Kelly & Northrop, 2015; Nielsen, 2016; Wilkins & Comber, 2015). The combination of teacher attrition and teacher shortages, especially in key areas of math and science, has created an opportunity for career changers to fill a need in education (Ingesoll, 2012; Koehler et al., 2013). This is due in part to a retiring Baby Boom era of teachers and a Gen X/Y generation workforce projected to transition through various job cycles in their career (Anderson Fry, & Hourcade, 2014; Wagner & Imanuel-Noy, 2014).

Professionals seeking to change their careers to the field of education bring established work experience, skill sets, and content knowledge into the school system. By considering the skills and abilities that career changers offer, schools may benefit from

individuals who may transition into the classroom with a perceived sense of maturity, real world career skills, and content applicable knowledge (Tan, 2012; Wagner & Imanuel-Noy, 2014; Williams, 2013). Traditionally trained teachers undertake mandated coursework and may hold temporary employment for the duration of their studies as they learn the philosophical and best practices of education. In this way traditionally trained teachers learn how to prepare for their new and sometimes first career within the confines of the educational program itself. In contrast, CCTs also known as nontraditional teachers or second-career teachers, possess practical skills or subject expertise gained through years of experience in their previous career as well as established conceptions of teaching and learning derived from professional life experiences (Peske et al., 2013; Tigchelaar, Vermunt, & Brouwer, 2014). In this way, CCTs are in the unique position to implement their skill sets gained from their previous career as they occur within the workings of the school system. These skill sets may include communication skills (to address school stakeholders), personnel management skills and maturity (to implement classroom management), data analysis skills (to review student assessment and evaluation), collaboration skills (to participate in professional learning communities and embrace student diversity), and organizational skills and work habits (to apply lesson planning and technology use).

Since the 1980s, there have been greater efforts to recruit second career teachers as a means to address teacher shortages and the impact of teacher attrition on school systems (Hung & Smith, 2012; Marinell & Johnson, 2013). As such, the availability of alternate routes to teacher certification and training has provided greater opportunity for

career changers to make the transition into the classrooms (Marinell & Johnson, 2013; Peske et al., 2013). Hart (2010) adds "these opportunities have been fed by policy changes that opened up teacher certification to 'non-traditional' candidates, and were often linked to state regulatory actions authorizing newer types of teacher education programs" (p. 4). However while alternative certification programs have made it possible for more career changing professionals to transition into the nation's classrooms, researchers have noted that these programs vary in implementation and are informed by limited data on the specific needs of career changers (Hung & Smith, 2012; Marinell & Johnson, 2013; Wilkins & Comber, 2015). Researchers further found little connection between candidates' training routes and teacher certification type in relation to teacher effectiveness and competency in the classroom, but noted that alternatively certified teachers expressed feeling less prepared than their traditionally trained counterparts (Hung & Smith, 2012; Kee, 2012; Waterman & He, 2011). Additionally, Zhang and Zeller (2016) reiterated that many states continue to have conflicting views on how to best train new teachers.

Still, career changing professionals may provide increased gender and minority diversity when compared to their traditionally trained colleagues, and may offset their perceptions of formal preparation with their perceived readiness of skill sets and professional experience (Williams, 2013). However, while career changers may possess perceived advantages in transitioning into the classroom, researchers also pointed to the need for continued support of CCTs who experience the same pitfalls as other first year teachers in the classroom (Tan, 2012; Wagner & Imanuel-Noy, 2014)

Guam, a U.S territory, has experienced teacher shortages and factors that contribute to teacher attrition similar to its stateside counterparts. The Guam Department of Education (GDOE) provides public education for approximately 30,000 island students and employs 2,486 professionals to conduct and support instruction in the classroom. However, GDOE continues to struggle from teacher shortages notably from teachers leaving the department within the first three years or seeking retirement. Researchers have further pointed that nearly half of the new teachers entering the field will leave the workforce after only serving briefly in the profession (Ingersoll & Smith, 2013). Since school year (SY) 2010-2011, GDOE reported a need for over 200 teachers annually and has projected that 724 (18%) of its current teacher workforce is near retirement. While teacher training and retention continues to be the focus for teacher certification programs and professional development, the speed in which teaching candidates are prepared through a traditional teacher training program is not sufficient to fill teacher shortages on every given year. Additionally, the requirements set forth by the US Department of Education's No *Child Left Behind Act*, and Guam public law 28-45 *Every Child is Entitled to an Adequate Education,* has increased mandates for the district to ensure its schools are provided with highly qualified educators.

Statement of the Problem

Teacher attrition continues to impact public schools that seek to retain teachers in the classroom and meet rising enrollment rates. The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) projected that teacher shortages will continue well into 2030. The UNESCO Institute for Statistics (2013) estimated "the

world will need an extra 3.3 million primary teachers and 5.1 million lower secondary teachers in classrooms by 2030 to provide children with basic education" (p.1). In the United States, while teacher attrition rates have remained steady through 2012-2013, the National Center of Educational Statistics (NCES; 2014) still found that 13% of the teacher workforce moved from one school to another and 7% left the profession entirely. Moreover, teacher retention of highly qualified teachers is the key to addressing teacher shortages and student achievement in U.S public schools (Buchanan et al., 2013; Kelly & Northrop, 2015; Torres, 2012). The need for highly qualified content area teachers in U.S classrooms will continue to increase due to a combination of factors including, but not limited to, a retiring teacher workforce, new teachers leaving the profession in the first three years, a growing student population, and educational policy (Buchanan et al, 2013; Zhang & Zellers, 2016). In understanding the factors that lead to teacher attrition, researchers identified the challenges of increased teacher workload, lack of mentorship and meaningful professional development, and lack of classroom management skills as contributing factors to new teachers leaving the profession (Ashiedo & Scott-Ladd, 2012; Craig, 2014; Schaefer, Long, & Clandinin, 2012). As such, new teachers experience greater stress and isolation due to the lack of available supports during their first years of teaching (Ingersoll & Strong, 2012; Janzen & Phelan, 2015; Hong, 2012). Researchers further pointed to the financial strain and impact of high teacher turnover on the quality of schools affected by teacher attrition (Bastian, McCord, Marks, & Carpenter, 2017; Ingersoll, 2012). By establishing positive mentoring

opportunities, schools in turn foster values of resiliency, effort, and persistence which may provide novice teachers with the tools needed for further teacher retention.

The recruitment of experienced career changing professionals into the educational workforce is a viable option to address teacher shortages. Researchers have identified key qualities of career changers that make their recruitment advantageous to schools including greater sense of commitment, desire to engage in purposeful and meaningful work, and standards of work ethic (Bauer, Thomas, & Sim, 2017). The effort to recruit and retain career changing professionals combined with the advantages of alternative certification routes will increase the talent pool of candidacy for professionals seeking to fill vacant positions in schools across the nation.

On Guam, greater efforts are being undertaken to identify, train, and retain highly qualified teachers, especially CCTs, who possess work experience in their content area of instruction and skill sets that support their transition into the classroom. In an effort to recruit, train, and retain highly qualified teachers, in particular professionals who already possess a bachelor's degree, the University of Guam (UOG) implemented its High Qualified Teacher (HQT) program as part of its Master in Arts of Teaching (MAT) program. One component of the HQT program provides for CCTs to engage in a fast track program to gain teacher certification to work in the Guam Department of Education. Through this alternative route, CCTs undertake coursework for teacher certification that was previously only offered at the undergraduate level. Since its inception in 2009, the UOG/HQT program has seen a steady influx of career changing professionals seeking to make the transition into the classroom. Although many are enthusiastic and eager to teach

in the island classrooms for the first time, many soon find themselves struggling to meet the expectations and responsibilities of the teaching profession for which they felt trained to do. As such, CCTs who seemingly possess advantages in work experience, skill sets, and content knowledge are faring no better than their traditionally trained counterparts. This is consistent with research findings as new teachers, regardless of background experience, need the pedagogical support for transitioning into a new profession (Clark & Byrnes, 2012; Hallam, Nien, Chou, Hite, & Hite, 2012; Ingersoll, 2012; Smeaton & Waters, 2013).

The lack of meaningful mentorship opportunities creates a gap between preparation and practice for these career-changing teachers. As a result, many new career changers who enter the profession on Guam may only receive limited, formalized one to one mentoring opportunities upon entering their first year of service beyond minimal and periodic exposure to professional development at their schools. Researchers have pointed to new teachers' first years being filled with isolation and with little or no support (Aloe, Amo, & Shanahan, 2014; Battersby & Verdi, 2015; Buchanan et al., 2013; Goldrick, Osta, Barlin, & Burn, 2012; Ingersoll et al. 2012; Janzen & Phelan , 2015) . The continued experience of isolation and the need to address its impact through continued teacher induction, mentoring, and professional development is further identified in previous studies (Cook, 2012; Fontaine et al., 2012; Hong, 2012; Ingersoll et al., 2012). This creates an increased learning curve of applying best practices in the classroom during teachers' first three years of service. These issues continue to increase the

likelihood of teacher attrition and contribute to ongoing teacher shortages for island schools.

Researchers continued to support the recruitment of career-changing teachers (Anderson et al., 2014; Tan, 2012; Williams, 2013). However, researchers have determined that these teachers are more likely to leave the profession within the first years of their teaching career compared to their traditionally trained counterparts if they do not feel they are making significant impact or improvement in their performance (Fontaine et al. 2012). Researchers asserted that the challenge of retaining CCTs is the assumption that career changers, while possessing career experience can naturally translate those experiences into classroom pedagogy and student learning (Haim & Amdur, 2016; Snyder, Oliveira, & Paska, 2013; Watters & Diezmann, 2015). As such, mentorship is a key component of teacher preparation that goes beyond the standard expectations of candidate internship in their respective traditional or nontraditional certification program.

On Guam, while some efforts have been made to provide mentorship opportunities for new teachers, most experiences have been limited. Although The UOG HQT/MAT program has provided mentorship for program graduates during their first full year of teaching, the mentoring process has been limited to monthly face to face contact which leaves little opportunity for certification graduates with immediate guidance and support. The district mentoring program while still in its infancy has identified teacher mentors who work exclusively with new teachers throughout the district. However, due to having only a few mentors employed, most mentors find themselves working with a

greater number of new teachers than expected. Additionally, since there are more new teachers entering the district than available mentors, most mentees do not receive mentoring support until well after their first year of teaching. Also, while some schools in the district may provide new teacher mentorship throughout the year, these efforts differ from school to school, and often utilize veteran teachers who may not have the available time or training to properly mentor new teachers due to their own teaching responsibilities. In this way, it becomes increasingly important for the district to provide mentorship support that aligns with the realities of the teaching context in Guam schools.

In particular, CCTs have reported difficulty in making the transition to the realities of teaching in their first year. While some have highlighted their ability to adapt and seek support as needed, most have questioned the effectiveness of their mentorship experience. In this way the availability of mentorship opportunities is not enough to add to the preparation of graduates nor the quality of the mentorship experience. While researchers have concluded that the use of mentorship may support teacher retention and job satisfaction for novice teachers, evidence suggests that inconsistencies in mentoring practices have limited the effectiveness of mentoring programs and support systems. Moreover, there is limited research that examines the needs of CCTs and their initial mentoring experiences. The problem on Guam is that there is a lack of local research that examines the initial mentoring experiences of new CCTs in their first years of teaching and the support they needed as a result of those perceived experiences. There is also a lack of available research that examines the training needs of CCTs, many of whom are entering the field of education.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to explore CCTs perceptions of their mentoring experience during their first years of teaching. Additionally, the study provides insight to CCTs needs for future training and development as it relates to continued retention on Guam. Furthermore, the study explored a) how CCTs described their mentoring experiences through various training and support systems available to them in their first years of teaching, and b) examined what kind of mentoring components may influence their decisions to remain in the profession.

The study focused on CCTs who have completed one to five years of teaching service in the classroom. With the growing concern of an aging teacher workforce and the transient nature of teachers in their first years; retention has become an increasingly important component for both traditional and nontraditional teaching programs. While CCTs may possess a perceived advantage in content knowledge and experience, many are introduced to educational best practices for the first time or have only limited experience through indirect teaching activities. This study provided insight into CCTs perceived strengths, experiences, and personal motivations, and how those qualities help them to make the transition into a new career in education. Additionally, participants provided insight to their experiences as new teachers and how their experiences in turn affected their sense of preparedness and professional identity.

Finally, the results from this study added to the existing body of research with regards to the necessary components that are needed to be maintained, strengthened, or provided in the future for mentoring programs and practices in the Guam school district.

The results of this study concluded which components of participants' mentoring experiences contributed to their feelings of preparedness and satisfaction. Researchers asserted that a strong connection between mentoring and positive outcomes for mentees exists (Helms-Lorenz, van de Grift, & Maulana, R, 2016; Kearney, 2014; Polikoff et al., 2015). Researchers further agreed that induction and mentoring programs provided novice teachers with the support needed to improve instructional practices, address experiences with isolation and burnout, and instill reflective practice (Aloe et al. 2014; Battersby & Verdi, 2015; Buchanan et al., 2013; Janzen & Phelan , 2015; Hong , 2012). Additionally, mentoring and additional support practices helped develop novice teachers' professional identities in the form of confidence, self-efficacy beliefs, and resiliency (Doney, 2013; Gibbs & Miller, 2014; Greenfield, 2015; Hong, 2012). Furthermore, the support provided to novice teachers in the form of improvements in instructional practice, content-specific pedagogy, emotional support, and development of professional identity impacts job satisfaction and teacher retention.

In particular, job satisfaction has a significant impact for CCTs and their prospects for retention. In a study by Bauer et al. (2017), the researchers found that employment stability, work/life balance, and personal fulfillment and meaning were the factors that determined career changers' job satisfaction and eventual attrition from, or retention in the profession. Researchers have also determined that job satisfaction and happiness is more important, in some instances, than working conditions and salary compensation (De Stercke, Goyette, & Robertson, 2015). Researchers asserted that when job satisfaction is high there is a greater likelihood for teacher retention (Kidd et al.,

2015; Kirkpatrick & Moore Johnson, 2014). The implementation of mentoring practices during the first years of instruction impacts the development of novice teachers' professional identity (Bastia et al., 2017; Stallions, Murrill, & Earp, 2012). By supporting and investing in the development of novice teachers' professional identity and development, schools may impact job satisfaction, self-efficacy beliefs, and teacher retention (Harfitt, 2015; Tricarico et al., 2015).

Research Questions

This study gained insight into CCTs' perceptions of their mentoring experiences during their first years of teaching experience. The study provides insight to understanding the following overarching research questions:

1. How do career changing teachers perceive their mentoring experiences during their first years in the teaching profession?
2. What are career changing teachers' needs for support during the first years of teaching?

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study is based on elements of social constructivist theory (Bandura, 1977; Bandura, 1997; Kirschner, Sweller, & Clark, 2006), social cognitive theory (Kozulin, 1990; Petrova, 2013; Vygotsky, 1962, 1978), and the hierarchy of needs theory (Maslow, 1943, 1954) as a theoretical base. The use of multiple theories provides an avenue for understanding the process of mentoring and the roles of mentors and mentees in contrast to the element of pure discovery teaching-learning that often guides constructivist theory (Kirschner et al., 2006; Mayer, 2004). The first years of

teaching provide novice teachers with opportunities to discover and experience the realities of the profession for the first time. In constructivist theory, the novice teacher then discovers and develops, through their experiences, their personal approaches to problem solving in their first years of teaching in *learning by doing*, often with minimal guidance (Mayer, 2004). However, Kirschner et al. (2006) argue skill acquisition for novice learners is most effective when there is strong and direct instructional guidance rather than by a pure learning by doing constructivist approach. This may translate into the realm of new teacher mentorship as novice teachers, in the role, of mentees, may receive the instructional guidance from mentors.

Social constructivist theory helps novice teachers to construct their understanding of the world through their interactions within a group, and is often attributed to the work of Lev Vygotsky (Petrova, 2013). Social constructivism establishes the need for social interaction to aid in cognitive development (Kozulin, 1990; Vygotsky, 1962). While the original work of Vygotsky in the development of social constructivism addressed the learning of children, the theory parallels the learning process of novice teachers seeking understanding of their new surroundings and profession. In Vygotsky's original work with children, it was premised that students will socially construct an understanding of their experience through their interactions with other individuals or cultures (Vygotsky, 1962). Moreover, the social constructivist theory has implications for mentoring wherein a peer teacher with more experience or skills may help structure or assist a novice teacher in various tasks (Kozulin, 1990). Vygotsky (1978) contributed two principles that readily apply to the process of mentorship. The first concept is that of the "More Knowledgeable

Other (MKO)" as an individual who possesses more knowledge than the learner. The second concept is known as the Zone of Proximal Development or ZPD which establishes a point in which a learner can achieve independently and a point in which the learner needs guidance and support from a skilled partner (Vygotsky, 1978). In social constructivist theory, as guided by the work of Vygotsky and paralleled to the process of mentorship, the MKO (mentor) works with the learner (novice teacher) to navigate the experiences of preservice learning to their first years of teaching experience (ZPD) by providing guidance and instruction to help the learner develop the skills they will need to work independently in the future.

The work of Bandura's (1977) social learning theory provides another dimension to the conceptual framework of this study. Bandura states that an individual's environment and observation of that environment affects the behavior of the individual. This early work in social learning theory premised that learners observe and encode behaviors that they later imitate and continue with positive or negative reinforcement (Bandura, 1977). The early work of Bandura's social learning theory would link to later work centered on the perceptions of self-efficacy and cognitive development, notably for teachers (Bandura, 1993). Teacher self-efficacy is an individual's belief and confidence that they can promote learning (Hoy, 2000). Bandura (1997) stated that as teacher efficacy increases so does their resiliency, effort, and persistence, while low self-efficacy increases stress, anxiety, and depression. This has prompted numerous research studies on teacher efficacy and its impact on teacher decision making, stress levels, peace of mind, and desire to remain in the profession (Dibapile, 2012; Klassen, Tze, & Gordon,

2011;Swackhamer, Koellner, Basile, & Kimbrough, 2009). Bandura's theories on learned behavior and teacher efficacy influence mentorship practice as mentors undertake the role of "models," whose behaviors may be observed and positively imitated by novice teachers (Bandura, 1977). Positive behaviors by the model may be deemed as positive reinforcement for novice teachers to continue such behavior in their own practice. These positive behaviors including continued guided support through the mentorship process, in turn, may result in an increase in self-efficacy for novice teachers, and address issues of teacher attrition and mobility.

Furthermore, this study explored teachers' perceptions and needs in relation to their mentorship experiences. In the context of this study, teachers' perceptions are supported through Maslow's needs theory wherein a hierarchy of needs is addressed through the mentorship process. Maslow (1943) posited that all individuals seek to satisfy five basic needs characterized as physiological, safety, belonging-love, self-esteem, and self-actualization and organized as a hierarchy of importance. As individuals satisfy each level of need, the individual seeks to satisfy the next level of the needs hierarchy and fluctuates between levels as their life changes through experiences. With the desire to reach the stage of self-actualization, Maslow (1954) further posited that individuals who are able to attain self-actualization may reach the point of achieving their individual potential. Maslow later identified the qualities of self-actualization that may translate to educational performance through mentoring including flexibility, problem-centered decision making, satisfying interpersonal relationships, and strong moral/ethical standards (Maslow, 1954). As novice teachers meet their basic needs (physiological,

safety, and social needs) on a personal level, mentorship may help novice teachers to meet their professional needs (social, self-esteem, and self-actualization). These needs (social constructivism) transition to the building of their self-esteem (teacher efficacy), and finally to self-actualization (needs theory) as a practicing professional. Maslow's need theory also has implications for the study, as it explores CCTs perceptions of their mentoring experiences in meeting their needs as novice teachers.

As such the conceptual framework for this study centered on the development of the CCTs as they seek to navigate the various phases of their mentorship experience. The development of the CCT, through various components of activity or phases may serve as a guide to understanding participants' experiences through different aspects of their mentoring experience, and various points of an organization's structure and culture. The essence of Kram's (1983) identified stages of initiation, cultivation, separation, and redefinition provide a structure for understanding formal or informal mentorship experiences through components of induction, collaboration & professional development, professional practice, and reflective practice.

Kram's (1983) four phases of mentoring relationship provides guidance through the identification of a four component framework for formal mentoring programs. This framework of progression towards self-sufficiency, job satisfaction, and eventually retention may also be supported through Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs theory. As an individual transcends each level of need, Maslow asserted that increased levels of satisfaction are obtained as a result of increased self-esteem. Self-esteem in turn is developed as a result of feelings of success and accomplishment. As such the hierarchy

of need theory is grounded on the basis of an individual's desire to have his needs met in each level in order to progress to each subsequent level towards satisfaction (Maslow, 1943). Maslow premises that when an individual reaches the level of self-actualization, he may achieve greater satisfaction in the endeavor, in this case teaching retention that was undertaken. Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory is applied to the conceptual framework by premising that each component of the four component mentoring framework, similar to Kram's phases, is representative of a level of need for the mentee. As mentees' needs are met in each mentoring component, the mentee gains greater satisfaction from the experience and moves deeper into the transformation from novice to peer.

Nature of the Study

This study utilized a phenomenological research design to understand the perceptions of 15 CCTs mentoring experiences in their first years of teaching in Guam classrooms. Creswell (2008) pointed to the importance of the qualitative approach in gathering data from the individual perspectives of the participants. Merriam (2009) added "qualitative researchers are interested in understanding the meaning people have constructed, that is, how people makes sense of their world and the experiences they have in the world" (p. 13). Lodico, Spaulding, and Voegtle (2010) reiterated "qualitative researchers believe that full understanding of phenomena is dependent on the context, and so they use theories primarily after data collection to help them interpret the patterns observed" (p.6). Merriam (2009) further added to the merits of qualitative study design as "all qualitative research is interested in how meaning is constructed, how people make

sense of their lives and their worlds. The primary goal of a basic qualitative study is to uncover and interpret these meanings" (p.24). Additionally, participants' narrative responses add to the understanding of their experiences. Creswell (2008) stated that "for educators looking for personal experiences in actual school settings, narrative research offers practical, specific insights" (p. 512). For this study, data collection was conducted through interviews and narrative responses by CCTs with one to five years of teaching service in the Guam Public School System. This study examined the mentorship experiences of a group of CCTs in their first years of teaching on Guam. This study contributed to the body of knowledge needed to address the perceptions of preparedness for CCTs in their first years of teaching, and their insights for improvement of future mentorship practices to support their retention and the retention of future prospective teachers.

Definition of Terms

Career changing teachers (CCTs): For the purpose of this study, career changing teachers are those participants whose previous work experience prior to teaching was in a career field outside of education. These participants may cite the fields of business, medicine, health, military, legal, religious, or other professions outside of education as their primary career prior to teaching in the classroom or have retired from a previous profession entirely. A definition established in a study by Hart Research Associates (2010) defines career changers as "individuals who entered teaching after working three or more years in a different field (p. 8)". As it applies to this study, participants may have also been enrolled in a teacher preparation or certification program while

concurrently employed during their first years of teaching. The term career changer will be used interchangeably with *career changing teacher* or *second career teacher* in this study.

Fast Track Certification Program: A program designed to provide students with a direct route to teacher certification by condensing course schedules and timeframes for completion.

Induction: A program of professional development and orientation activities designed for those who have completed basic employment processes and preservice training (Ingersoll & Smith, 2003). Ingersoll and Strong (2011) further added "Teacher induction can refer to a variety of different types of activities for new teachers – orientation sessions, faculty collaborative periods, meetings with supervisors, developmental workshops, extra classroom assistance, reduced workloads, and, especially, mentoring" (p. 5).

Mentoring: As described by researchers (Hellsten, Prytula, & Ebanks, 2009; Ingeroll and Strong, 2009), the mentoring process is an establishment of formal or informal relationships wherein guidance from a veteran teacher is provided to support novice teachers.

Mentor: A seasoned teacher or working colleague with more seniority, content matter expertise, and/or experience who provides support, guidance, and advocacy to a novice teacher (Dawson, 2014).

Mentee: A novice teacher who enters a mentoring relationship and receives support, guidance, and advocacy from a mentor.

Novice teacher: Jackson (2009) described novice teachers as those who both are new to the profession and possess limited teaching skills and experience or those who have some experience but still perform with a novice skill set.

Teacher Attrition: A reduction in the number of teachers as a result of teachers leaving the profession (Fontaine, Kane, Duquette, & Savoie-Zajc, 2012; Schaefer, Long, & Clandinin, 2012).

Teacher retention: The process or result of teachers remaining or returning to their professional assignment at their identified school.

Assumptions, Limitations, Scope, and Delimitations

I assumed that participants in the study provided open and truthful responses to the interview questions or written prompts. Another assumption was that the data collected provide an accurate presentation of mentoring practices in the identified school district. Finally, I made the assumption that participants' documented experiences were similar to the experiences of other novice teachers across other demographic areas.

The study is a qualitative design limited to the personalized mentoring experiences of 15 CCTs. These perceptions are unique and may not be reflective and generalized to all CCTs across the nation. The study is also limited to public, middle and high school teachers who completed one year of classroom instruction and serving in the first five years of teaching service. The study is not representative of teachers currently employed in private schools, charter schools, catholic schools, or those who have left the profession. The study does not take into account elementary school teachers who may have had similar experiences. Participant responses are also limited to the qualitative

research design and the data collection strategy used in this study. Quantitative data collection was not utilized and the study does not include quantitative data triangulation (Creswell, 2008; Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2009).

The scope of the study encompasses the implementation of formal mentoring programs or informal practices provided for CCTs through the respective school site or district. While the scope of the study may help address similar school districts in the region, it may not be reflective of the school districts across the nation.

Significance

The study explored the need for new teacher mentoring to address the issue of teacher retention. Researchers have provided support for induction and mentoring programs, both formal and informal, as a means to address teacher attrition (Adoniou, 2016; Carmel & Paul, 2015; Helms-Lorenz et al, 2016; Hudson, 2012; Huling, Resta, & Yeargain, 2012), professional development and school improvement (Battersby & Verdi, 2015; Hamilton, 2013; Ingersoll & Perda, 2013; Kahrs & Wells, 2012) and policy (Fontaine et al., 2012; Kane & Francis, 2013; Lynch, 2012; Mullen, 2011). Consequently, the support provided to beginning teachers during the first years of the profession plays an integral role to their retention (Fontaine et al., 2012; Hudson, 2016).

This study is also significant for mentoring program designers in developing or strengthening current mentoring practices. This study may provide program designers with insights to the needs of CCTs in conjunction with existing research that identifies viable design elements for a framework of mentoring (Dawson, 2014) in an effort to establish a viable model of mentorship for the Guam Department of Education. This

provides CCTs additional opportunities to provide input for future mentorship program design as researchers have pointed to program inconsistencies in mentor training (Ingersoll, 2012; Kane & Francis, 2013; Kearney, 2014), mentor-mentee pairings (Yuan, 2016), and time and instructional demands (Polikoff et al., 2015). The study may help program administrators to identify needed components of their programs to better accommodate future candidates.

The focus of this study examined the perceptions of 15 CCTs mentoring experiences during their first years of teaching. This focus may help to determine if there is a relationship between the quality of support the participants received and their desire to continue in the teaching profession. This study added to the body of existing research that supports the need for quality teachers in the classroom and quality mentoring support provided to new teachers.

The results of the data gathered through interviews with CCTs in their first years of the teaching profession may provide district policy makers with information needed to impact social change. By examining the themes that emerged from the stories of these participants, policy makers may become more aware of current mentoring practices in the Guam school district and its impact on new teachers decisions to remain in the teaching profession. In the U.S, although there has been research conducted to study alternatively certified teachers' training and performance, most have yet to specifically target CCTs and have yielded inconsistent or inconclusive results (Linek et al., 2012). This study is significant as research related to CCTs training and mentoring experiences are limited on Guam. Additionally, the study may be significant to Guam educational policy makers as

research reports do not explore the perceptions of mentoring experiences of new teachers locally. These results may be significant if they lead to curricular modifications to the mentoring programs or supports offered to teachers on Guam.

The study provided opportunities for stakeholders in mentoring programs to improve current practices to address identified concerns. This study created a discussion point to help address teacher turnover and increase support for job satisfaction of beginning teachers. An increase in the retention and proper mentoring of these valuable and viable professionals impacts social change by ensuring that highly qualified professionals are practicing in our classrooms (Rodgers & Skelton, 2014; Hudson, 2016; Long et al., 2012). In particular, by limiting the turnover and attrition of CCTs, the opportunity to retain professionals with an established work experience, an understanding of practical applications of course content, and working knowledge of the soft skills needed to navigate established school cultures is increased (Long et al., 2012; Hudson, 2016; Kane & Francis, 2013). By addressing the needs of beginning teachers through improved mentoring practices, school districts may begin to limit teacher turnover and the need to retrain new teachers annually (Ingersoll, 2012). The study hopes to impact social change by addressing the practice of "sink or swim" in the field of education by ensuring that new teachers have greater support to ensure their continued success.

Summary

This study was designed to examine CCTs perspectives of their first years of teaching and the mentoring support they received throughout those experiences. Section 1 of the study described the problem of teacher shortages and the need to retain qualified

teachers in the classroom. While the profession continues to recruit new teachers into the profession, researchers found that many do not continue to practice and eventually leave within the first five years of teaching. The purpose of the study explored the perceptions of CCTs in their first years of teaching as they transition from various phases mentoring experience including induction, practice & collaboration, professional development, and reflective practice.

Section 2 provides further support for the study through the exploration of the themes of teacher attrition, retention, and mentoring practice. Through the review of literature a basis for the study of mentoring practices emerged as factors that affected teacher shortages were explored. The identification of phases of mentoring relationships were established using Kram's (1983) mentoring relationship theory with support of Vygotsky's (1962) social cognitive theory, Bandura's (1977) social learning theory, and Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs theory. This framework guides the identification of general components initiation (induction), cultivation (professional development), separation (professional practice), and redefinition (reflective practice) as CCTs navigate each phase.

Section 2: Literature Review

The purpose of this study was to explore the perceptions of CCTs mentoring experiences during their first years of teaching in the Guam Public School System. The establishment of mentoring practices serves as a support system for providing new teachers with guidance, resources, and peer support as they transition into the teaching workforce. Long et al. (2012) conducted a literature review and structured analysis of 93 research based articles on induction and mentoring as it impacted early teacher attrition. The researchers found that the link between induction and mentoring to teacher retention was inconclusive due to the complexities of the variety of mentoring programs and the external factors that influence teachers' individual decision-making. Still, the researchers noted that while induction and mentoring impacts teacher quality, greater efforts must be made develop a collaborative school culture and to cultivate novice teachers' professional identities (Long et al., 2012). This provides insight to the implementation and intention of mentoring practices as researchers asserted that despite induction and mentoring, many novice teachers continue to struggle during their first years of teaching (Hudson, 2013; Rodgers & Skelton, 2014). The implementation of quality mentoring experiences especially those that assist in developing professional identities and promote job satisfaction may provide the necessary supports needed to retain novice teachers.

This study examined the phenomena of mentoring and provides an understanding of specific components that may contribute to the effectiveness of mentoring programs. By understanding the perceptions of CCTs initial mentoring experiences, schools may gain insight to the supports needed by novice teachers in order to address issues of

teacher attrition with a goal to increase teacher efficacy in the classroom and retention in the profession (Cruther & Naseem, 2016; Hughes, Matt, & O'Reilly, 2014).

Literature Search Strategy

In this section, the review of literature on teacher mentorship was initiated through database searches from peer reviewed educational journals, books, and dissertations. The search parameters were conducted through the use of academic databases including ERIC, ProQuest, SAGE Journal, Academic Search Complete, Science Direct, and Education Source. Search criteria was limited to full text, peer reviewed content, with an emphasis on academic journals and a publication range from 2013 to 2017. Key search terms included *teacher mentoring, career changing teachers, second career teachers, teacher mentors, novice teachers, teacher induction*, and *beginning teachers*. Searches continued until the recurrence of topics and applicable studies repeated through multiple databases, or recurred through multiple search terms. Saturation was also established through a review of research bibliographies to identify common recurrences of studies. In this section, the review of literature examines the background of the study, teacher attrition and retention; induction and mentoring practices, theoretical framework of the study, and literature related to CCTs or career changers.

Conceptual Framework

While research on the practice of mentorship has been quite evident in recent years, there is also a challenge amongst researchers to properly define and provide a conceptual framework for the mentorship phenomena itself. Bozeman and Feeney (2007) argued that while hundreds of research exists on the practice of mentoring in varying fields of study, many findings only add to the utilitarian nature of mentoring rather than expounding on the conceptual base of mentoring theory. This is evidenced by numerous studies focusing on the utilitarian benefits of mentoring to impact professional growth and organizational improvement, and the varying definitions that researchers use of mentoring itself (Haggard, 2010); yet arguably fail to add to the depth and breadth of the explanatory nature of mentorship theory (Bozeman & Feeney 2007). While the origin of mentoring is vague and difficult to place with certainty, its roots may be found in the stories of classical Greek and French Literature (Zellers et al., 2008). Zellers et al. (2008) further pointed to the exploration of contemporary mentoring study in the early work of Kanter (1977) and Roche (1979) who provided a framework of studies of "sponsors" and their interactions with young personnel to navigate the organizational structures of the business setting.

These early studies provide a basis for understanding the impact of persons in a position of experience in establishing informal relationships with novices to navigate the challenges of a new professional setting. The complex human dimension of mentoring theory combined with the necessities of formalization for program design provides opportunities for researchers to explore its impact on special groups and populations in

varying circumstances. These varying dimensions of human relationship building and organizational induction provide the framework for mentoring theory to support this study. While mentoring theory as a whole appears multidirectional, there is value in exploring its dimensions to address the unique needs of career changing professionals and their needs from a human perspective and a formalized preparation perspective.

This study utilized components of social constructivist theory, social cognitive theory, and hierarchy of needs theory. The various facets of these frameworks support elements of mentoring practice which allow for the guidance of novice teachers through social support and knowledge acquisition. The support provided by experienced colleagues provides a variance to the traditional constructivist practice of learning through discovery that most novice teachers experience (Kirschner, Sweller, & Clark, 2006). Mayer (2004) added that beginning teachers gain most of their experience through discovery and a "learning by doing" approach which further propagates the belief that the first years of teaching is either "sink or swim". Researchers found that novice teachers increase the effectiveness of their skill acquisition when they are provided with strong instructional guidance rather than by learning on their own (Achinstein & Davis, 2014).

The focus of Vygotsky's (1962) contributions to social constructivist theory applies to the practice of mentoring wherein novice teachers make meaning of their professional world through their interactions within their mentors or group of colleagues. In Vygotsky's original work with children, cognitive development is constructed through

social interaction with individuals or cultures. Vygotsky (1978) further provides the concepts of the "More Knowledgeable Other (MKO)" or individual who possess greater knowledge than the learner, and the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) which establishes the learning gap between what the learner can accomplish independently and where support from a skilled partner is needed. In the context of mentoring, the work of Vygotsky applies to the mentor in the role of the MKO who provides support to the novice teacher as they navigate the first year challenges and experiences of teaching. These first year experiences may be attributed to the novice teacher's ZPD where in they seek guidance and support as they learn to develop the new skills they will need to work independently. In this way, mentoring helps novice teachers by providing a scaffold of support as they acquire the necessary knowledge to navigate the levels of understanding of teaching (De Leon, 2012)

The work of Bandura's (1977) social learning theory provides another dimension to the conceptual framework of this study. Bandura's contribution to social learning theory is also relevant to mentoring wherein behavior is impacted by ones environment and observation of that environment. Whereas Vygotsky's contributions to learning are within the framework of cognitive development, Bandura provides support on the development of behavior and self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977). Bandura asserted that learners demonstrate behaviors that they imitate through positive or negative reinforcement (Bandura, 1986). The process of learning through behavioral observation and imitation, results in the formation and continued revision of individuals' self-efficacy beliefs (Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk-Hoy, & Hoy, 1998). Bandura's theory on self-

efficacy impacted the educational landscape as the concepts apply to teachers' belief systems of their ability to impact and achieve success in the profession. Hoy (2000) stated that teacher self-efficacy is an individual's belief and confidence that they can promote learning. Snyder and Lopez (2007) described self-efficacy as a reference to skills and one's belief in accessing those abilities to accomplish their goals.

Bandura (1986) further found that self-efficacy impacts resiliency, effort, and persistence, while a low sense of self efficacy may lead to stress, anxiety, and depression. Gibbs and Miller (2014) asserted that the development of self-efficacy beliefs positively impacts teacher resiliency and identity, as novice teachers experience challenges of isolation and stress. Furthermore, Bandura's theories on learned behavior and teacher efficacy are applicable to the mentoring process wherein novice teachers learn about the profession through their environmental experiences. Novice teachers develop behavioral practices according to the positive or negative reinforcement of their decisions. Mentors play an integral role in providing support, guiding practice, or positively reinforcing novice teacher behavior to increase novice teachers' self-efficacy (Gibbs & Miller, 2014). Bandura (1997) asserted that individuals' positive self-efficacy influences behavior and results in their continued efforts to succeed in their tasks. Consequently, when individuals experience decreasing self-efficacy, it results in negative emotions which impacts their belief in having further success (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998)

Bandura (1977) identified behavior, environment, and person or cognitive factors as issues that influence the development of one's self-efficacy. Additionally, Bandura (1997) identified mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, and

physiological feedback as factors that individuals access and use to formulate their sense of self –efficacy. Of these experiences, Bandura distinguished master experiences through performance outcomes as a strong predictor for self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997). Additionally, novice teachers use their vicarious experiences through mentoring by observing and collaborating with their mentors. Verbal persuasion may also take the form of encouragement, feedback, and advice provided by mentors to their mentees. Physiological feedback results from how the novice teacher reacts to their mentoring experience. As a result these emotions, whether positive or negative, impact their beliefs and performance (Bandura, 1997).

Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory applies to the mentoring experience as novice teachers navigate their personal and professional lives. In this way, mentoring provides novice teachers with the support needed to achieve the various levels of needs on route to professional confidence and sustainability but also recognizes that external factors impact teacher decision-making and behavior. Maslow (1943) proposed five levels of needs including physiological, safety, belonging-love, self-esteem, and self-actualization as stages of human needs that an individual seeks to attain. An individual seeks to fulfill the basic needs of physiological and safety needs first, followed by the psychological needs of belonging-love and self-esteem as they strive towards the final need of self-actualization. As individuals attain the different levels of needs, they also fluctuate between levels as their lives and experiences change with the desire to reach self-actualization (Maslow, 1943).

In the context of mentoring, Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory applies to novice teachers as they seek to gain professional confidence and expertise. The novice teacher enters the profession with the ability to sustain their basic needs (physiological and safety), while mentorship provides the support to help them navigate the psychological needs (belonging-love and self-esteem) they seek from the profession. Through mentoring, the novice teacher socializes and collaborates with colleagues who intends to satisfy their need to belong, while gaining guidance on instructional practices, observation, and reflection which seeks to satisfy their self-esteem needs.

This theoretical framework has implications for the study, as it explores CCTs perceptions of their mentoring experiences in meeting their needs as novice teachers. As such the theoretical framework for this study centered on the development of the CCTs as they seek to navigate the various phases of their mentorship experience. The development of the CCT, through various components of activity or phases may serve as a guide to understanding participants' experiences through different aspects of their mentoring experience, and various points of an organization's structure and culture. In this framework, the novice teacher progresses through the various levels of need (Maslow) through their mentoring experience to develop their perceptions of these experiences (Vygotsky) which effects their behavior and self-efficacy (Bandura). As the novice teacher meets their needs at each level this increases their level of satisfaction and feelings of self-efficacy. The positive impact on self-efficacy results in feelings of success and accomplishment. As such the hierarchy of need theory is grounded on the basis of an individual's desire to have his needs met in each level in order to progress to

each subsequent level towards self actualization (Maslow, 1943). Maslow premises that when an individual reaches the level of self-actualization, he may achieve greater satisfaction in the endeavor, in this case teaching retention that was undertaken. This framework is applied to various stages of novice teachers' mentoring experience which impacts their perceptions of mentoring and the profession as a whole. As mentees' needs are met in each stage or phase of mentoring, the mentee gains greater satisfaction from the experience and moves deeper into the transformation from novice to professional.

Phases of Mentoring

Kram (1983) identified four phases of a mentoring relationship that novice teachers navigate through in their mentoring experience. These stages of initiation, cultivation, separation, and redefinition provide an understanding of the dynamics of formal or informal mentorship practice of induction, collaboration and professional development, professional practice, and reflective practice. While Kram originally identified the mentoring phases to describe the development of mentor and mentee relationships, the phases of mentoring also provide a viable framework to discuss the progression of mentoring as a whole.

Initiation. Kram (1985) described the initiation phase as characterized by a high reliance of support between the mentee and the mentor. The initiation phase is described as the first phase of mentoring wherein the reliance on mentor support is high. This phase of mentoring may include the initial orientation, and introduction of the mentee to the general school operations, personnel, and culture. In this phase the mentor and mentee

establish their initial working relationship through the general introduction of organizational processes, working culture, and administrative procedure (Kearney, 2014; Lunenberg, 2011; Pogodzinski, 2015). During this induction and orientation component, the mentee's perceptions of job satisfaction may be in flux since their needs for mentor support are high as they gain an understanding of specific job operations and processes, and begin the application of content theory into content practice. However, while induction practices have become commonplace, most schools differ in the implementation of its structures (Kearney, 2014).

Baker-Doyle (2012) further described traditional approaches to teacher orientation as focused on helping the novice teacher familiarize themselves with the existing school system rather than contributing to the change of the system. Additionally, while traditional approaches to teacher orientation may focus on administrative routines and procedures, attendance at required meetings, policy overviews, and the identification of significant personnel; most interactions between school personnel is dependent individuals efforts and discretion (Kidd et al, 2015). Ghosh (2012) argues that the role of the teacher mentor is more concerned with the novice teacher's survival in the school rather than their personal long term goals as a professional. In this way, the individual needs of the novice teacher are perceived as secondary to the knowledge of the school's operational needs (Adoniou, 2016). Mentoring also plays an integral role in novice teachers learning the appropriate professional language and jargon needed to orient themselves to the work ahead (De Leon, 2012). Vygotsky (1962) emphasizes language acquisition as an important connection to learning. In this phase, the mentor and mentee

are on different ends of Vygotsky's ZPD wherein the mentor undertakes the role of the MKO to provide scaffolding support to help the novice teacher (Vygotsky, 1972; De Leon, 2012).

Administrative leadership also has an impact on the quality of mentor trainings, selection, and pairing assignment (Hughes, Matt, & O'Reilly, 2014; Pogodzinski, 2015, Veal, Dobbins, & Kurtts, 2013). In a report by DeCesare et al. (2016), the researchers gathered data across five districts that emphasized the importance of the principals in providing the organizational structure and provisions for implementing teacher orientation. These structures and provisions helps build teacher confidence, increase collaboration, and reduce isolation. Administrators influence practices that include implementing a separate orientation day for new teachers, preparing collaborative planning activities, providing a limited and quality mix of courses for new teachers, and providing common meeting times and observation opportunities for both the mentor and mentee (Kearney, 2014; Lunenberg, 2011).

It is important for schools to establish initial teacher orientation activities that meet the individual needs of novice teachers. Kane and Francis (2013) argued that teacher induction efforts must center on the development of "teachers as learners". Current induction practices have focused on teacher compliance of school policy and procedures rather than the complex acquisition of skills needed to impact student achievement (Kane & Francis, 2013). Harfitt (2015), in a study of new teachers who leave the profession and then return, found that the initial experiences that introduce beginning teachers into their new profession has an impact on their sense of professional

identity and impacts further decisions on teacher attrition or retention. With this in mind, the initial support provided by mentors in this phase must not only bridge the gap between preservice knowledge and experience, but provide novice teachers opportunities to acquire the necessary skills to become successful. Mentors, administrators, and colleagues must provide opportunities for teachers to learn through practice and support rather than assuming the transition from preservice to professional practice will occur smoothly.

Cultivation. The cultivation phase is characterized by the mentor and mentees working relationship toward job competency. Kram (1983) described this phase as opportunities for the mentor–mentee relationship to establish trust, provide counseling, demonstrate modeling, and develop friendship. This may parallel the collaboration and professional development component wherein the mentee's reliance on the mentor equalizes, and shifts to a more balanced power structure between the mentee and the mentor. During this phase, the mentor seeks to nurture competency in meeting professional tasks, while the mentee seeks to gain more confidence in meeting the expectations of professional practice. Still, while mentoring practices may include shared meeting times, sharing of lesson plans and instructional practices, frequent classroom observations, and other collaborative activities, the establishment of a personal-professional relationship between mentors and mentees is crucial to the success of any mentoring program (Hudson, 2016). In this phase, the mentor and mentee traverse through varying levels of relationship building with a goal to establish mutual respect and

trust along the way. Hudson (2016) added that "the sharing of expectations and learning between the mentor and mentee were noted as a way to form the relationship" (p. 40).

The establishment of a respectful and trusting relationship between mentors and mentees can be nurtured by establishing a two-way interaction, outlining expectations of roles, sharing experiences, and sharing teaching practices and resources (Hudson, 2016). Additionally, the mentee's perceptions of job satisfaction may begin to establish as their levels of confidence continue to grow. As their understanding of best practices in the field becomes the central theme, mentees will seek their mentor's support to understand how these practices are applied or modeled. In this way, mentor availability and the frequency of collaborative meetings between the mentor and mentee influences the quality of mentorship (Polikoff, Desimone, Porter, & Hochberg, 2015). Polikoff et al. (2015) further pointed to the importance of proximity of mentors, as mentees utilize mentors less if they are not based on campus. This becomes a point of peer collaboration between the mentee and the mentor, and the process of mentorships reaches its peak of relevance. Hudson (2013) found that teachers associated mentorship as a form of professional development by improving communication skills, building capacity for leadership, and increasing pedagogical knowledge.

Accordingly, school districts have focused its efforts in leveraging professional development and most notably professional learning communities as a way to create a collaborative learning environment for teachers (Battersby & Verdi, 2015; Bambrick-Santoyo, 2013; Gulamhussein, 2013; Jacobs et al., 2015). PLCs in conjunction with peer

to peer mentoring provides novice teachers with collaborative opportunities to share and learn from their colleagues while impacting the culture of support available to novice teachers (Battersby & Verdi, 2015). Rodgers and Skelton (2014) further pointed the applicability of professional development to affect the training of mentors themselves. Through professional development and mentoring, knowledgeable teachers may help novice teachers through sharing best practices to improve pedagogical skills (Rodgers & Skelton, 2014). The NCTAF (2016) added "The way teachers work and learn together should model the way we want students to work together" (p. 9). As the novice teacher gains more knowledge through interactions with their mentor and colleagues, they gain a better understanding of their professional environment (Vygotsky, 1978), increase their level of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977), and fulfill their professional needs of belonging to their profession (Maslow, 1943).

Separation. Ghosh (2012), in a comparison of business and teacher mentoring practices, found that while business mentorship seeks to support career advancement and socialization through organizational structures; teacher mentorship focused on practical skills and emotional support. While teacher mentorship begins as a means to help novice teachers "survive" the experience, there is a need to support and develop their professional practice for the long term (Ghosh, 2012). The separation phase is characterized by the mentee gaining more independence and self-sufficiency as experience and confidence has been gained from the cultivation phase (Kram, 1983). During this phase the role of the mentor is minimized as the mentee gains greater control of their personal practice. This practice may manifest as personal styles of instruction,

procedural application, and communication with peers. As the mentee separates from the exclusive guidance of the mentor, mentorship now shifts to knowledge that may be transmitted from multiple sources such as other colleagues or personal research. In this way, the process of mentorship expands from the formalization of a program to include informal sources for growth. While the relationship between mentee and mentor may still be present, the relationship dynamic now shifts from the reliance of the mentor as a continued guide to that of a point of reference in times of need.

In this phase, the novice teacher has learned to develop the skills and confidence to become more self sufficient in their professional decision-making in and out of the classroom. As the novice teacher has gained an understanding of their teaching environment through their interactions with their mentor during the cultivation phase; they develop a greater sense of self-efficacy to meet their need of positive self esteem. As such, the mentee's perception of job satisfaction may now be influenced by feelings of classroom efficacy as well as external factors such as resource availability, funding, parent involvement, and finances. During this phase, the novice teacher transitions from the focus on survival skills to the development of sound content related pedagogical skills to master teaching. Achinstein and Davis (2014) further emphasized the importance of mentoring to address content focused knowledge and practice. While much of the cultivation phase will develop the socio-emotional support that teachers need to acclimate to the stresses of their environment, mentors need to provide additional support that focuses on content specific instructional practices (Achinstein & Davis, 2014). The acquisition of content related teaching skills is essential for new teachers, especially

career changers whose field knowledge from their previous profession may not be readily transferrable to the teaching of that knowledge in the classroom (Diezmann & Watters, 2015).

Redefinition. In the redefinition phase, the mentor-mentee relationship evolves into a peer relationship where lines of power no longer exist between both parties (Kram, 1983). In this phase, the mentee completes the transformation to professional independence. The mentor's role is minimized and support is more infrequent or provided only at the request of the mentee. The process shifts from a formalized approach to a more informal process. The mentee may continue to seek guidance from the mentor, however the mentee may seek support from various sources as other avenues for knowledge acquisition are frequently available to the mentee and open to personal preference. The balance of power is completely equalized as mentor and mentee roles transform to colleague or friendship roles. In this phase the novice teacher has lessened the gap of Vygotsky's ZPD and developed a greater sense of self-efficacy towards their achievement of Maslow's level of self actualization (Maslow, 1943; Vygotsky, 1972). While Kram's original intent for the redefinition phase is to describe relationship the progression for the mentor and mentee, this phase may parallel a reflective practice component for mentoring wherein the mentee increases introspective practices towards their continued growth. In this way, the mentee transitions from a reliance of external support to professional development through self-examination. As such the mentee "redefines" his role and professional value as he reflects on his practices (Kram, 1983).

Through continued reflection and peer support, the mentee undertakes the process to identify areas of success and areas of improvement to determine his level of job satisfaction and eventual retention or attrition. Stallions et al. (2012) presented a six phase approach to reflective practice that helps teachers gain a deeper sense of introspection to help them cope with the challenges they face. In the same way that novice teachers transition from one phase of mentoring to the next, novice teachers also navigate through the cycle of initial challenges, reflective practice, growth from experience, and renewal of self (Stallions et al., 2012). However, during this stage there is greater need for mentors and mentees to move beyond the support of emotional well being and into the improvement of professional practice and reflection. Clark and Byrnes (2012) found that the participants noted a high degree of helpfulness from mentors in the areas of listening and emotional support. However, participants in the Clark and Byrnes (2012) study also noted that practical pedagogies such teaching content and modeling reflective practices were the least to occur during their experiences. As mentioned earlier, the induction and mentoring experience assists novice teachers in the development of their professional identity and internal process that effect their retention including teacher resiliency, competency, and self efficacy (Buchanan et al., 2013; Doney, 2013; Gibbs & Miller, 2014; Greenfield, 2015; Hong, 2012). At this stage, there must be an alignment of the novice teacher's professional identity with professional goals and the supports needed to attain them. When a misalignment of these goals and supports occur, teachers experience feelings of resignation and stress which effect their decisions to remain in the profession (Adinou, 2016).

Literature Review Related to Key Variables and Concepts

In the last decade, researchers have found that new teachers who struggle in the teaching profession will leave within the first five years of duty (Buchanan et al., 2013; Kutsyuruba & Tregunna, 2014; Ingersoll, 2012). Furthermore, while researchers differ on an accurate projection of novice teacher attrition, most estimate that 25% to 40% of new teachers will leave the profession within the first five years of employment (Le Cornu, 2013). While most researchers cited a variety of factors that contribute to teacher shortages, most attribute these shortages to teachers leaving the profession before they retire rather than a shortage of available teaching candidates and recruits (Gray & Taie, 2015; Howes & Goodman-Delahunty, 2015; Schaefer, Long, & Clandinin, 2012; Martin & Mulvihill, 2016). Teacher shortages continue to impact schools across the nation, while teacher attrition, in addition to factors such as an increasing student enrollment and teacher retirement, creates a strain on the educational system as a whole (Hulling, Resta, & Yeargain, 2012) . Additionally, frequent teacher turnover has an impact on the financial investment of schools in the continual training and hiring of new teachers, as well as the negative effect on school climate and student performance in the classroom (Helms-Lorenz, Van De Grift, & Maulana, 2013; Harfitt, 2015).

While most novice teachers choose to enter the profession for altruistic reasons, most also find their spirit tested by the lack of support available to them upon entry (Adoniou, 2017; Stallions, Murrill, & Earp, 2012; Wilkins & Comber, 2015). The emotional toll those novice teachers experience leads to increased stress and teacher burnout that add to their decision to leave teaching (Janzen & Phelan, 2015; Hong, 2012).

Furthermore, while many factors contribute to novice teachers' decisions to leave teaching, some common issues cited by teachers include concerns with classroom management, emotional exhaustion, limited financial and professional advancement, and the handling of the psychological needs of students (Aloe et al., 2014; Ashiedo & Scott-Ladd, 2012; Hudson, 2013; Koehler, Feldhaus, Fernandez, & Hundley, 2013).

As such, many schools in the nation have focused its efforts in providing teacher mentorship to support new teachers as they transition into the workforce (Adonious, 2016; Nollan & Molla, 2017; Richter, Kunter, Ludtke, Klusmann, Anders, & Baumert, 2013; Long et al., 2012). Through the implementation of mentoring, novice teachers receive individualized support from colleagues to help them navigate the challenges of their first years of teaching (Adonious, 2016; Israel, Kamman, McCray, & Sindelar, 2014). Richter et al. (2013), and Nollan and Molla (2017) further highlight the goals of mentorship in providing instructional support, psychological support and emotional support, and role modeling to help novice teachers gain confidence to make the transition into teaching. In response to growing teacher attrition rates, school districts and teacher preparation programs have implemented teacher mentoring programs and have employed various alternative certification routes and fast track programs in the hopes of attracting and recruiting new qualified teachers into the field.

In an effort to address teacher shortages, schools have increased their efforts to recruit career changing professionals in other fields to fill projected vacancies in education (Fontaine et al., 2012; Lynch, 2012). However, Kee (2012) found that alternately certified teachers in their first year, who had limited coursework and field

study experiences, felt less prepared than their traditionally trained counterparts. Zhang and Zeller (2016) further found that teachers who did not receive traditional preparation experiences in educational programs were more likely to leave the profession than those from a traditional preparation path. Additionally, second career teachers, or CCTs , who already possess a degree or diploma in another field of study, are more likely to leave teaching if they are unable to retain a permanent position within a given timeframe or if they feel overwhelmed by demands of the job (Fontaine et al., 2012). As such, CCTs in particular may benefit from mentoring as many enter the profession through alternative certification routes and have limited experience in the pedagogical content that traditional graduates receive (Anderson, Fry, & Hourcade, 2014; Koehler et al., 2013).

While Haim and Amdur (2016) pointed out that the challenges that novice CCTs face are not much different from those of traditional graduates, Anderson et al. (2014) posit that career changers experience a higher attrition rate when compared to their traditional counterparts. Still, CCTs possess skill sets that help increase the diversity, professionalism, and experience available to school districts' talent pools (Nielson, 2016). It is important to explore the implications of mentoring for novice CCTs and the perception of their experiences in order for school systems and policy makers to provide the appropriate support to increase teacher retention.

Teacher Attrition

Teacher attrition. While teacher attrition is a component of the larger issue of teacher turnover, researchers have differed on its definition as it applies teacher mobility

throughout the profession. Researchers generally characterized teacher attrition as teachers completely leaving the profession (Schaefer et al., 2012). However, in understanding teacher shortages, researchers also argued that teacher turnover is more likely the result of teacher migration within the field or to other nonteaching positions, and new teachers' indecision to commit to teaching as their primary career choice during their first three years. Researchers posited that teaching shortages are a result of personal decisions, health issues, financial funding, organizational management, and teacher preparation rather than teacher dissatisfaction with teaching itself or the desire to seek opportunities elsewhere (Ashiedo & Scott-Ladd, 2015; Clandinin, 2015 ; Stallions et al., 2012). While the impact of these components collectively on the data of national teacher shortages may vary, researchers agreed that teacher attrition is part of the ongoing supply and demand for qualified teachers (Fontaine et al., 2012; Ingersoll & Smith, 2005).

Since the 1990s, researchers have studied the impact of teacher attrition on school operations, politics, and policy (Fontaine et al., 2012; Gray & Taie, 2015; Lynch, 2012.). High needs areas, notably those with high poverty levels, high minority populations, and low performing schools, are particularly impacted by teacher shortages, especially in many high demand content areas such as mathematics and science (Kelly & Northrop, 2015; Tricarico, Jacobs, & Yendol-Hoppey, 2015). A decade ago, Boe et al. (2008) reviewed data collected from the NCES Schools and Staffing Surveys, and the NCES one year longitudinal Teacher Follow-up Surveys with the intent to quantify teacher turnover trends. The NCES Schools and Staffing Surveys, which are successive cross sectional surveys, and the Teacher Follow-up Surveys provided national information on teachers

prior to teacher turnover and subsequent information on the turnover of these teachers. Boe, Cook, and Sunderland (2008) determined that annual turnover has increased to 1 in 4 teachers by 2000-2001. Teacher attrition steadily increased to 8% since the 1990s and the highest occurrence of teacher attrition happened in the first three years of teaching. Furthermore, Boe et al. (2008) revealed that in 1999-2000, full time public school teachers with 1 to 5 years of teaching experience had a five year attrition percentage of nearly 40%. Part-time teachers had an attrition rate of 67%, and all public school teachers serving both full time and part time positions resulted in a 42% teacher attrition rate. Additionally, over a nine year span (1991-2000), Boe et al. determined that teacher turnover increased by 60% for all public school teachers.

These teacher attrition trends are inferred to continue as noted by the National Center for Educational Statistics' (2011) study of beginning teacher attrition and mobility, which found that "teachers who began teaching in 2007 or 2008, about 10% were not teaching in 2008-2009, and 12% were not teaching in 2009-2010" (p.3). Gray and Taie (2014) further found that 15% of beginning teachers in 2007-2008, were no longer teaching by 2010-2011 and 17% were no longer teaching in 2011-2012. In a report for the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Goldring, Taie, and Riddles (2014) followed up on survey results from the 2012-2013 NCES survey on teacher attrition and mobility, and found that national attrition rates have slightly decreased and held steady in recent years. The findings from the survey indicated that 20% of public school teachers with 1 to 3 years left their previous school assignment. However, a closer look at the data revealed that 13% of the teacher mobility was attributed to

teachers who left to another school while 7% left the profession entirely (Goldring, Taie, & Riddles, 2014). Researchers further pointed to the efforts to improve induction programs and the inclusion of mentoring practices for the continued trend of decreasing teacher attrition (Helms-Lorenz et al., 2016; NCTAF, 2016).

Teacher attrition adversely affects schools as the cost of retraining and recruiting replacement teachers puts a strain on limited school resources (Lynch, 2012). In its 2007 report, The National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (NCTAF) determined that teachers who leave the profession cost small districts, on average, approximately $4000 - $10,000 , while larger districts spent approximately $15,000-$17,000 per teacher leaving the profession to address recruiting, hiring, and retraining of replacement teachers. The Alliance for Excellent Education (AEE), a national policy and advocacy organization that works to improve national and federal policy, estimated that the national cost of teacher attrition to school districts across the nation is $2 billion and increases to $4 billion when factoring teacher transfer from one school to another. The AEE (2008) further provided that the Department of Labor estimated attrition costs to employers at 30% of the salary provided to employees that leave their job. Using the data provided by the NCES and the U.S Department of Labor, the AEE calculates that it costs school districts an average of $12,000 per teacher when teacher attrition takes place. Researchers further asserted that annual teacher turnover will likely continue without improvement in the organization, management, conditions, funding, and practices of schools (Clandinin et al. 2015; Ashiedo & Scott-Ladd, 2012).

These assertions create the basis for teacher retention as a need to ensure teacher supply to meets the teacher demand that results from teacher attrition. Moreover, the availability of teachers entering the profession would be sufficient if not for the high demand created by teacher attrition (Ingersoll & Perda, 2013; NCATF, 2016). In this way, greater efforts to increase teacher retention are needed to ensure balance between teacher availability and turnover.

Impact of career changers. Teacher attrition impacts schools socially, politically, financially, and in the form of student achievement. As noted earlier, when teachers leave the profession at such an early stage in their careers, it affects schoolwide continuity, financial planning, personnel dynamics, and student performance (Buchanan et al., 2013; Goldhaber & Cowan, 2014). Teacher shortages and attrition have created a void in hard to staff vacancies, which has created opportunities for professionals in various fields to change professions to education (Ingersoll, 2012). These teachers are perceived to possess a sense of maturity, real world career skills, and content perspective that may support their transition into the field of education (Anderson et al., 2014; Wagner & Imanuel-Noy, 2014). Career changers have also been characterized as culturally and professionally diverse, and represent minority communities and differences in gender (Bauer et al., 2017; Williams, 2013).

Researchers described career changers as an untapped workforce that may provide school districts with an untapped potential of new teacher talent and a diverse hiring pool (Andersion et al. 2014; Williams, 2013). Career changers enter the field of education for a variety of reasons including personal motivations, financial latitude, job displacement,

or certification opportunities (Bauer et al., 2017; Cuddahpah & Stanford, 2015). Consequently, to help fill their personnel needs and provide opportunities for those seeking to change careers to education, some states, school districts and teacher preparation programs have offered a variety of teacher certification routes for career changers (Cuddahpah & Stanford, 2015; Snyder, Oliveira, & Paska, 2013).

Marinell and Johnson (2013), in a study of two decades of schools and staffing survey data, found that career changers who entered teaching as first year teachers doubled from 1998 to 2008, and made up one-third of the incoming public school teacher in that time. In recent years there has been an increase in recruitment for CCTs especially in the fields of science, technology, engineering and math (S.T.E.M) as schools seek to recruit scientists, engineers, mathematicians to leverage their expertise into the classroom (Cuddapah & Stanford, 2015; Diezmann & Watters, 2015; Snyder, Oliveira, & Paska, 2013). Many CCTs enter the field of education through alternative certification routes, and are enticed by fast track programs which support greater opportunities to quickly transition from a bachelor's degree to a master's degree (Bohonos, 2014).Alternative certification programs have helped create a diverse pool of career changers, who bring an established work experience, skills sets, and content related knowledge that differs from traditional teacher preparation program graduates (Anderson et al., 2014; Koeler et al., 2013; Tan, 2012). However, researchers also found little connection between career changers training routes and their effectiveness or competency in the classroom (Haim & Amdur, 2016).

Researchers have found that the needs of traditionally trained teachers differ from those of alternately trained teachers. In a study by Linek et al. (2012), the researchers compared the impact of teacher preparation between traditionally trained and alternatively certified teachers. Linek et al. (2012) concluded that the needs of alternative certified teachers were more practical in nature compared to their traditionally trained counterparts. The researchers concluded that alternatively certified teachers needs were more closely identified with how to teach, while the traditionally trained teachers' (who received a year of mentoring during their preparation) needs were centered on student learning. The researchers further concluded that traditionally trained teachers had a greater sense of preparedness and sense of transition compared to the alternatively trained teachers due to their exposure and propensity for reflective practice.

Career changers enter the profession with high optimism, and a desire for personal and professional fulfillment. Nielson (2016) found that CCTs professional identities were closely associated with an independent perspective of teaching, social advocacy, and teacher leadership. Career changers were also viewed as more direct in their communication, forthright in challenging the status quo, and voiced opinions that were often more objective than subjective (Nielson, 2016). Career changers also viewed teaching objectively as a job that had duties to be fulfilled (Peske et al., 2013). While some career changers enter the profession for personal fulfillment and an opportunity to make a difference with young people, others view the profession as a change in their life direction or as a means to fit the changes that have occurred in their lives (Marinell & Johnson, 2013; Peske et al, 2013; Robertson, 2014). Tan (2012) found that career

changers identities and self-efficacy beliefs are also influenced by how well their students perform in relation to other experienced teachers' classes. This suggests a subtle difference between traditional first year teachers and career changers perceptions of self-efficacy. Whereas traditional first year teachers seek personal success in their survival in the first year, career changers enter with confidence that is linked to student performance especially when that performance is compared to other experienced teachers (Tan, 2012). Still, career changers may benefit from mentoring as many may enter the field of teaching with a false sense of professional savvy compared to their traditionally trained counterparts (Anderson et al, 2014; Nielson, 2016). This may be attributed to career changers serving in some capacity of authority in their previous profession, despite noting that they experienced the same challenges and pitfalls as other novice teachers (Tan, 2012; Wagner & Imanuel-Noy, 2014).

Career changers also enter teaching traditionally older than preservice graduates and have life experiences as parents, coaches, religious leaders, former military personnel, organizational or business supervisors, or other positions of leadership (Marinell & Johnson, 2013; Robertson, 2014). In a study by Cuddapah and Stanford (2015), the researchers found that career changers identified four characteristics of ideal teachers including perceptions of being caring and student-centered, knowledgeable, organized, and flexible. Furthermore, Tigchelaar, Vermunt, and Brouwer (2014) found that career changers have predisposed conceptions of teaching and learning that is derived from their previous career experiences. Career changers access those experiences more readily than educational theory. Yet, despite a preconceived feeling of readiness,

the career changers also later viewed their reality of teaching as time consuming, complex, and more demanding than they originally thought (Cuddapah & Stanford, 2015). In a study by Watters and Diezmann (2015), career changers noted that their decisions to leave were often associated with a lack of support systems that created opportunities to build supportive relationships and connect their previous experiences to their new profession.

The availability of mentoring programs have an impact on teachers, especially CCTs or second –career teachers, who lack a background in education and traditional preparation avenues prior to teaching (Anderson et al., 2014). Researchers suggested that mentoring programs for CCTs must recognize and utilize career changers' previous work experiences and fill in the gaps where information is needed (Tigchelaar et al., 2014; Wilkins & Comber, 2015). Mentoring programs should support career changers background knowledge and skills, where mentors support and guide the career changer through reflection, reciprocal feedback, and establish strong supportive relationships (Tigechelaar et al., 2014; Watters & Diezmann, 2015). Veale et al. (2013) further stressed the importance of the administrator's role in ensuring that mentoring experiences take into account working conditions, mentor selection, appropriate mentor and mentee pairings, and collaborative opportunities. These decisions are important as career changers do not have the same preparation background as primary career teachers (Anderson et al., 2014; Cuddapah & Stanford, 2014; Marinell & Johnson, 2013; Veale et al., 2013).

Teacher Retention

The rise in teacher attrition has prompted school districts, administrators, program directors, and policy makers to increase their efforts to promote teacher retention. Researchers asserted that teacher attrition has had an adverse effect on student achievement, staffing patterns, and school culture (Fontaine et al., 2012; Hulling et al., 2012; Ingersoll, 2012; NCATF, 2016). The decisions made by teachers concerning their intentions to stay or leave the profession is both complex and dependent on a series of internal and external factors (Buchanan et al., 2013).

While these factors range from personal motivations to system wide faults, researchers also found that teacher satisfaction is positive prior to their first teaching experiences (Ashiedo & Scott-Ladd, 2012). Consequently, teacher retention or the opportunities for retention are especially viable during teachers' first years in the profession. Fontaine et al. (2012) found that teacher' concerns in areas such as classroom management, assessment, student diversity, and special needs seem to lessen as they transition into their second year and third year of teaching. Additionally, researchers also suggested that new graduates possess great confidence in their abilities to teach and are highly motivated to enter the profession prior to their first teaching experiences (Anderson et al, 2014; Ashiedo & Scott-Ladd, 2012; Nielson, 2016).

Researchers suggested that the teaching profession is fluid and may be viewed as transitory for both new and established professionals (Craig, 2014; Heineke, Mazza, & Tichnor-Wagner, 2014). Heinke et al. (2014) further identified environmental factors (microsystem), workplace interactions (mesosystem), district and community influences (exosystem), cultural and ideological perspectives (macrosystem), personal and

professional backgrounds (historical factors), and life events (external factors) as all having an impact on teacher's decisions to leave, migrate, or stay in the profession. The circumstances attributed to teacher attrition and conversely teacher retention varies and compounds as teacher experiences are unique to personal experiences, perceptions, and beliefs of self-efficacy. Researchers have pointed to beginning teachers difficulties in adjusting to new school environments and cultures, and managing relationships with students as examples of factors that contribute to teacher attrition (Callahan, 2014; Ingersoll & Smith, 2004; Peske et al., 2001). Still other researchers pointed to financial issues such as salaries and teacher pay as indicators for teacher attrition (Lynch, 2012). Schaefer et al. (2012) further asserted that teacher attrition and retention is reflective of mitigating individual and contextual factors. Individual factors such as levels of burnout, resiliency personal demographics, and personal/familial factors are balanced with contextual factors such as levels of support, salary, student issues, professional development, and the demographic features of schools to determine the impact on teacher decisions (Schaefer et al., 2012).

Intrinsic and extrinsic motivations. Researchers have identified common internal and external factors that affect teacher retention. Teacher retention is influenced by teachers' intrinsic and extrinsic motivations upon entry into the profession (Buchanan et al., 2013; Ashiedo & Scott-Ladd; 2012). As such teachers' decisions to leave or stay in teaching are often determined by how strongly the reality of teaching parallels their initial motivations for becoming a teacher. In a study by Ashiedo and Scott-Ladd (2012), strong intrinsic motivators for teachers include the opportunity to work with young

people, intellectual stimulation, and a contribution to society. Extrinsic motivators such as the flexibility of time and time off, job security, and professional development opportunities were also considered important to teachers. Researchers have highlighted that teacher retention is more likely when there is a strong connection between intrinsic motivations rather than just with extrinsic factors (Tricarico et al., 2015). In a mixed methods study by Williams and Forgasz (2009), the researchers found that intrinsic motivations such as belief in possessing the necessary attributes needed for teaching (81%), high job satisfaction (81%), and a desire to work with children (70%), ranked highest among participants. While work hours (63%) was identified as a favorable motivation for most survey participants, other extrinsic motivations such as good holidays (37%), job security (35%), and salary (13%) were not as closely coveted. De Stercke, Goyette, and Robertson (2015) further argued that practices that support teacher well-being or happiness may have more impact on teacher retention rather than a focus on working conditions. Researchers also found that teacher compensation policies and programs that focus on career advancement, financial competitiveness, and higher salaries may play a role in retaining high quality teachers (Lynch, 2012). Gray and Taie (2014), in a study for the NCES, found that 97% of beginning teachers whose first year salary was $40,000 or above continued to teach the following year compared to 87% of beginning teachers who first year salary was below $40,000. However, researchers agreed that multiple factors affect teacher decision-making and that these factors do not exist in isolation (Buchanan et al., 2013; Schaefer et al., 2012; Tricarico et al., 2015).

Job satisfaction and self-efficacy. Teacher retention efforts become increasingly important as researchers found that teacher attrition or the likelihood of teacher mobility increases within a limited timeframe of teaching. Researchers indicated that teachers' intentions of remaining in the profession occur during various stages of their career. In the early stages of teachers' careers, these intentions of remaining or leaving the profession may be linked to their perceptions of preparedness, efficacy, and early experiences (Darling-Hammond, 2010; Fontaine et al, 2012).Novice teachers' teaching experiences during the first years of instruction impacts the development of their professional identity (Bastian, McCord, Marks, & Carpenter, 2017; Stallions et al., 2012). In a study by Tricarico et al. (2013), the researchers identified seven teacher characteristics that impact teacher's professional identity including persistence, motivation, and work ethic, a sense of calling, differentiated instruction, family, and community.

The role of schools in supporting novice teacher's core values and the development of their professional identity results in job satisfaction and a greater sense of self-efficacy (Harfitt, 2015; Tricarico et al., 2015) Researchers linked a perceived lack of support and school problems to job dissatisfaction and burnout which contribute to teacher attrition (Kidd, Brown, & Fitzallen, 2015). Consequently, teachers who experience higher job satisfaction are more likely to remain in teaching (Ingersoll & Strong, 2012). Kelly and Northrop (2015), in a study of highly selective graduates, found that teachers who were considered "the best and brightest" candidates experienced a higher attrition rate when compared to their less selective counterparts. The study found

that the highly selective graduates experienced greater levels of job dissatisfaction and burnout. Moreover, studies indicated that higher levels of teacher fatigue, burdensome workloads, isolation, and stress associate with classroom performance contribute to teacher burnout and eventual attrition (Aloe et al., 2013; Battersby & Verdi, 2015; Buchanan et al., 2013). Fontaine et al. (2012) further asserted that some teachers continue to maintain second employment during their teaching career as a secondary option in case their teaching goals are not met. This phenomenon seems to suggest that teaching professionals initially have reservations regarding their permanency on the job. In contrast to other professions wherein employees work within the parameters of their duties and conditions in the hopes of upward mobility and promotion; researchers suggested that teaching professionals are more cognizant of issues and demands of the job to foresee and prepare for eventual separation in the near future.

When teachers' job satisfaction is high there is a greater likelihood for retention (Kidd et al., 2015; Kirkpatrick & Moore Johnson, 2014). Teacher self-efficacy in classroom instruction and management impacts job satisfaction. In a meta-analysis of sixteen research studies, Aloe et al. (2014) found strong correlations between teachers' self-efficacy in classroom management and three levels of burnout including emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and lowered personal accomplishment. Janzen and Phelan (2015) found that teachers' feelings of obligation create anxiety when conflicts that affect job satisfaction. Teacher's internal conflicts between a sense of responsibility and intrinsic desires coupled with external factors of their teaching environment or support systems places great strain on teachers' motivations to stay or leave. Researchers have

emphasized developing and supporting teacher resiliency to address teacher retention (Buchanan et al., 2013; Doney, 2013; Gibbs & Miller, 2014; Greenfield, 2015; Hong, 2012). Hong (2012) studied the resiliency responses of "leavers" and "stayers" and found that those who left the profession responded with weaker self-efficacy beliefs. In a two year, qualitative study of the resilience building process, Doney (2013) posited that resiliency is developed when protective factors such as teachers' support systems interact with the stressors experienced throughout the profession. According to Doney (2013), "Without stress, the resilience building process cannot occur. Each stressful encounter provides an opportunity to access protective factors and build resilience" (p. 659). In this way, it can be concluded that support systems are necessary in building teacher resilience and self-efficacy to impact job satisfaction.

Support systems. Teachers, especially novice teachers, seek support ranging from communication and collaboration, to an understanding of protocols and participation in varied programs. Zhang and Zeller (2016) posited that novice teachers seek experiences similar to their preparation and training prior to teaching. Novice teachers seek support systems that prioritize pedagogy and practice as they transition from clinical training to the profession (Zhang & Zellers, 2016). As such schools have undertaken efforts to provide support through formalized interactions such as embedded professional development, professional learning communities, and induction and mentoring programs. Collegial structures such as professional development, induction and mentoring, and more recently professional learning communities impacts novice teachers' decisions to stay or leave (Battersby & Verdi, 2015; Hamilton, 2013; Ingersoll

& Perda, 2013). According to the NCTAF (2016), professional development that allows for teacher-led collaborations helps to strengthen academic content knowledge and how to effectively instruct it.

The NCTAF (2016) further writes "teachers are more likely to try classroom practices that have been modeled for them in professional development settings by other classroom teachers" (p. 14). However, Rodgers and Skelton (2013) added that professional development activities need to be developed into more constant and consistent training opportunities to support novice teachers. Researchers further challenged the impact of teacher in-service primarily on the basis of inconsistent practices, frequency and time, and inability to address individual teachers' content related needs (Bambrick-Santoyo, 2013; Gulamhussein, 2013; Jacobs et al., 2015). Still, many researchers found that professional development continues to be the method of choice in promoting teacher collaboration, content-related engagement, reflection, and pedagogical skills (Bambrick-Santoyo, 2013; Demonte, 2013; Desimone, 2011; Gulamhussein, 2013; Tricarico et al., 2015).

School administrators play an integral role in providing emotional, environmental, and instructional support to impact teacher retention especially for hard to staff schools (Tricarico et al., 2015). In their study, Shaw and Newton (2014) found a significant correlation between principal support and job satisfaction. Hughes, Matt, and O'Reily (2015) further recommended that principals provide support structures by increasing curriculum planning time, utilizing positive feedback and recognition, and providing more professional development opportunities to reduce teacher attrition. Research

findings also support positive administrative behaviors including support for professional development, support for disciplinary problems, teacher ownership of the classroom, access to curricula, care and understanding, and availability (Cancio, Albrecht, & Johns, 2013). Pogodzinski (2015) further found that administrator support for teacher to teacher collaboration and positive administrator to teacher interactions, lead to increases in teacher efficacy.

Kelly and Northrop (2015) added that participation in support systems such as induction and mentoring, in combination with other factors such as salary, peer support, counseling and coping strategies help to improve teacher retention. Researchers also suggested that teachers who received support through induction and mentoring were more likely to stay in their profession (Callahan, 2017; Ingersoll & Strong; 2012). Hudson (2013) found that mentoring acts as a form of professional development in building capacity for leadership, collaboration amongst peers, and reflective practice. While general teacher induction programs provide teachers with an introduction to school culture and operations, mentoring opportunities provide novice teachers with opportunities to improve classroom teaching and learning (Hudson, 2012). By using an advanced statistical review of induction data, Ingersoll (2012) found that certain induction activities impacted retention, wherein mentoring, common planning, and collaboration provided the strongest impact on teacher retention.

Induction and Mentoring Programs

Induction programs. Induction programs help new teachers acclimate to a school culture or help new teachers make the transition from preservice to professional

practice. Researchers generally described teacher induction as structured processes, programs, and activities designed to provide orientation, and support for new and novice teachers to a school (Ingersoll, 2012; Kane & Francis, 2013; Kearney, 2014). New teachers benefit from induction through collaboration and socialization with colleagues, familiarity with the school culture, knowledge of curricular initiatives and programs, and development of teacher practice and growth through professional development. Schools have put greater emphasis in providing induction for new teachers, and have leveraged these opportunities to support teachers' instructional growth, reflective practice, and capacity for future leadership (Helms-Lorenz et al., 2016).

As part of induction programs, common practices such as orientation, professional development, observation, and most notably mentoring have been linked to having a positive impact on teacher efficacy and retention (Bullough, 2012; Helms-Lorenz et al., 2016). Additionally, the use of professional learning communities and leveraging teacher in-service training has been attributed to quality induction programs due to its emphasis on teacher collaboration, peer support, and instructional growth (Le Cornu, 2013; NCTAF, 2016). In many ways, induction programs are new teachers' first introduction to the organizational culture and expectations of a school. Induction programs often provide new teachers with the support needed to navigate the unknown or unexpected challenges that many do not foresee upon entry into the profession. However, researchers noted that induction programs vary and their overall success is dependent on individual teachers' needs and the design of the program to meet those needs (Kane &

Francis, 2013; Kearney, 2014) While most schools provide induction programs for new teachers, these programs vary in their design, implementation, and formality (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). Still, while induction programs vary from school to school, various researchers linked teacher induction with teacher retention, most notably when mentoring is utilized as a component for induction (Bullough, 2012). Researchers continued to emphasize the importance of induction programs and have highlighted the effectiveness of such programs that include components of teacher mentoring support and collaboration. The NCTAF (2016) added "High-quality induction and mentoring programs for beginning teachers result in more teachers who stay in the profession and improved achievement for their students" (p. 13). Mentoring programs in particular provide the necessary one to one support that novice teachers need to navigate the initial trials of the profession (Hudson, 2013).

Mentoring programs. There is a continued disconnect between candidates' coursework and preparation, and the realities of the profession during their first years of teaching (Veale, Dobbins, & Kurtts, 2013). Current induction practices have placed a greater emphasis on teacher mentoring as a support provided for new teachers to make the transition into the school system. However, mentoring programs have varied from school to school and may not meet each teacher's individual needs (Watters & Diezmann, 2015). A standard approach to mentoring presents a problem for many programs as the processes are designed and dependent on varying degrees of motivation by those being mentored and the mentors themselves. In many ways, researchers have only strengthened the idea that mentorship is highly contextual to the human experience of those involved

in the process (Chun et al., 2010; Kahr &Wells, 2012; Zellers, Howard, & Barcic, 2008). Hellston et al. (2009) found that the experiences of beginning teachers differed regardless of the formal or informal nature of their mentoring program. Beginning teachers often engaged and sought guidance through informal interactions with staff regardless of the perceived positive or negative nature of their mentorship experience.

Still schools have increased their efforts to develop mentoring programs that provide collaborative opportunities between novice teachers and their colleagues. Mentoring programs provide new teachers with opportunities to share experiences with their colleagues, develop best practices in the classroom, gain observation and modeling experiences, and receive support and encouragement from their mentors (Hudson, 2016). These opportunities help new teachers gain confidence and improve self –efficacy in the hopes of retaining their long term services to the profession (Birkeland, & Feiman-Nemser, 2012).

It is important for mentoring programs to help novice teachers acclimate to their new professional environment, by tailoring its program to address the specific school culture (Hobson & Malderez, 2013). These efforts should emphasize the goals of continued inquiry, improvement in instructional practices, and reflective practice (Resta, Huling, & Yeargain, 2013). Through mentoring, novice teachers improve their teaching practices by engaging with experienced teachers who provide consistent and collaborative support. Despite the variety of approaches and models to formal and informal mentoring, researchers have identified significant practices that impact the

success of mentoring programs. Positive mentee experiences have resulted from effective pairings due to participant choice rather than program assignment (Carmel & Paul, 2015; Hudson, 2016), frequent observations and mentee feedback (Kahrs & Wells, 2012), mentor training and role definition (Dawson, 2014), and reflection and self-evaluation (Hudson, 2013; Mathur, Gehrke, & Kim, 2012).

Researchers posited that a viable mentorship model should focus on new teachers interacting with a variety of experienced teachers to address common activities, such as in a professional learning community (Crutcher & Naseem, 2015; Dawson, 2014). This practice may create a pool of potential mentors for novice teachers regardless of their content area assignment. This view of multiple sources of mentorship through informal relationship building and personal networks is further supported by researchers as a potential new paradigm for the mentoring framework (Kemmis, Heikkinen, Fransson, Aspfors, & Edwards-Groves, 2014; Rodgers & Skelton, 2014). Still, researchers asserted that the availability of mentorship is not enough and found that potential graduates desired greater accountability from mentors, practical application of best practices in classroom management, increased connections to educational theory, and alignment between college coursework and classroom curriculum (Adoniou, 2016; Clark & Byrnes, 2012). In this way, the training and compensation provided to mentors is an essential component of effective mentoring programs (Stanullis, Little, & Wibbens, 2012; Waterman & He, 2011). However, while mentoring programs vary in approach to novice teacher training, some programs failed to provide the proper training for mentors who

must be cognizant of the differences between teaching children and adults (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; Stanullis et al., 2012).

While the avenues and models for mentorship are varied, a common concern amongst practitioners is the issue of ensuring that a culture of mentoring is sustainable for the long term (Long et al. 2012; Shwartz & Dori, 2016). Researchers further asserted that the balance of power and control between mentors and mentees need to be closely monitored and navigated to ensure that a collaborative and supportive relationship is maintained especially in dealing with issues of minority and gender differences (Hudson, 2016). Experts disagree on the best way to prepare or train people to teach however most agree that some form of mentoring is necessary in order to help new employees make the transition to their new profession (Clark & Byrnes, 2012; Ingersoll, 2012; Smeaton & Waters, 2013).

Summary and Conclusions

The research literature supports the need for quality induction and mentoring programs to address issues of teacher attrition and retention (Hudson, 2012; Ingersoll, 2012; Schaefer et al., 2012). The development and implementation of quality induction and mentoring programs help beginning teachers' transition into the profession and support further professional development. The shift in the "sink or swim" mentality to a professional development approach has prompted an increased attention to the supports provided for new teachers. Induction programs and specifically mentoring programs have gained more awareness of its role in ensuring our newest professionals are retained

and sustained in the workforce (Bullough, 2012; Helms-Lorenz et al., 2016; Ingersoll, 2012; Kane & Francis, 2013; Kearney, 2014).

Still, as more mentoring programs are developed, the programs continue to differ in quality and implementation. Still, as noted by the studies above, mentoring programs can provide much needed support for beginning teachers which may translate into an increased effectiveness and self-efficacy in the classroom to further impact quality teacher retention and student achievement. The literature suggests that effective mentoring programs must focus on the individualized needs of novice teachers, while employing common practices of social and emotional support, mentor training and effective pairing, collaborative interactions, and reflective practice. However, it is equally important to understand the perceptions of novice teachers, especially CCTs who may not have the benefit of traditional preparation. There is a need to further investigate the perceptions of novice career changers' mentoring experiences in order to provide the necessary support that is unique to this group with regards to their levels of self efficacy, beliefs, practices, and needs.

Section 3 provides an overview of the research methodology, design, and context of the study. Accordingly, the role of the researcher is discussed and the participants of the study are described to include the ethical protections provided to them. The following section will also provide the data collection protocols and discuss data analysis, as well as trustworthiness of the study.

Section 3: Research Method

The process of providing new teacher mentorship has taken various forms in numerous school districts across the nation, with varying degrees of success. School districts continue to utilize mentorship as a means to further develop new teachers as professionals in the field. Researchers suggested that the further development of new teacher knowledge and skill helps to prepare them for future success (Aloe et al., 2014; Battersby & Verdi, 2015; Buchanan et al., 2013). Still, there is a need to further explore the perceptions of CCTs mentoring experiences as more and more of these professionals seek to enter the field of education.

The purpose of this study was to explore CCTs perceptions of their mentoring experience during their first years of teaching in a school district on Guam. Data was collected to examine participants' experiences in various support systems provided by the school district and respective school programs and the impact of these experiences on participants' decisions to remain in the teaching profession for the foreseeable future. Researchers suggested that support programs that provide components of induction and mentoring, peer collaboration, and professional and reflective practice have a positive impact on teacher retention (Crutcher & Naseem, 2016; Hudson, 2013; Hughes, Matt, & O'Reilly, 2014; Rodgers & Skelton, 2014). In Section 1, an overview of the problem, purpose, and significance of the research are provided. Section 2 provided a review of relevant research for the current study. In Section 3, a description of the qualitative design, data collection procedures, and methodology is provided.

Research Design and Rationale

The study explored CCTs' perceptions of their mentoring support during their first years in the classroom. The study contributes to the understanding of the phenomenon of teacher attrition through the perceived supports provided to career changers in education. Researchers pointed to novice teachers' feelings of isolation, preparedness efficacy, administrative support, or financial compensation that impact their decisions to stay or leave the profession (Buchanan et al., 2013; DeAngelis, Wall, & Che, 2013; Goldhaber & Cowan, 2014; Howes, 2015; Kelly & Northrop, 2015: Schaefer et al., 2012;).

Qualitative studies provide researchers with an appropriate avenue for presenting research data based primarily on participant perspectives (Creswell, 2003). Merriam (2009) asserted that in qualitative research, the researcher is interested in how people interpret, understand, and construct their worlds from their experience. In this study, a phenomenological approach was selected to explore the lived experiences of 15 CCTs. Hatch (2002) further explained that although social groups may share similarities in their experiences, there are also multiple perspectives that exist as a result of individuals' personal lived experiences. Merriam (2009) posited: "Because the philosophy of phenomenology also underlies qualitative research, some assume all qualitative research is phenomenological, and certainly in one sense it is" (p.24). A phenomenological approach is appropriate for this study as the design focused on the lived experiences and perceptions of CCTs mentoring experiences during their first years in the teaching profession. As such, I sought to further understand the phenomena of teacher attrition

and retention by examining the human experience of new CCTs as they navigate the levels of support provided for their transition into the classroom. In this way, phenomenology is suited to the research design of this study as I recorded the experiences of career changers to understand the phenomena of teacher retention as it relates to teacher mentoring, attrition, and future support. Researchers further supported the use of phenomenology in understanding the essence of an experience and providing opportunities for in-depth exploration of a phenomenon (Creswell, 2007; Merriam, 2009). Seidman (1998) added, "While focusing on human experience and its meaning, qualitative research stresses the transitory nature of human experience" (p. 16).

In this study, a phenomenological approach was selected to help understand CCTs shared experience of mentoring, whether formal or informal, and explore the perceptions of those experiences during their first years in the classroom. This is supported by Merriam (2009) who adds "a phenomenological approach is well suited to studying affective, emotional, and often intense human experience." (p. 26). By focusing the study on CCTs' mentoring experience, I sought to describe the phenomena in detail and depth (Merriam, 2002).

The researchers recognized that there are many different ways to interpret the same experience (p. 270). In this study, a phenomenological approach was utilized to provide a rich narrative of CCTs experiences in their first years of the profession and perceptions of the supports needed to positively affect their professional growth and future retention. The data collected clarified emerging themes during the course of participant interviews and added to the body of research found in the literature.

Role of the Researcher

At the time of this study, I have been working as a teacher in the Guam Department of Education for the past 17 years. I am a Nationally Board Certified Teacher and served in various roles as a school accreditation coordinator, student advisor, and instructional coach/mentor. My interest and inquiry for the study originated from my work at the local university with career changing professionals who sought a new career path in education. Through this work with the local university, I served as an adjunct instructor in its Highly Qualified Teacher (HQT) program as part of the university's Master in Arts of Teaching (MAT) program. My interest stemmed from my perception of the theoretical preparation that career changers received prior to instruction and the reality of practical application during their first years of teaching. I wanted to gain an understanding of the perceptions of career changers regarding the support they received as new teachers regardless of any perceived skills they may have possessed as an experienced career employee elsewhere. Additionally, I wanted to gain an understanding of any additional support that career changers may desire as a result of their early experiences.

Creswell (2007) supported the pursuit of research that reflects and impacts our own communities to share multiple perspectives with the audience. As an employee of the Guam Department of Education and the University of Guam, I developed and maintained a good working relationship with teachers in the district and had previously been an instructor for some of the graduates from the HQT/MAT program who currently serve as teachers in the district. However, I do not serve as a direct supervisor for any of

the participants in the study, nor do I currently serve as an instructor for those who have graduated from the University of Guam and currently teach in the Guam Department of Education. As such, I believe that there are no perceived issues of retribution, coercion, or conflicts of interest with the participants or process. As a former HQT/MAT instructor to potential participants in the study, I ensured to document any assumptions or biases he may have through bracketing (Hatch, 2002) in the event these participants were selected for the interview process. Hatch (2002) suggests the use of bracketing to help researchers to identify their own biases and assumptions and to help them separate those feelings from the process of data analysis. For this study, I believe that the former HQT/MAT participants, if selected for this study, will perceived me in the role of a researcher since I am no longer their instructor or supervisor. Additionally, the study will adhere to strict ethical guidelines that clearly define my role as a researcher in collecting data. I will also ensure that participants understand their level of participation and rights as set forth by the Walden Institutional Review Board.

Methodology

Participant Selection

Research literature has generally supported the use of fewer participants in phenomenological design in order to deeply explore individuals' experiences in the hopes of understanding how and why people perceive, interpret, and interact within a given context (Creswell, 2008; Marshall, Cardon, Podder, & Fontenot, 2013; Merriam, 2009; Morse, 1994). Yet, there has been much debate on the number of participants needed to conduct viable qualitative research (Marshall et al., 2013). Some researchers proposed a

study consisting of a range of participants from 12 to 60 (Adler & Adler, 1987), 15 to 30 (Bertaux & Bertaux-Wiame, 1981), 20 to 30 (Warren, 2002; Creswell, 2007), 30 to 50 (Dezin & Lincoln, 1994; Morse, 2000), and 60-150 (Gerson & Horowitz, 2002), while others have proposed a smaller sampling of 12 or less (Creswell, 2008; Guest, Bunce, & Johnson, 2006). As it relates to a phenomenological design, Marshall et al. (2013) proposed a sample size ranging from 6-10 participants, while Creswell (2007) supported the use of 5-25 participants, and Morse (1994) suggested at least six participants. Yin (2009) asserted that the selection of sufficient participants in order to identify common themes should also be balanced with the need for in depth exploration of participant perceptions. Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2007) clarified that sampling included not just the selection of a number of participants but also the number of contact opportunities and the length of time for each contact. Furthermore, some researchers in the field caution that continuing to collect data past an established saturation point may take away valuable time and resources from the "deep and rich" data analysis that is an integral part of qualitative research (Marshall et al., 2013; Patton, 2002). Yin (2009) further points to the exhaustive nature of qualitative research and the demands it places on emotional and time investments. Yin (2009) further explains that "*because the data collection procedures are not routinized."* (P.60), the personal demands required by researchers can be both time consuming and trying to one's ego.

Still most researchers agreed that the context of the research design must be guided by the achievement of theoretical saturation or the point at which no new information or themes are generated (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Guest, Bunce & Johnson,

2006; Marshall et al., 2013). Marshall et al. (2013), in a review of multiple qualitative studies, asserted that many research studies suggest theoretical saturation but neglect to fully operationalize its function nor determine at what point saturation occurs. Research literature further suggested that sample size, a component for saturation, is difficult to determine since there is a lack of agreement amongst researchers of a numerical standard for research design (Morse, 2000; Patton, 2002; Yin, 2009).

Researchers pointed to a variety of factors that must be considered in determining sample size including length of time and resources (Seidman, 1998), access and availability of participants and groups (Adler & Adler, 1987), data saturation (Guest et al., 2006), and heterogeneous or homogenous groupings (Bryman, 2012). In a study conducted by Guest et al. (2006), the researchers analyzed thirty interview transcripts and applied the findings to a series of 109 thematic content codes in their experimental codebooks to determine sample saturation. In their findings, Guest et al. (2006) posited that "data saturation had for the most part occurred by the time we had analyzed twelve interviews" (p. 74). By using guidance from researchers (Creswell, 2008; Guest et al., 2006; Morse, 2000) to support smaller sample sizes in phenomenological studies, this research design includes 15 participants from a homogeneous sample of teachers in their first five years of employment with the Guam Department of Education.

Participants in this study included purposively selected teachers who identified themselves as career-changing teachers and are currently serving in the first five years of service with at least one full year of classroom instruction completed. The participants in the study are identified as career changers whose previous work experience prior to

teaching was in a career field outside of education but are presently employed as a teacher in the school district, or have retired from a previous profession entirely. These participants may have their previous work background extend from the fields of business, medicine, health, military, legal, religious, or other professions outside of education. As it applies to this study, participants may have also been enrolled in a teacher preparation or certification program while concurrently employed during their first years of teaching. The term career changer was used interchangeably with *career changing teacher* or *second career teacher* in this study.

Potential participants were identified by their date of hire in the district's pool of newly hired teachers to meet the criteria of teachers working within their first five years in the profession. For this study, 15 novice teachers were selected from a pool of 50 CCTs. At the time of this study, only 50 novice teachers were identified as full time, certified teachers serving in the Guam Department of Education's new hires listing. As I reviewed this listing, I omitted recent graduates from the University of Guam, who had not yet completed one full year of teaching service. Once the 50 potential participants were identified, a packet was sent to each person that included a consent form, participant information form, and overview of the study with disclosures. The consent form included the procedures for the study, an assurance of their confidentiality, and the opportunity to contact me for further clarification. The participant information form was used to collect demographic information on CCTs current and previous professional background. This form aided in the selection of a homogenous sample for the study, and utilized a series of closed-ended questions to gather participant demographic information including years of

experience, prior career experience, current content area, and teaching grade level. The participant information form was used to determine if the potential participants met the criteria of completing at least one year of service, currently employed at the middle or high school level, and previously employed in a career field other than education, as well as give context to their previous career experiences. The potential participant packets were sent via inner-school mail, United States Postal Service, or hand delivered as needed.

Of the original 50 invitation packets, 27 novice teachers agreed to participate in the study, while 23 other teachers declined or did not return the packet. From the 27 returned packets, I noted the participants' approval of informed consent and reviewed the participants' information forms to determine if they met the necessary criteria for this study. I conducted a follow-up contact via telephone to clarify if all the participants had completed at least one year of service, currently worked in the middle or high school level, and were previously employed in a profession outside of education.

Of the 27 novice teachers who agreed to participate, 15 participants were selected based on the selection criteria on the participant information form and the follow up telephone contact. The other 12 potential participants were not selected as they had not yet completed one full year of teaching service or did not currently work in the middle or high school level. As such the sample size of the participants in the study is limited to 15 novice teachers, who were selected for the study and limited to those with one to five years of experience in the classroom. The selection of 15 participants ensured more time for quality interviews despite the limitation of a smaller sample size. Participant selection

was representative of middle school (6-8) and high school (9-12) grade levels only. This study was limited to participants employed in the public school system and did not include teachers employed at that time in the private, charter, home school systems or other alternative school system.

Data Collection Instumentation and Procedures

Instrumentation

This study used one to one interviews as the primary instrument for data collection. This type of instrument provided me, as the researcher, with an advantage to gain rich, thick detail through questioning and probing techniques, and participate in the natural "give and take" of conversation. Creswell (2008) proposed that "one-to-one interviews are ideal for interviewing participants who are not hesitant to speak, are articulate, and who can share ideas comfortably" (p.226). Since the participants were all educators, they had experience speaking with people, and willing to share their stories and experiences which made the use of one-to-one interviews an appropriate avenue for data collection.

Prior to the interviews, the information collected from the participants' information forms helped me determine participants' previous career backgrounds, as well as identify those who worked with a mentor. This information helped me to establish an understanding of participants' career points of view, context of their mentoring experience whether formal or informal, prepare probing questions as needed, and build rapport. An interview protocol (Appendix D) was used during the interviews to provide a consistent structure to the interviews. I also made notes during the interview

and conducted intermittent debriefing of the participants to ensure accuracy. The interviews were taped and recorded using voice transcription software and an audio-recording device.

Procedures for Data Collection

Once the 15 participants were selected, they were assigned a code and pseudonym to establish their anonymity and confidentiality. Once the codes and pseudonyms were established, I contacted the novice teachers through email correspondence or telephone to plan an appropriate interview schedule and select a convenient time and location to conduct their interviews.

Data collection consisted of two rounds of one-to-one, semi-structured interviews for each participant. The interviews (Appendix D) were used to gather participant's initial perceptions of their mentoring experiences, its impact on their development as teachers, and the kinds of support they needed. The semi-structure interview format provided for guided questions with the flexibility of order. Additionally, semi-structured interviews allowed for open-ended questions with the use of probing techniques to elicit participant response (Rouston, 2010). Merriam further supported the use of open-ended questioning in helping researchers respond to emerging themes and the construction of new ideas during the interview process. In this study, the open-ended questions were used to gain an initial understanding of participants' perceptions of their mentoring experience to prepare for further questions during the interview.

The one-to-one interview was used to gather data through detailed, in-depth exploration of participants' personal mentoring experiences. Merriam (2009) further

supported the use of interviews as "necessary when we cannot observe behavior, feelings, or how people interpret the world around them" (p. 88).The interviews were scheduled according the participants' available time and preferred location. As I planned for the one-to-one interviews, I took into account the process of obtaining access to the participants within the various Guam Department of Education schools, and the time needed to conduct interviews without excessive disruptions to participants' instructional job duties or personal lives. As such, the interviews were conducted at each participant's school site during non-duty hours. Due to the limited time that each participant was willing to commit during the non-duty hours, each interview consisted of two rounds of open-ended questions with probing questions as needed.

The two rounds of interviews provided participants with an opportunity for in-depth reflection and interpretation of their experiences. Each round of the interview process took place over the course of 6-8 weeks to accommodate the 15 participants' schedules, with each interview session lasting approximately 90 minutes for each round. Seidman (1998) proposed the 90 minute length as manageable for interviews, as it provides a balance between an interview that runs too long and one where the participants may feel rushed. Each round of interviews was completed on a different day for each participant, with 1-2 weeks of spacing between each round to ensure proper time scheduling and to not disrupt participants' duties or personal time. The interview protocol (Appendix D) was used during each round of the interviews. Creswell (2008) suggested that the interview protocol should be used to organize the interview process and take field notes.

The first round of interview questions collected data on participants' experiences during their first years in the teaching profession. The questions presented in the first round of interviews were designed to establish context, a base of comparison between their previous and current career experiences, and build rapport with the participants. These questions centered on participants' previous work experiences, motivations to become a teacher, and perceptions of being a new teacher. The design of these questions helped me, as the researcher, to understand the context of these career changers' motivations and experiences in order to understand how their previous career experiences influenced their perceptions of their new profession and subsequent mentoring experience. This round of interview questions focused on participants' reflections of their transition into education, the meaning of their first teaching experiences, and how they perceived those experiences impacted their feelings of preparedness and self-efficacy. As noted in the research literature, career changers' self-efficacy is integral to the development of teacher resiliency and may contribute to teacher retention (Doney, 2013; Gibbs & Miller, 2014; Greenfield, 2015; Hong, 2012). By understanding the participants' motivations and early career experiences, I gained an understanding of the context of their perceptions on mentoring for the second round of interviews.

The second round of interview questions was used to collect data on participants' initial mentoring experiences and the perceived needs of support during their first years of teaching. These questions were designed to gather information on participants' perceptions of the mentoring support provided to them whether through a formal program

or an informal support system. This second round of interview questions addressed the research questions of this study by gathering data on the perceived mentoring experiences of the participants and encouraged their input in identifying the support they needed as new teachers.

Prior to the start of the interviews, I met with each participant at the agreed time and location. I reviewed the consent form with the participants so they may acknowledge and confirm their participation. I disclosed their rights and reiterated my assurance of their confidentiality. I secured the room to ensure privacy and comfort, and informed the participants that the interview would be audio-recorded and transcribed. I also used an interview protocol and standard legal sized notebook to take notes. During the interview process, I ensured that I established trust and built rapport with the participants to gain more informed research. Fontana and Frey (2000) stated that the process of gaining participants' trust may be both time-bound and time consuming that researchers must be cognizant of the fragile balance that exists between research questioning and participant disclosures during interviews. I ensured that I was aware of nonverbal elements, as pointed out by Fontana and Frey (2000), to include interpersonal space (Proxemics communication), pacing and length of silence (Chronemics communication), body language (Kinesthetic communication), and changes in voice and articulation (Paralinguistic communication). Once the interviews were complete, I thanked the participants for their time and informed them that they would receive a copy of the transcribed interview at a later date to confirm their responses.

Data Analysis Plan

The data collected from the two rounds of interviews with each participant established the context of the participants' intentions and perceptions, and described their mentoring experiences and the support they desired as a result of those experiences. The interview questions were developed to address the larger research questions as it relates to CCTs. These questions were the result of emerging themes from the research literature on career changers including motivations to enter the teaching profession, perceived transitional skills acquired from their previous careers, levels of self-efficacy prior to teaching, and the nature of their mentoring experiences and the support they needed as novice teachers (Anderson et al., 2014; Bauer et al., 2017; Wagner & Imanuel-Noy, 2014). While this study's research questions were focused on understanding novice career changers' perceptions of their mentoring experience, it is important to understand the context of these perceptions as it relates to previous career backgrounds, feelings of self-efficacy prior to teaching, and motivations to enter teaching profession.

As such, the first round of questions was designed to provide a foundational basis of reference for establishing the participants' initial motivations, feelings, and transitional experience of becoming a teacher. The second round of questions were designed to gain an understanding of the level of mentoring that participants' received, and the support they desired. In this way, the first round of interview questions informed the context of who the participants were as they transitioned into the teaching profession. It was important to establish a context for research question 1 (RQ1), by first gathering information to understand the feelings, skills, and level of self-efficacy that participants

possessed prior to any formal or informal mentoring experience. By establishing a context, I gained an understanding of the participants' perspectives as it related to mentoring by comparing those experiences with their initial motivations, and previous career experience. The second round of questions built on the context to gain an understanding of how mentoring or the lack thereof has impacted their perception of growth as a professional. This round of interview questions addressed RQ1 and research question 2 (RQ2), by gathering data on participants' mentoring experiences and the support desired as a result of those experiences. Through the participants' responses to the second round of interview questions, I made connections by identifying common response patterns, and related those patterns to the contextual data, established in Research Question 1, to determine themes of study.

Upon completion of the interviews, I transcribed verbatim the interviews and read through them line by line to make note of potential themes associated with the research questions. I used a conventional content analysis for its application of coding schemes. Trochim and Donnelly (2008) described conventional content analysis as a process of allowing the data to develop themes instead of applying preconceived theories or codes. In conventional content analysis, the researcher thoroughly reads the data before categorizing them.

For this study, I used a hand analysis of qualitative data approach for the analysis of transcribed data and coding. In preparation for the data analysis, I used a clean copy of each transcript and color coded each paper to organize participant responses. I made notes in the margins of the transcripts and used open coding to note emerging categories.

Common categories were color coded and given a distinct abbreviated code to determine patterns using colored –adhesive note papers. As suggested by Anfara et al. (2002), once these patterns were determined, I established a table or matrix of the common themes and codes and cross referenced them with the research questions.

Similar to the work of Patton (2002), I followed a "funnel" strategy wherein the data were analyzed broadly and then narrowed through continued inquiry. In this study I used a multi-leveled approach to coding data, wherein the information was first divided through in-depth study and open coding, then categorized to determine patterns, and finally analyzed to identify themes and determine relationships. Researchers have suggested the use of three levels of coding when analyzing data (Meyers & Sylvester, 2006; Anfara et al. 2002). I started with open coding to identify patterns, and then analyzed the patterns to generate categories or themes, by identifying their axial properties. The axial codes were further analyzed for common patterns to determine relationships and establish the selective codes of the study. This progression of using initial participant responses to establish codes, then determining thematic patterns, and finally establishing relationships from the core themes or categories, guided the coding process for this study.

Thematic complexity was established by using layering and interconnecting themes. In the first level of data analysis, I read through the transcripts several times before beginning the coding process. During this level of coding, identified by Anfara et al. (2002) as the *First Iteration*, I divided the data into manageable parts. I used open

coding to identify basic themes and analyzed the chunks of data to identify properties through the various text segments.

In the second level of data analysis, I established axial codes by categorizing the participants' words to identify patterns. Anfara et al. (2002) describes this level of coding as the *Second Iteration*. Through the use of axial coding I compared similarities and differences between the themes identified by the open codes to identify patterns in the responses. Once the data were categorized and analyzed for varying patterns, I utilized selective coding to determine the relationships between the core themes. In this level of coding, which Anfara et al. (2002) refers to as the *Third Iteration,* I analyzed the core themes in relation the research questions. The core themes identified through the data analysis informed the responses to this study's research questions.

Trustworthiness

As noted by Creswell (2007), the use of member checking, peer debriefing, and bracketing adds to the trustworthiness of the study. Researchers in the field have provided an array of techniques to help ensure the integrity of their work. Miles and Huberman (1984) provided twelve tactics such as clustering, noting patterns or themes, seeing plausibility, and building a chain of evidence, to name a few, for "confirming meanings, avoiding bias, and assuring the quality of conclusions" (p. 215). Researchers asserted that techniques such as peer debriefing, member checking and triangulation (Lincoln & Guba; 1985) combined with standard techniques such as category saturation (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), collection of referential materials, and transcription activities (Mellon, 1990) helped increase the integrity and trustworthiness of the design. Still Lincoln and Guba

(1985) supported the role of researchers to ensure trustworthiness in their design as "the human instrument is as capable of refinements as any other variety" (p. 194). As such, Lincoln and Guba (1985) asserted that in qualitative studies the traditional concept of validity is established though its focus on credibility and authenticity of the process to determine trustworthiness.

Credibility for this study was established through the use of member checks and peer review. Member checks seek the participants' opinions about the initial findings and to provide an opportunity for transcript review. Creswell (2003) pointed to the use of member checking to ensure accuracy of themes and provide "rich, thick, description to convey findings" (p. 196). Upon completion of each round of interviews, I reiterated my contact information for the participants should they have any additional information to include in the study. A follow-up meeting was scheduled with each of the participants to debrief their interview responses. During the debriefing session, I provided a copy of their interview transcript and discussed potential themes that I identified throughout my readings. Each participant had an opportunity to confirm or dispute the findings of their responses. The result of these debriefing sessions yielded confirmation from all the participants and no additional data. Additionally, I requested the assistance of an associate superintendent from the district central office to serve as a peer debriefer for the study. The peer reviewer was an associate superintendent for the Research, Planning, & Evaluation department of the Guam Department of Education, whose duties centered on research studies and the evaluation of research results within the district. Through the peer review process, the results were confirmed and no further information was needed

outside of suggestions for presentation format and considerations for the dissemination of information for the district.

The nature of the use of two rounds of in-depth interviews, with each round lasting approximately 90 minutes with each participant, provided for transferability of the study. The multiples opportunities for contact with the participants, including the subsequent debriefing session after the interviews were completed, provided opportunities to gather thick, rich detail of participants' responses to their experiences. Dependability was also established through the documented data which included audio and written transcription, field notes, literature support, and through the data collection and analysis procedures as documented in this study.

Ethical Procedures

Ethical protection was provided and implemented for participants in the study through the following strategies and tasks:

- My completion of certification of "Protecting Human Research Participants" training from The National Institutes of Health (NIH) Office of Extramural Research

- The study was implemented when completion and approval from the Walden University Institutional Review Board (# 04-29-16-0159099), Guam Public School System Letter of Cooperation, and University of Guam IRB Committee (CHRS# 15-93) approvals were obtained. The Walden Letter of Cooperation was used to gain consent from the local Department of Education to support the study and CCTs participation in the study.

- A signed consent form from each of the participants in the study was collected, filed, and stored by the researcher (see Appendix A for a copy of the informed consent form). A copy of the signed consent form was provided to the participant and an original copy was filed and stored. The consent form includes the purpose of the study, procedures to be followed, potential benefits of the study, and assurances of confidentiality. The participants were informed that their consent was ongoing and that they have the right to withdraw from participation at any time. Additionally, the interview questions were given to the participants for review prior to the actual interview and the interview took place at a centrally located and agreed upon area.

- Participants were assured of their confidentiality prior to data collection and that no information provided was individually linked to them. The researcher assigned pseudonyms and coded numbers in order to protect participant identity.

- Throughout the course of the research study, all audiotapes and transcripts from the interviews and the narrative responses were stored and locked for limited access. Any digital transcription or audio recordings were password protected and stored on a singular transcription device used only for the research study. Upon completion of the study all audiotapes will be destroyed or digital audio deleted, and the transcripts and narratives stored in a locked file cabinet for at least five years and then destroyed.

- Additionally, it is important to note that some participants were former students in the university fast track program where I served as an adjunct instructor. However, measures were taken to inform participants that my role in the study is that of a doctoral student and that their participation is confidential, voluntary, and may cease at their request.

Summary

In Section 3 I provided an overview of the research design, including the process for data collection and analysis. Accordingly, I discussed the role of the researcher, identified the participants, and described the ethical protections provided. In this section I also provided the process for participant sampling, conducting the interviews, and the use of coding to identify the results of this study. In Section 4, I discuss the findings for this study including the results of the data collection and analysis for this study. In Section 5, I present the relationships and conclusions as a result of the identified themes to address this study's research questions.

Section 4: Results

Researchers supported the implementation of some form of mentorship to help novice teachers' transition into the classroom (Ingersoll & Strong, 2012; Paris, 2103). Career changing teachers, despite their previous work experiences, also benefit from forms of mentoring to support their acquisition of pedagogical practices and content area instruction (Hudson, 2012; Ingersoll, 2012; Schaefer, Long, and Clandinin, 2012). This section discusses the process of data collection and analysis to address the overarching research questions. Additionally, the process of gathering and recording the data provided by research participants through interviews is discussed.

Setting

Participant interviews were conducted onsite of each participant's respective school during nonduty hours. Two rounds of interviews were conducted in each participant's location of choice and selected time of availability to ensure comfortability. Participants did not indicate any personal or professional issues or trauma that affected their response. During the interview, windows were covered and a "meeting in progress. Please do not disturb" sign was posted outside the door.

Table 1 provides the participant' demographics from their respective participant information form. The information provided includes participant pseudonyms, gender, years of experience, grade level, previous career field, and the type of mentorship received or provided to the participant. The demographic information provides the context for the participants' of the study. These career changers completed at least one full year of teaching in a public middle school or high school.

Table 1

Participant Demographics

Name	Gender	Years of Experience	Grade Level	Previous Career Field	Type of Mentorship
Albert	Male	5	9-12	Military; Sales	Informal
Rex	Male	5	9-12	Medical & Health	Informal
Rhea	Female	5	9-12	Medical & Health	Formal
Eve	Female	1	6-8	Retail & Marketing	Formal
James	Male	3	9-12	Retail & Marketing	Informal
Emma	Female	1	9-12	Web & Graphic Design	Informal
Maya	Female	1	9-12	University Extension Programs	Formal
Mia	Female	1	9-12	Communications Industry	Informal
Julia	Female	2	9-12	Military; University Extensions Programs	Informal
Beth	Female	2	6-8	Medical & Health	Informal
Henry	Male	2	9-12	Food & Beverage Industry	Informal
Larry	Male	1	6-8	Government Agency	Informal
Paula	Female	5	6-8	Insurance Industry	Informal
Heidi	Female	3	6-8	Private Business	Formal
Gerry	Male	3	9-12	Financial Industry	Informal

Note. Grade level designates 6-8 (Middle School) and 9-12 (High School).

Data Collection Design and Recording

The data collection process was initiated by contacting potential research participants via the Guam Department of Education's (GDOE) inner-school mail, United States Postal Service, or hand delivered as needed. I identified potential participants by their date of hire in the district's pool of newly hired teachers and date of employment to meet the criteria of teachers working within their first five years in the profession. During the first two weeks, 50 invitations packets were distributed to the potential participants via interdepartmental mail and personal hand delivery. The invitation packets included the participant consent form, participants' information form, and a full disclosure of the study and their rights to confidentiality. Of the 50 invitations distributed, 27 invitees agreed to participate in the study by signing the research consent form. The 23 other invitees declined to participate in the study by making note on the invitation packet with "not at this time" or returning the consent form unsigned.

Once the 27 participants were identified and their respective consent forms were signed, I reviewed the participant information form (Appendix C) to collect professional demographic data. The participant information form was utilized to collect information pertinent to the study's participant criteria such as teaching years of experience and professional field prior to teaching. Of the 27 initial participants, only 15 participants met the criteria of CCTs currently serving in their first five years of teaching and assigned to a middle or high school grade level. Twelve of the identified 27 participants were excluded from the identified participant pool due to not meeting the criteria of serving in any previous professional field, completing one year of service, or assigned to a middle

or high school grade level. Of the 15 participants, five participants completed only one year of teaching service. Three other participants completed two years of service, three participants completed three years of service, and four participants complete five years of service, respectively. Only four of the 15 participants received some form of formal mentorship, while 11 participants only cited receiving informal mentorship through colleagues and school interactions.

After receiving, the participants' information form, I schedule two rounds of one to one interviews with the participants via telephone or face to face contact. A follow up contact was established a day before the scheduled interview to ensure confirmation of their scheduled interview time and location. The participants were contacted individually via telephone to confirm their participation. The participants were assigned a numerical code and a pseudonym that coincided with their respective participant information form. The respective codes ensured confidentiality and anonymity throughout the process of data collection.

Once each participant's code was established, I scheduled two rounds of one-to-one interviews with each participant. Each round of interviews was scheduled on a different day, whereas each participant was interviewed twice with 1-2 weeks of spacing between each round of interview. An interview protocol was used for each round of interview. The first round of scheduled interviews were used to gather data on participants' career experience, transition into the field of education, reasons for entering the field of education, and perceptions of teaching prior to entering the field of education. The second round of interviews gathered participants' perceptions of teaching during

their first years in the field, information of their formal or informal mentoring experiences, and the perceived levels of support needed by the participants.

The data collection involved two rounds of semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions and probing techniques to elicit participant response. Each round of the interviews occurred on a different day and was schedule for each participant. The open ended questions (Appendix D) provide insight to participants' career backgrounds, their decisions to enter the field of education, perceptions of their preparedness prior to teaching, the level of mentoring support they received and continue to need, and their intentions to continue or not continue to teach. I conducted the first round of one to one interviews over the course of 8-10 weeks from mid-October to early-December with each first round interview taking approximately 60-90 minutes each. The second round of interview resumed in mid-January upon return from the scheduled school break. The second round of interviews followed a similar time frame and duration as the first round. The second round of interviews were conducted from mid-January to late-April with each interview lasting approximately 60-90 minutes each. In each round of the interviews, the participants were asked six open-ended questions with follow up probing questions as needed. Each round of interviews was conducted over the course 8-10 weeks with an additional 2-3 weeks to complete the interview transcriptions.

During the interviews, I wrote field notes and made notes in the margins of the interview protocol to include references to time on the audio recorder, key statements from the participants, and potential coding considerations. The use of the field and

margin notes helped identify potential patterns prior to the establishment of categories or codes (Anafara et al., 2002; Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

When the interviews were completed, I transcribed each interview for each round. The initial analysis of the field notes, margin notes, interview transcriptions, and audio recordings provided a basis of understanding of the participants' experiences in their first years of teaching, the supports they needed, and the impact that mentoring may have had on their experience. Upon completion of both rounds of interviews, a debriefing session was scheduled for each participant to provide them with an opportunity to confirm or refute the data I recorded based on their input. In preparation for the debriefing session, participants were provided a copy of their transcribed interviews via interdepartmental mail in a sealed addressed envelope to their respective schools, or hand delivered to their school site. Each participant was asked to review their responses to ensure accuracy or to determine any changes that may be needed. During the debriefing session, the results were confirmed and no changes were identified by the participants in this study,

Tracking and Recording Data

As part of the tracking and recording of data, I utilized a multilevel approach to coding to first identify potential patterns and then to analyze for potential themes. Upon completion of the interviews, I transcribed the interviews and read through them to make note of patterns associated with the research questions. I used a clean copy of each transcript and color coded each paper to organize participant responses. I made notes in the margins of the transcriptions and used open coding to note emerging categories. Common categories were color coded and given a distinct abbreviated code to determine

the patterns by using colored –adhesive note papers. As these patterns emerged, table or matrix of the common themes and codes was established and cross referenced them with the research questions. Additionally, the transcribed data were analyzed to establish various text segments for lean coding and aggregate data to identify themes. Thematic complexity was established by using layering and interconnecting themes.

. Once the open coding was completed through the first reading, the transcripts were read through again and labeled for potential themes to address the research questions. The emerging themes were color coded and analyzed to respond to the research questions. The multileveled approach to open coding generated the categories and themes based on the patterns that emerged (Anfara et al., 2002; Meyers & Sylvester, 2006). This process established the relationship of participants' experiences to their perceived needs of mentorship throughout the first years in the teaching profession. As such, I utilize direct quotes from the participants' interviews to provide rich, thick descriptions to illustrate the findings of the study (Creswell, 2008).

Data Analysis

As previously stated, this study explored CCTs perceptions of their mentoring experience during their first years of teaching. The primary goal of the study was to uncover and interpret these meanings through the narrative responses of the participants in their understanding of their experiences (Merriam, 2009).

A total of 15 career changing teachers provided insight into their experiences through multiple interviews for each participant. The analysis and coding of the interview transcripts allowed for the identification of common patterns or themes as it

related to the participants' experiences (Creswell, 2008). I utilized the excerpts from participants' interviews and interpretations from my field notes to report the findings that supported the research questions.

The collection and review of data provided by the participants revealed patterns through a series of codes that were analyzed to determine emerging themes. The first phase of open coding revealed 15 themes that included participants' motivations to enter teaching, perceptions of their skill sets from previous careers, informal or formal supports provided to them during their first years of employment, and their perceived needs during the first years in the classroom. The review of participant responses informed the original open codes. The open codes were then chunked, color coded, and categorized to develop the themes for the study. In the second phase of data analysis, I identified four axial codes by determining similarities in the open codes to construct recurring patterns within the information provided. These axial codes resulted in patterns that describe participants' motivations to transition into the field of education, formalized preparation provided to help participants' transition into the field of education, practices initiated to support the transition of novice teachers, and perceptions of novice teachers' transition into the field of education and self-efficacy.

In the third phase of selective coding, I determined three emerging themes from the previous coding phases that respond to the research questions including (a) career changers motivations and viability as teachers, (b) perceptions of professional practices for teacher efficacy, and (c) support and retention needs. Table 2 illustrates the open coding process used to organize the study themes.

Table 2

Open Codes, Themes, Axial Codes, and Selective Codes

Open Codes	Themes	Axial Code Properties	Selective Code
Employment Opportunities Job Displacement Other Job intentions Transition to new phase in life Family encouragement Self-Reflection on desires Intrinsic Rewards Extrinsic Rewards Job skills-Direct Application Soft Skills-Indirect Application Schedules/Time Parent Dynamics Student Dynamics Colleague Dynamics Administrator Dynamics Formal Mentorship Information Mentorship Professional support system	Teacher Intention Teaching as a Temporary Career Connection to previous career Difference from previous career Prior perceptions of preparedness	Motivations to transition into the field of education; Identifying transitional skills and experiences Perceptions of teacher transition into the field of education	Career Changers' motivations and viability as teachers (Contextual)
Self efficacy belief Certification Requirements Positive mentor experience Negative mentor experience	Mentor Availability Induction and Orientation Professional Development Professional Practice	Preparation and practices to help transition into the field of education	Perceptions of professional practices for teacher efficacy (RQ1)
Classroom management Duty Requirements Instructional Needs Isolation/stress/burnout Coping skills Personal skill development	Accountability Systems Emotional Support Instructional Support Administrative Support Mentor Quality Professional Independence	Practices and needs of support to transition into the field of education	Support and retention needs (RQ2)

Note. Themes derived from open code categorization.

Table 3 illustrates sample participant responses used to select properties that guided the identification of patterns and themes to develop the selective codes. .

Table 3

Selective Codes, Properties, and Participant Response Patterns

Selective Codes	Properties	Sample Response
Career changers motivations and viability as teachers (Contextual)	Temporary flexibility and income; Desire for job stability; Support for other career goals; Lack of other job options available; Viable option for their next stage of professional career	I decided to get a Temporary Certificate and teach for one year while I studied for the DAT. I got married and started a family so my plans changed. Teaching was something that seemed appealing to me because of the flexible schedule, time off, holidays I could spend with my family. I don't think a lot of kids these days have the kind of guidance they need.
Perceptions of professional practices for teacher efficacy (RQ1)	Onsite learning experiences Collaborative opportunities with veteran teachers; Guidance & Support provided; Formal or informal mentoring opportunities	One of our assistant principals walked me to my class, introduced me to the students, and left me to the wolves. I was just overwhelmed and I didn't even technically start teaching yet. I felt like I was put.in charge of a ship and a crew, but I wasn't told where I was going or what I was supposed to do.
Support and retention needs (RQ2)	Support needs; Improvements to the induction or mentoring process; Practices or activities needed to influence growth; Reflective practice; intention to stay or leave the profession.	Classroom management is something I was not ready for. I couldn't really talk to my friends about what I was really feeling because they weren't teachers. When I finally got a mentor, it really helped to have someone support me, to see what was happening in my classroom, and sit and talk with me and not judge me There's a disconnect between the university and the district.

Note. Selective codes identified through the development of themes and aligned to research questions.

Results

Career Changers Motivations and Viability as Teachers

Participants provided information on their previous career backgrounds and their motivations to enter the field of education. This data provided a contextual reference to their perceptions of preparedness and efficacy prior to completing their first year of teaching. In the analysis of the data, five contextual themes emerged from participants' insights on teaching as a temporary career, motivations and intentions as potential teachers, connections to previous careers, differences from previous careers, and first year perceptions of preparedness.

Theme 1: Teaching as a Temporary Career

The first theme that emerged from the interviews was participants' identification of the teaching profession as a temporary career. This provided an understanding of the context wherein early career changers decide to enter into the teaching workforce. Of the 15 participants, most never considered going into the field of education, while only two participants considered teaching earlier in their life. Still, all 15 participants felt that teaching was a means to provide temporary flexibility and income to support or continue to support other career goals.

Beth, a new mother who previously worked as a medical assistant spoke of entering the teaching field in order for her to have the flexibility to obtain her certification in another profession. She added:

> I decided to get a Temporary Certificate and teach for one year while I studied for the DAT. Teaching was *never* a choice when I was in college. I just did not think

> or see myself as a teacher because I always wanted to be a part of the medical field.

Henry, who worked in the food and beverage Industry, continued to hold another job while performing his duties as a teacher added:

> I was working as a bartender and a waiter. I enjoyed the job, but sometimes I had to work strange hours, or be called in to work at the last minute. I also was at the mercy of scheduling issues that made it hard for me to make plans. I figured that teaching would give me some free time on the weekend and summers. This gave me some stability in my life, so I could consider my options.

Three of the participants felt that teaching was their only viable option due to the lack of other job options available.

Rhea shared her experience of returning home after having a career in another state:

> Once I started to look at the options that I had here on Guam for the experience I had, it wasn't looking very promising or exciting. Then after having conversations with the many teacher friends and family that I had about their profession, they each seemed satisfied and enthusiastic about their careers. At the time, there wasn't very many female health or PE instructors, so I looked into my options a bit further and decided to jump into the field of education and become a teacher.

Albert, who returned home after providing military service and desired to be a firefighter, realized that he could not find a job position in his desired field:

> Before becoming a teacher, I joined the National Guard to become a medic, in hopes of being a firefighter for the fire Department. After coming home from basic training, I quickly learned that getting a firefighter position was extremely difficult. This career field was not even a consideration for me growing up. I planned on becoming a Sports Medicine Doctor, but I got married and started a family so my plans changed.

Still, 13 of the participants responded with having no initial desire to teach prior to becoming a teacher. Eve spoke of having to change her career plans due to financial issues: "This was not my first career decision; I wanted to be a vet. But money was not enough so I settled for my next choice." Mia, a new mother, expressed a common benefit of teaching that other participants reiterated:

> No, I never intended on becoming a teacher. It just never came up as something I'd be interested in doing. But I felt that I could help shape lives and do something I felt could have an impact. I also started a new family. So teaching was something that seemed appealing to me because of the flexible schedule, time off, holidays I could spend with my family, vacations I could plan for; stuff like that.

James added to these intrinsic and extrinsic rewards of teaching:

> At first, I really didn't think too much about becoming a teacher, but some friends and family sold me on the weekends and summers off. Also, I felt that I was really good with people. I wanted to work with kids. I felt like I could contribute to my community, so teaching seemed like a natural next step for me.

However, three participants stated that they may have, at one point in their lives, wanted to be a teacher, but only considered pursuing the profession after serving in another profession. Paula shared the following: “The idea of teaching kept resurfacing in my life through different people and opportunities, but I was not comfortable with the idea of being responsible for shaping so many lives.” Julia added:

> I thought about teaching when I first left the military. I thought about how I enjoyed working with people, and leading others. But teaching just didn’t seem like a viable option for me yet. I wanted to look into some other options first. Teaching just seemed like it would be there for me later.

Emma explained the difference between teaching and her previous job:

> I wouldn’t say I always wanted to be a teacher. I thought about it early in my life, but it wasn’t until I started working when I realized that I just couldn’t work in a field where I didn’t interact much with anyone. I was literally in an office left to myself with a deadline or a project to complete. It was really boring.

The context of participants’ intentions to enter the teaching profession as a temporary option to their career choices indicates an initial desire for job stability as their professional lives were currently in flux (Bauer et al., 2017; Watters, 2015; Williams, 2013).As such, career changers in this study were seeking to transition from the uncertainty of their current professional lives (33%) or as a viable option for their next stage of professional career (67%).This is further reflected in the research findings of Howes and Goodman-Delahunty (2015) whose participants emphasized the draw of

practical considerations such as face to face hours, holidays, and flexibility for one's personal life.

Theme 2: Teacher Intention

Still, most participants' motivations to become a teacher indicated a desire to impact their community, provide guidance to students, or the freedom of professional choices afforded by the teaching profession. Participants also mentioned that the teaching profession had been a field that they considered earlier in their life.

Larry reflected on how his priorities changed prior to becoming a teacher:

> My first career decision was based on the salary, but a flexible schedule was appealing. As time went on, I realized that I could not see myself in the field of "corporate science" for the rest of my life. I was open-minded to teaching as I had many friends recommend it to me.

Paula shared her passion for students as a motivational factor that led to her becoming a teacher:

> I decided to make the career change and become a teacher because of our island youth. They need us. I realized I was avoiding the call to duty and making excuses. I chose to become a teacher for the kids. It's definitely not about money, clout, or networking. The kids are still here, so my motivation is still the same.

James shared his motivation to help the youth:

> I felt that I had something to give. I felt that there was more that I could do. I wanted to work with the youth to give some guidance. I don't think a lot of kids

> these days have the kind of guidance they need. I remember when I was in school, I wasn't the best student, but some teachers really go through to me.

Henry reflected on his initial motivation to be a teacher: "I liked the schedule, you know? You had your weekends and your summers and holidays. Of course, I have a better understanding of why, because of all the stuff you have to deal with". Gerry noted the benefit of professional freedom he was afforded as a teacher:

> To be honest, the first thing that really drove me to wanting to become a teacher was the freedom. The freedom you have within your job (as far as your creativity and approach to teaching kids) and the freedom I had for myself personally as well.

The participants' intention to enter the field of teaching provides a context for teacher motivation as career changers transition from one career to the next. Participants cited various reasons for entering the field of education such as the benefits and flexibility of the work schedule, and desire to work with the youth, and instructional freedom in the classroom. In these emerging themes, participants' motivation to enter into the field of teaching was primarily intrinsic (53%), while extrinsic motivations (27%) were also noted. The other participants (20%) provided a combination of both intrinsic and extrinsic factors that influenced their motivation to become a teacher. Research by Howes and Goodman-Delahunty (2015) supports these findings as career changers have identified similar themes of personal fulfillment, practical considerations, desire to contribute, lack of alternatives, and influence from others as motivating factors

for career changers transitioning into education. Similarly, other studies have supported the decision of career changers to enter the field to be based on the perceived benefits of flexibility, stability of income, and personal motivation to contribute to society (Bauer et al., 2107; Marinell & Moore Johnson, 2014; Watters & Diezmann, 2015; Williams, 2013).

Theme 3: Connections to Previous Careers

Another emerging theme was participants' connections to their previous career. Eleven participants felt that they contributed an awareness of human relations, relationship building, and interacting with a variety of people as a result of their previous job experiences. Rex, who worked in the medical field, shared:

> I worked closely with both Radiologists and Cardiologists. I also worked with other medical personnel. I had to be very professional and organized. I also interacted with different people from different walks of life. I always have to conduct myself with an understanding of care and compassion.

Mia added: "In the field of communications, I had to build a lot of relationships. Networking was an important part of the job, but it wasn't just talking; it was also about listening, following through with contacts". Heidi, who worked in the tourism industry, reflected on her skill set:

> In my job, I had to multitask. I had to know where to find certain information and relay it to my bosses. I also had to be aware of schedules and appointments for guests. I had to communicate well, not just in English, so I would receive some training in different languages. I also had to be computer literate because a lot of

> our information was logged in to the system. I especially had to be organized and have a good attitude all the time. My job was stressful because it was like I had to do a lot of things, but I think it prepared me to be a hard worker.

Paula reflected on an advantage of working in a previous career:

> My previous career helped prepare me for teaching by sharpening the following skills: time management (prioritizing my workload, maximizing productivity during the workday), customer service (on the phone and in person), multi-tasking, and computer skills (prepping emails, creating editing documents in Microsoft Word and Excel, etc.). I think the most useful tool I gained was the ability to switch duty "hats" within the span of an hour, a day, or even a week.

Additionally, nine participants also indicated that they possessed job related skills such as time management, organization skills, presentation skills, proficiency in technology use, working within procedures and structure, and abilities to relate their content area to real world applications. Rhea reflected on her work skills that could translate into teaching:

> I was a provider rep for a national kidney healthcare organization providing support to providers on how to bill the government (Medicare) for their services. I was already used to speaking in front of many people and had plenty of practice with instruction, so the idea of instructing and mentoring young individuals was exciting. I was passionate about health and fitness, so getting students to be motivated and to care about themselves seemed very fulfilling, despite knowing the various challenges young adults are faced with today. Even though teaching

> wasn't my first career, there were many similarities in the career I had that was useful (relationship building, instructing, supporting, and problem-solving).

Eve spoke of how her work experience connected to her content area:

> I was the person at the back counting money, balancing funds, and giving the cashiers what they needed. So I guess I had a lot of practical math skills. It taught me to be very organized and work with procedures in the business.

James shared the strengths he felt he brought with him as a new teacher:

> Since I spent a lot of time in sales, I was use to giving presentations. I think one of the things I didn't have a problem with in my first year was standing up in front of my class and presenting information. I was also good at making connections to my content. In sales, it was important to connect to the client in a way they could understand the product. Teaching is similar in that way.

Emma spoke of her experience with technology use:

> I worked on the back-end side of creating custom websites for clients, which included creating and testing various functionality of the website. I also worked on the front-end side, which included the design and user-experience interface of the website. I'm very proficient with technology and meeting deadlines and organization.

Maya also made connections to her new teaching experience:

> I learned how to manage my time. I was very good at scheduling and now that I'm a teacher I can show my students how they can use what they are learning in math out in the real world, like give them some examples they can actually see.

Furthermore, ten participants indicated their development of professional traits such as responsibility, accountability, and conduct. Gerry shared his experiences of working in a bank:

> When I was working in the bank I was exposed to all areas and departments. As part of my training I participated in different facets before settling into a single role. Time management and accountability was a major thing. So was having computer skills. There wasn't a lot of room for you to be messing around or relaxing around other people's money.

Larry added: "As a project planner, I would be able to create a routine and have a work-structure that was (for the most part) consistent on a daily basis. I knew my limitations and know how to work around them." Julia, on her professionalism, shared:

> I'm pretty much a self-starter. Being in the military teaches you to be very responsible and professional. I take initiative with the work I have to do, and I take my duties seriously. I feel accountable when I teach, so it's important for me to do the best job I can, even if it can be very hard at times.

The context of participants' connections to their previous careers identifies the transferrable skills that career changer's bring into the profession as new teachers. These skills are further supported by researchers as advantages that career changers possess in

comparison to traditional graduates (Anderson et al.; 2014; Williams, 2013).

The emerging themes identified varying levels of participants' transferrable skills including professional conduct (33%) and job-ready work skills (67%) such as organization skills, time management, multitasking, communication skills, and maturity.

Theme 4: Difference from Previous Work Experiences

While participants' connections to their previous careers provide some perceived advantages while entering the first teaching year, participants also noted key differences from their previous careers that impacted their overall perceptions of the teaching profession. The participants identified differences in increased accountability, workload outside of classroom teaching, student dynamics, and expectations for one's own learning or on the job training.

In identifying key differences, participants noted an increase in accountability associated with teaching. However, some participants' perceptions of accountability were associated with the increased administrative work that they had to undertake as opposed to the classroom instruction that they had to provide. Researchers identified feelings of being overwhelmed, stressed, and burned out as contributing factors to novice teachers' difficulties in their first years (Buchanan et al., 2013; Janzen & Phelan, 2015; Hong, 2012). Albert reflected on his perception of the teaching profession prior to his first year:

> Before teaching, I believed that it would be easy, but I was strongly mistaken. I feel that the expectations are a lot higher because I am dealing with students and I am accountable for their safety and learning. Unlike my previous jobs, I am now

> responsible for teaching students' important lessons that will prepare them for life.

Heidi seemed frustrated by the amount of extra work that teachers had to fulfill: "Teaching has not been what I expected it to be. First of all the amount of accountability paperwork is ridiculous". Gerry was also taken aback by the increased duties of teachers: "For the most part, yes. I didn't know it was going to be so tedious as far as documenting all kinds of things. How do you know your students are learning? Show me in a graph with a narrative." This was pretty shocking to me and by the responses of many of my colleagues, this whole data collection process is a new thing, I guess. Rex also added:

> I did not expect to see so many paper work involved as a teacher. Words such as IEP, BMP, CFA, and PLC were all new to me. There are so much more than just teaching the students. I learned that we have so much more responsibilities than just teaching our students concepts that they will need in the future.

Beth summed up her first year teaching experience:

> My experience has definitely been an eye opener because those who aren't teachers think that all we have to do is "teach" and that it's as simple as that, but it isn't. I didn't expect to do more than just "teach." Teaching definitely has more responsibilities than my previous work experiences.

Additionally, participants also felt that they had to continue their duties as a teacher during their off-hours. Eve reiterated this challenge:

> Well working as a shift leader is a little easier compare to a teacher because once you're done and you go home you do not have to worry about anything else. A

> teacher's job does not end in the classroom, because we put time and effort on what we teach and we think on how to teach to the student in ways that they will learn it. We try to make a subject fun in ways that we try to make learning fun and enjoyable.

Maya had similar thoughts: "The workload given to teachers was not what I expected. Although teachers have a typical 8 hour schedule, they still work beyond those hours to complete their duties". Paula spoke of the various dimensions of professionalism that teachers undertake as well:

> I learned about different teaching theories and theorists, but not much about all the different hats we wear as a teacher (counselor, nurse, parent, etc.).

Henry reflected on the difference between his expectations and reality:

> I think the promise of getting the weekends off is a little deceiving for new teachers. I didn't expect so much writing, and the time I'd have to spend just making lesson plans and filling out paperwork for my administrators. As a new teacher, all that extra time I expected to have was taken up with having to take some work home, grade papers, or just needing it to catch up rather than relax.

A noticeable pattern also emerged as the participants, pointed to the challenges associated with students. Participants felt that students' attitude, work ethic, and the reception to instructional practices was a significant challenge for new teachers. Larry noted the difference of instructing students and working with adults:

> The amount of contact and the way I had to interact with the students was definitely a change for me. Unlike dealing with adult clientele, I had to be a lot

> more firm and straight-forward with my students so that all information I was transferring was clear and accurate.

Rex reflected on the challenges of working with students as a new teacher: “I did not expect for certain students to be so apathetic when it comes to their education”. Students’ lack of motivation was also a challenge concurred by Rhea: “Some of the things I wasn’t prepared for were the really troubled individuals, that, despite your constant conferences with them, they continue to come to class un-motivated”.

Eve noted that, sometimes, obtaining a level of respect was the first challenge by students: “I was not prepared of how students are towards you. Some students are respectful some are not”. Others, like Mia, were not prepared for diverse student populations in her classroom:

> It was really eye opening and overwhelming when I went through my roster every year and see how many students have learning disabilities, or are speaking English as a second language, or come from poverty, or have behavioral issues. Some are already in trouble with the law.

Finally, most participants noted that they had to seek information on their own instead of receiving similar on-job training they had associated with their previous careers. Rhea commented on her challenge of finding support during her first year:

> In the classroom teaching health, I was pretty much on my own; doing what I thought made sense. I wish there was a new teacher manual that can somewhat guide me through what I needed to touch on throughout the year.

Maya found the flow of information limited to new teachers:

> It was totally different. I wish that somehow I was introduced to the reality of teaching back in college or at least a few weeks prior to starting the job.

Henry shared the differences in his preparation for his new and former career:

> It caught me by surprise. When I first started as a waiter, they kind of just eased you in. They had me doing some job shadowing. They gave me less tables to handle at first. They partnered me up in a buddy system those first few weeks. When I started teaching, they gave me a key and shut the door.

Still, some participants found that the difference between their teaching career and their previous career was a positive experience when viewed in context. Emma, who was expected to work independently to meet deadlines as a website designer added:

> Yes, my teaching experience is what I expected it to be. With teaching, I am interacting with a lot more people. I don't feel as isolated as I used to in my prior career. There are a group of teachers I can ask questions, whereas in my former career, I only had one other person to ask, who was very difficult to get a hold of.

Paula reflected on the balance between instruction and other non-instructional duties:

> Teaching definitely has more of an immediate gratification and sense of purpose than my other occupations. Being a "manager" of a classroom without constantly being interrupted and tasked with other duties (in the middle of teaching), enables me to focus on my main concern, which is my students. Of course, all the "extra" administrative paperwork, workshops, trainings, PLCs, etc. do still continue in the

> background, but the brief moments when I actually get to just teach are open windows in a stuffy office.

The differences that participants experienced in comparison to their previous careers provide a context for understanding how these experiences may impact their perceptions of preparedness. These differences identified patterns of increased administrative duties (53%), a lack of resources and training (27%), and managing student needs and expectations (20%) as factors that impact participants' perceptions of preparedness. Research continues to identify similar concerns with CCTs as significant factors that impact their perceptions of preparedness (Howes & Goodman-Delahunty, 2015; Waters & Diezmann, 2015).

Theme 5: Teachers' First Year Perceptions

Most participants did not feel that they were fully prepared for the rigors of teaching during their first years in the profession. These patterns of feeling untrained, ill-equipped, isolated, and confused is noted in research literature as factors that affect continued retention (Anderson et al., 2014; Williams, 2013 ;).

Albert spoke of the difficulty of being a new teacher:

> I was not prepared for lesson planning, classroom management, methods on teaching the lessons, activities, etc. The list could be quite long if I talked about how not prepared I was. The feeling of being overwhelmed, not prepared, confused, definitely takes an emotional and physical toll. I believe that even if you love teaching, the first few years is still going to be difficult and I guess that is just a part of being a teacher.

Maya was overwhelmed with all the things she did not know:

> On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being very prepared, I choose 2. Some of the things I was not prepared for were how to manage a full class load, the various school procedures for different situations, the importance of the first days of classes, not knowing what I will be teaching, the lack of resources and not being fully informed on what resources the school does offer, not given enough time to prepare the classroom that will be used, and not being fully informed on who were the main staff of the school. I had a very positive outlook towards teaching, but after completing a year, my perception of teaching is not as positive. In addition to that, they have to deal with multiple personalities of the students and certain students can be really difficult. Not only that, teachers are not given the utmost support that they need. They may have to go out of their way to make things work to do their job successfully.

Emma's experience also highlighted the difficulties of a lack of resources and support:

> I was not prepared with what content I would be teaching; I did not have a syllabus prepared nor did I receive the syllabus of the previous teacher; I was not prepared with a lesson plan (I did not know what subject I would be teaching). I felt I had very little resources to begin with since the one other teacher teaching the same subject was not so helpful. This was largely due to the teacher I took over did not coordinate well with the other teacher. I was also not prepared for

> any of the evacuation procedures. I had to let my students fill me in as it was happening.

Beth spoke of her feelings of inadequacy during the first year:

> I was not prepared at all. Mentally, I tried to prepare myself for the worst, but I wasn't sure if I was ready or even fit to be a teacher. I had absolutely no experience in education and leading a classroom full of students. I made so many mistakes on my first year that I cringe every time I remember them.

Henry reflected on his struggles during the first year:

> I was just trying to survive that first year. I felt like I was doing everything wrong. I would try different suggestions from my peers, but quite honestly, as a teacher the success of a lesson comes down to your familiarity and knowledge of implementing the lesson. As a new teacher, it was a different story of knowing what you can or should do and actually doing it if you've never done it before. My kids were bouncing off the walls because I just couldn't get it together.

While some participants felt they were prepared, these participants also reflected that this perception of preparedness was the result of interactions with family and friends. These support circles provided positive reinforcement and encouragement as well as a snapshot of the challenges they would face prior to their first year.

While Rex did not feel prepared for the mental and emotional toll of teaching in his first year, he was able to gain support from family who were teachers themselves:

> I would say that my level of preparedness was adequate when I first became a teacher at the middle school. My wife and her family are teachers so they gave

me as much advice as I began my teaching career. I felt that I was not prepared for the emotional and mental aspects that come from teaching. I did not expect to be so involved when it came to making an impact with the students. During my first year, I really invested a lot of myself emotionally.

Emma also found inspiration close to home:

Becoming a teacher was actually my first career choice in college. I always loved helping others learn. This later changed as I found a different passion in college. I was brought back to the idea of becoming a teacher by my husband. Seeing him enjoy teaching and the bond that he formed with his students was inspiring.

Mia credited her circle of support for keeping her in the profession:

Actually, I didn't want to continue. There were many times I wanted to quit, but I was lucky to have a friend to confide in, to be surrounded by very supportive teachers who encouraged me not to quit because the first year is always the hardest, and to have a professional mentor to help me get through my first year. Because of all the encouragement and support I received from them, this convinced me to try another year of teaching.

Some participants also stated that their personal character qualities of independence, drive for success, and internal reflection provided a counterbalance to the challenges they faced.

Paula shared her efforts:

I don't feel that the university program realistically prepares teachers to thrive in the classroom. I had to do my own research and read various books about:

> classroom management, teaching strategies, and teacher
>
> PTEPs/evaluations, smart goals.

Larry added: “I had to do a lot of homework of my own before school started to make sure I started on the right foot. I had to take matters into my own hands to give myself a chance at success”. Gerry felt that he benefitted from teaching and taking education classes at the same time: “I was learning things and practicing them in the classroom as soon I heard about it. I would also get to bring things up and have my professors and classmates give me feedback”.

James shared his personal strengths and how it helped him cope with the challenges he faced:

> I’m very independent. I like working by myself at times and figuring it out, so I didn’t go out a seek support, even if I should have. That’s just my personality. Once in a while I’d stop by the teachers’ lounge and ask teachers about different ways to handle things, but I just felt more comfortable solving the problem myself.

Julia referenced some of her personal qualities that made her successful in the military:

> I don’t get shaken very easily. I know that there will always be challenges no matter what you do. So I looked at each teaching challenge as a problem to solve, you know? I’d use my experiences to find similar solutions.

Mia felt that she could handle some parts of the job, but needed support in other parts: “I felt like I’d be okay with the teaching part because I was use to speaking in front of people, but I was not prepared for all the other duties I had to do”.

Participants’ perceptions of their first year of teaching provided a snapshot of their feelings of efficacy in and out of the classroom. Most participants (73%) did not feel that they were successful in the first year, and often cited feeling unprepared, overwhelmed, and isolated. However, the recurring patterns of available resources, increased training, and the attainment of more experience seemed to point to areas that may impact changes in these perceptions. This may be due to CCTs personality traits, skills, or values that were reinforced or honed through previous work experiences (Anderson et al., 2014; Marinell & Moore Johnson, 2014; Williams, 2013).

Perceptions of Mentoring Experiences (RQ1)

Research Question 1 guided the research process that focused on participants’ perceptions of their mentoring experience during their first years in the teaching profession. The interview questions gathered data to understand the participants’ perceptions of their mentoring experiences, whether formal or informal, that impacted their professional performance or self-efficacy. In the analysis of the data, four themes emerged from participants’ insights on induction and orientation, professional development, professional practice, and mentor availability.

Theme 6: Induction & Orientation

The theme of induction and orientation was noted by five (33%) participants as impacting their perception of their mentoring experience. Induction and orientation

practices have been identified as one of the first activities that new teachers receive from their school or district (Green, 2015; Kidd, Brown, and Fitzallen, 2015). Kram (1983) characterized this as the initiation phase wherein a high level of support was needed between the newest members and those in the know. However, the five participants viewed their first days in the new profession of teaching as disorganized, impractical, or non-existent. Gerry spoke of his experience as a new teacher attending the first day of classes:

> On my first actual day, I was given a folder with passes, a map, a handbook, and some HR forms. I was told that class was already started and that the sub was with them. One of our assistant principals walked me to my class, introduced me to the students, and left me to the wolves.

Larry added:

> There was a "teacher induction" program that was started up by two teachers who were studying for their masters degrees. However, the program didn't follow through as the two got pretty busy. It was basically supposed to be an informal mentorship program within the school.

Henry reflected on his crash course of preparation before his first week of teaching:

> They had us come in a few days before the start of the school day. They went over the policies and procedures, and basically everything that we needed to know to not get in trouble, plus any changes from the last school year; which if you weren't here last school year, you wouldn't know anyway. Then, they told us

> who to find things from like keys, supplies, schedules, and stuff, and sent us on our way for the rest of the day to get our classrooms in order. Looking back I can see how that makes a veteran teacher's life easier, but at that time, I was just overwhelmed and I didn't even technically start teaching yet.

Paula was not as fortunate as her first introduction to the induction process was met with frustration and resentment:

> I don't feel like the school I was assigned to prepared me at all. My very first teacher orientation, first of all, I had no idea what it entailed or meant. I showed up at my school and sat in an empty seat. There wasn't anyone assigned to identify and locate new teachers, or help new teachers feel welcomed, and less anxious. I can't remember the exact information that was presented, but the speakers used lingo and referenced forms that new teachers would not be aware of or use to. I didn't know what an ODR was or what the offenses were. I didn't know what the attendance policy was. I didn't even know what my schedule would be like for the day. I felt like I was put in charge of a ship and a crew, but I wasn't told where I was going or what I was supposed to do to make sure the ship and crew run smoothly.

Theme 7: Impact of Professional Development.

Another theme that emerged from four participants' (27%) perceptions of their mentoring experience was their participation in professional development activities. Professional development, or staff development, is viewed as a strategic effort to improve professional practice and transformation, and support student achievement (Beavers,

2009; Desimone, 2011). Kram (1983) further described this as the cultivation phase wherein teacher development and support transitions from a level of initiation to competency. Professional development at these participants' schools were in the form of in-school training days, off-campus district training sessions, or as members of school-based professional learning community groups. At times, additional training was available to select teachers to support their needs throughout the school year.

Rex noted the benefits of both the school professional development and working in a professional learning community:

> The school was able to send me to training to help me with ESL or SPED programs. The department chair immediately set me up with another teacher who gave me a lot of support in the form of resources and word of encouragements every day. We were able to plan the curriculum together through weekly meetings.

Mia pointed to the importance of using professional development as an opportunity to continue to support the transition of new teachers.

> I guess all the PDs and PLC work is good for a general overview of things, but there needs to be more professional development throughout the year that focuses on things we can already use in the classroom. Practical stuff, not just overviews of things. Also, it needs to happen more than just three or four times a year. I know we should be discussing these things during our PLCs but most of the time we're just sitting around and talking or gossiping.

However, it is also noted that professional development experiences may be equally frustrating for teachers if they are not tailored to address the issues that teachers experience. The organized and meaningful use of professional development opportunities was also reiterated by Julia, who spoke of using professional development days to target specific classroom needs, but in her experience failed to do so:

> Our PDs are not too productive. I still don't know the difference between things that are discussed in PDs, faculty meetings, and PLCs. I mean, if they are setting aside time for training then we should be trained on strategies or things we can use in our classroom. Sometimes, it just feels like they present stuff to us just to fill up the time because we have to do it.

Albert added that the use of professional learning communities was a step towards continued mentoring support, but in his experience was also not being effectively implemented. He continued to add that these opportunities need to have the structure that parallels formal mentoring itself:

> The PLCs could be helpful because we get to meet regularly with other teachers, but there needs to be like an agenda or list of things that we need to get done. A lot of times, we have these lunches or after school meetings, and it's just to pass on information or remind us to do things; stuff that could be sent by email. I know what our admin says should be happening in our PLCs but it's just not being used in the right way. I'd like to have more discussions or feedback of how we can solve problems rather than just venting our problems.

Theme 8: Development of Professional Practice.

A consistent theme among the 11 (73%) participants who experienced only informal mentoring experiences was the concept of self-efficacy upon entering the profession. This was characterized by teachers seeking support on their own, independence, and learning on their own. However, this practice also resulted in a lack of targeted feedback, isolation, or emotional stress. In contrast, the four participants (27%) who were engaged in some form of mentoring during their first years, received consistent feedback, benefitted from intermittent observations, and interacted with an advocate for their success. Kram (1983) identified a phase of separation wherein mentees gain more confidence and independence as a result of continued support from their mentors. However, in this study, most participants felt thrust into the phase of independence without the cultivation of confidence through a consistent mentoring process. As such most participants felt frustrated, isolated, confused, or non-effective in their practices. Still, most teachers found support from their colleagues when sought out. Others benefitted from proactive content area departments that fostered camaraderie and group tasks. In particular, middle school teachers experienced less isolation than high school teachers with regards to teacher interactions and feedback due to their middle school team concept. Beth, a middle school science teacher, benefitted from her team's support: "I constantly checked in with my department chair, my interdisciplinary team members, and colleagues, and shared what I was doing. They were also very open about giving advice regarding lessons as well as managing the classroom". Albert added:

"In the schools I worked at, peer mentorship or utilizing the teams approach really made my learning how to be a teacher a lot easier. I was fortunate to have wise teachers to share their knowledge with me". This differed from Henry, a high school social studies teacher, who found it difficult to connect during his first year:

> It was difficult to go out there and ask for help. Everyone just seemed so busy doing their own thing. I basically locked myself in my room during lunches, and went straight home after school. It's hard being the new guy because everyone looked so comfortable with each other or in their groups. No one really goes out of their way to stop by your room and say, hey do you need any help?

Maya, a high school math teacher recalled being overwhelmed despite having others to just talk with:

> I felt like I wanted to breakdown and cry, then and there. Like I wanted to (pause). I don't know (pause). It was a stressful situation (pause), even though, um (pause), some teachers were willing to help or were talking about it, but, um (pause), for me to explain or talk about the situation was hard. I wanted someone to see it (pause), for them to understand what I am saying (voice cracking).

In some cases, familiarity with the school surroundings made a big difference with a new teacher's transition. Larry, a former student had returned to his former middle school as a teacher and was greeted as a familiar face. This was not uncommon for many on-island teachers, as many do not leave the island for off-island jobs, and instead work a few years in one profession and enter another like teaching with ease:

> I taught at my alma mater and the veteran teachers warmed up to me really well because they already knew me. I feel that if I had started out in a different school, things would have not been the same. I started teaching with a friend who had no previous connection to the school and her experience was completely different than mine. She ended up quitting by veteran's day from a lack of support from her interdisciplinary team and admin. I was fortunate that our department had their "crap" together. We had unit plans and previous work samples to draw upon and that made my life a whole lot easier.

Theme 9: Mentor Availability

Eleven (73%) participants felt that their mentoring experience was informal in nature, while five (27%) participants received a formal mentoring experience. Participants who identified their mentoring experience as informal cited their experience as self directed wherein the support provided to them was the result of informal conversations and interactions with colleagues initiated by the participant themselves. However, these informal mentoring experiences were limited to the sharing of experiences between colleagues, and intermittent collaborations. Participants whose mentoring experience was informal also noted that any organized support and guidance provided to them was only through planned school year activities such as professional development, faculty meetings, department meetings or monthly professional learning community (PLC) work. Henry summed up the frustrations of his first year mentoring experience:

> It was rough you know? I didn't have anyone that first year. I had no mentor; I barely knew anyone at the school, and I was basically left on my own to figure it out. A mentor would have really helped because then you could have someone to bounce things off of instead of making mistake after mistake.

Julia, who also did not have a mentor, relied on her previous career experience to help her through the first years:

> I didn't have a mentor. I tried to apply what I learned from the military and just use some common sense approaches. It would have been nice to have some guidance. I think for me, I would have liked someone to talk to exclusively about what I was experiencing in class. I would have liked someone to observe me and give me feedback. I didn't get anything like that except for the administrator observation and even that was not for an entire class time.

Mia added:

> I was just given some simple orientation, some supplies, a key, and a classroom. If there was any mentoring it was with my interactions with the other teachers in the lounge or during professional development and PLCs. I didn't have any one person who took me under their wing, per se.

The infrequent collaborations with other colleagues were noted by all the participants who identified with an informal mentoring experience. Still, these participants noted that although they did not receive any formalized mentoring, they benefitted from being able to interact and share conversations with other teachers, in particular veteran teachers.

Albert spoke of the benefit of receiving guidance from a team concept in middle school:"I did not receive any formal mentorship, however I did have a great team of veteran teachers that helped guide me in the right direction". Larry, a middle school science teacher also reiterated the benefit of the team concept in lieu of a formal mentoring experience:

> My first quarter teaching was a big learning process and a lot of it was manageable thanks to my 8th grade interdisciplinary team and science department colleagues. If I had any questions, veteran teachers were always willing and ready to answer my questions.

Still for some teachers, the informal nature of their mentoring experiences still provided opportunities to learn and improve their practices despite the lack of a formalized approach. Emma, a former web designer who was use to working independently, commented on the informal nature of her support:

> I didn't receive much formal mentoring at all. I would say that my mentoring experience was more informal in that I was talking to other teachers whenever I needed help. I basically had to find the answers myself, but that's not to say that people wouldn't help me once in a while. I just didn't have any specific person who I met with regularly.

Beth, a former dental assistant, also reiterated the amount of support she received from her colleagues:

> I received a tremendous amount of support from my administration, my team members, and especially from my content members (Science Department). Our

> department chair always ensured that I should not hesitate if I needed any help. Compared to my other job, I would say it is very different only because I did not receive any formal training to go into teaching.

Gerry, a former banker and high school ELL teacher, also did not receive a mentor but found support from teacher friends:

> I was not in a formal mentoring program but I had a handful of teacher friends who offered advice and assistance. I was also in a master's program at the time so it was very helpful to learn and experience at the same time.

While the informal nature of these participants' mentorship experience was limited in its structural offerings, some participants contributed to their own learning by taking initiative to contact district mentors, if available, or collaborating with veteran teachers for professional support.

Rex, a high school science teacher who did not receive a mentor, benefitted from colleagues who extended their support by accommodating his request to observe their classrooms:"I had informal support from other teachers. At my school, I had the privilege of watching my department chair and another teacher who possessed exemplary teaching methods".

Maya, who experienced a frustrating first year and had concerns with her instructional practices and classroom management, initiated contact with the district mentoring program to request for an available mentor:

> Luckily, one of them did come. Just to, you know, introduce the mentoring program to me; and that she can pick me up in January. When January came, we met at least once a week to talk. It helped a lot. It was eye opening.

However, most participants (73%) noted that a formal mentoring program or mentorship experience was not regularly offered or available to them upon starting their first year of teaching. Some teachers, like Paula, a former assistant at an insurance agency noted that she taught for two years before receiving a mentor:

> Unfortunately, I was not assigned a mentor until my third year of teaching. I didn't know anything about the mentorship program until my second year of teaching. A first year teacher on my team was assigned a mentor before me, so that's when I realized I should've been assigned a mentor already. Informal support mainly came from my co-workers.

Rex taught for four years before he received a mentor, and realized that he was fortunate to have figured some things out on his own: "I finally got a mentor from the mentorship program during my 5th year of teaching. My mentor gave me a lot of helpful strategies which I had used in the past".

Still, for the four (27%) participants who received a formal mentor, the experience provided greater support in the form of consistent meetings, observations, and feedback on their performance. Eve highlighted her mentoring experience that helped her transition into the new school year:

> My formal mentoring lasted for one year. The mentoring program consisted of formal observations from my mentor, immediate feedback from my mentor

> through the observation/interaction log, and continuous communication through emails, conferences/meetings, between my mentor and me. My mentor also gave me a binder full of strategies, articles, and certification information.

Maya agreed that the one to one support provided opportunities for her to grow as an educator:

> She made plans to observe my worst classes, and she gave me a different perspective of what was happening. She proposed ways to lessen those behaviors; which is lesson planning. And then she also suggested having me observe other teachers.

Needs for Support (RQ2)

Research Question 2 guided the collection of data that focused on participants' perceived needs of support during their first years of teaching and during their continued employment. In the analysis of the responses to the interview questions, seven themes emerged from participants' insights on their needs for accountability, emotional support, practical support, instructional support, mentor quality, and professional independence. All the participants felt that some form of mentoring, whether formal or informal, was needed for new teachers; however the degree of formalized mentorship and its extent was open to personal needs.

Theme 10: Need for Accountability

All the participants reiterated their desire for mentorship regardless of whether it was formal or informal. Eight (53%) participants explained the need for mentorship to

occur during the first three years of teaching. This was further supported by researchers (Ingersoll, Merrill, & May, 2012) who found that the first three years in the teaching profession is critical for further teacher retention. The use of an accountability system was alluded to by some participants who suggested that some form of mandated mentoring should be linked to the evaluation process of new teachers.

Albert suggested linking formal mentoring as a component to new teacher certification:

> Creating a better accountability system on how mentorship is conducted needs to be done. I believe that mentorship needs to be present for the first three years of a teacher's career and have it as a requirement for professional educator certification.

Rex concurred and added that classroom observation played an important role in the process:

> I believe that the mentoring process needs to happen at day one of one's teaching profession. A mentor must be planned for each new teacher in order to ensure retention of many of our teachers. A mentor must be set up right away as a new teacher finishes his or her certification. It could be better if they get their mentor as the certification process starts. Our new teachers need to be able to observe teachers and be observed by other teachers multiple times. This would give a teacher necessary input on how once can improve in their teaching ability.

Paula, who did not receive a mentor until her third year of teaching, reiterated the importance of receiving a mentor early in one's career:

> All first year teachers need to be assigned a mentor. Getting a mentor my third year of teaching was a waste of resources. By my third year, I already knew how to conduct parent teacher conferences; I knew how to formally and informally assess my students. We need to make sure that the new teachers, our fledglings, do not feel abandoned. We cannot just kick them out of the nest and expect them to fly without direction. We need to change the culture from surviving as a teacher to thriving as a teacher.

Theme 11: Need for Instructional Support

Instructional support was another theme that emerged a need for CCTs , many of whom were comfortable with their content subject matter. For these participants, instructional support ranged from classroom strategies and instructional practices to classroom management. Most participants (67%) identified classroom management as a major concern during their first years in the profession.

Larry shared view on the importance of classroom management during his first years: "Classroom management is something I was not ready for. It is honestly the most *'culture shocking'* aspect of teaching. I have friends who were bona fide education-related degree holders who still have problems with classroom management". Mia shared her early struggles managing her classroom:

> I needed a lot of help with dealing with all the different student needs. I didn't' have a problem with the math. I knew my math. But that's not what you get to do most of the time. Most of my time was spent trying to get them motivated, or settled in, or even just stay awake to do the math.

Emma also needed help with her classroom management of students:

> I needed support on how to manage students' behavior in class. I think once you get students' attention in class you will be able to achieve your goals. During my first year of teaching I had a very hard time coping with how to teach students' the way they wanted to be taught.

Paula reflected on her needs from an instructional point of view:

> I needed someone to look at what I was doing and tell me if I was doing it right or wrong. I needed someone to say "try this" or "you don't want to do that because this will happen". I wanted to be able to have options with using strategies that I was not aware of yet. I think I spent more time with discipline because I was just not prepared for all the things that go into managing a classroom. I could have used more observations to tell you the truth. I think I was visited only once.

Theme 12: Need for Emotional Support

Emotional support was another theme that eight (53%) participants identified as a need during their first years. Emotional support for some came in the form of informal talks in the teacher's lounge, while for others it was an opportunity to vent their frustrations of the day. In most cases, the need for emotional support stemmed from the need of having someone on campus that they could talk to and receive guidance, feedback, or confidence to continue to perform their duties in a professional manner. Rex spoke of the need for emotional in his first year of teaching: "In my first year of teaching, I needed more of a moral support as I transitioned to a new profession. Teaching requires a lot of emotional and mental support".

Henry added that the need for someone who understood what you were going through was important for new teachers:

> I couldn't really talk to my friends about what I was really feeling because they weren't teachers. So, yeah, it could get pretty stressful and sometimes you just need someone who went through what you are going through to help you see the light at the end of the tunnel. Sometimes, I needed to hear that I was going to be okay.

Maya recalled her relief when she was able to receive help from a mentor:

> Before I got a mentor, I was on the verge of quitting many times. There were times where I just wanted to cry because I didn't know what to do. When I finally got a mentor, it really helped to have someone support me, to see what was happening in my classroom, and sit and talk with me and not judge me.

Gerry was able to find multiple sources for emotional support that impacted his confidence:

> The only thing I was scared of at first, was meeting new people, which is just a personal thing for me. Having my previously known friend introduce me to his circle helped make me comfortable fast and built my confidence, which in turn, helped me perform better and develop quicker.

Eve added:

> My colleagues were a great support during my first year of teaching, because they really helped me get through the school year. Besides my mentor, they were there when I needed to vent about work. My family, friends, mentor, and colleagues at

work have helped me transition into my first year of teaching. They were the ones who gave me advice and the strength to keep pushing forward

Theme 13: Need for Practical Support

Some participants identified practical support (47%) as an area that needed to be improved for new teachers to thrive. Practical support included bridging the gap between theory and practice in education and the administrative practices expected all teachers in the district.

Paula explained her perspective on the practical needs for new teachers:

> First year teachers need to be taught the basics as far as office required forms and the school protocols and policies. PTEPs and teacher evaluations also need to be explained clearly. There's a huge disconnect between the university and the district. New teachers are graduating each year without realistic expectations or ideas of how a real classroom looks like and functions. There would be fewer cases of teacher burnout and teachers leaving the profession. Teachers don't need to be taught about all the different educational theorists. They need to be taught what to do when Sarah wants to go to the nurse but they are in middle of a lesson, or what to do when John's mom wants you to change his grade so he can join basketball. How about Jeff who is more than 5 grades below level for comprehension and is constantly getting suspended? What do you do if a student shows sign of abuse? These are the very real questions that new teachers need to know the answers to.

Julia also felt that practical support with the administrative expectations of teachers would have helped her:

> The area that I needed the most support in were for things like how to fill out forms. Lesson plan formats. Curriculum guides and maps. What to expect in things like IEP meetings. What it means to be in an accreditation focus group; stuff like that. If I knew these things coming in I feel like I'd be better prepared. For me, the administrative paperwork was more stressful than the actual classroom.

Henry suggests a practical solution to helping new teachers:

> There needs to be a session for just new teachers during orientation. Things like how to fill out forms. What to expect during the year. This would be a good time to meet other new people or even partner up with mentors.

Theme 14: Development of Mentor Quality

A few participants also suggested an improvement in mentor quality. Participants noted that most mentors at the school level were not paid for their efforts. Others noted that a lack of available mentors for the district meant that not every new teacher received the support they needed during the first three years of the profession.

Albert recommended increasing efforts to retain and train mentors in order to have a greater impact throughout the district:

> More needs to be done to recruit and retain mentors, I feel as though they are stretched thin due to financial reasons, but in order to have a wide and effective reach, this is something that needs to be considered.

Heidi supported this idea:

> We need to invest in mentors the way we invest in professional development, especially if these are people who will be working one on one with new teachers. Mentorship is beneficial but it's like teaching, there's good mentors and there's bad mentors, so those who mentor should be getting training as well.

Paula suggests that schools invest in developing in-house mentoring programs: "I believe that some sort of mentor program needs to exist at each school location". Larry also suggested that those who are mentors be more aggressive in their approach with new teachers: "As far as mentoring is concerned, the mentors need to be more aggressive and intentional with first year and preservice teachers. They should not fluff anything up and just be straight-forward about what to expect in teaching". Gerry commented on who should undertake a mentor's role:

> Mentors should be veteran teachers who have a number of years in them. I don't want to be mentored by someone who only started one or two years before me. Mentors should also be very respected around the school. They should also be compensated in some way like with an extra period off, if there's no money.

All participants agreed that greater support is needed for new teachers. Participants also expressed that their previous career experiences provided them with the "soft skills" needed to transition into the field of teaching such as time management, collaborative work, problem-solving, resourcefulness, and undertaking multiple roles. These career changers noted that their experiences of mentoring were mostly informal and benefitted greatly from the support of their colleagues in these informal settings.

Still, while these informal support systems provided opportunities to gain knowledge, improve instructional practices, or reflect through feedback, it was neither immersive nor consistent in practice. Those who participated in a formal mentoring program described their experiences as consistent, helpful, and supportive of opportunities to participate in observations and receive feedback on their teaching performance.

Theme 15: Development of Professional Independence

Three (20%) participants felt that despite the lack of a formal mentoring program, thorough induction or orientation, or consistent and targeted professional development, they were able to transition into the teaching profession with minimal support due to their personality type and experiences. Kram (1983) further described this phase as a redefinition phase wherein the new teacher makes the transition into professional independence. This next step in the transition includes a more informal support system, a perceived shift in the balance of power from a new teacher to a fellow colleague, and reflective practice as a means to improve professional practice.

Julia, a high school math teacher with military service experience, reflected on her life experiences as a something that helped her ease her transition into teaching:

> I was use to talking to people and getting my point across. So, I didn't have much trouble with the instruction side of things. I mostly need help getting familiarized with the administrative things like proper forms and personnel. I knew my content and I was confident with who I was as a teacher. So while I think a

> mentoring program could be beneficial, at the same time I don't feel like I was lost without it.

James, a high school science teacher, also spoke of how his personality traits helped him cope with the transition into teaching:

> I'm one of those people who like to work alone. I don't mind sitting down and trying to solve a problem. It's just who I am. I'll seek out help if I need it, but most of the time I can figure things out.

Rhea described how she took charge of her own transition into teaching:

> Even though I had a mentor, I also read up on my own. I did my own research, talked to different teachers, tried new strategies; things like that. I participated in a lot of things around school and tried to stay up on what was going on. I put myself out there.

Participant perceptions of their mentoring experience indicate that informal interactions were more frequently available rather than formal mentoring opportunities. However, teachers who participated in informal interactions with colleagues were primarily the result of initiated conversations or expected collaborations through department or team meetings. For participants who received some form of formal mentoring, interactions and support was provided on a regular basis and structured to provide opportunities for observation and feedback. Additionally, participants who experienced solely informal support indicated greater instances of feeling isolated, confused, or generally stressed. While participants that received mentoring opportunities also experienced first year challenges, they also noted that they felt that they had more

opportunity to share, vent, and receive feedback to support their transition into the profession.

Evidence of Trustworthiness

In this phenomenological study, I ensured credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability through measures and practices attuned to qualitative studies. The use of member checking, peer debriefing, and bracketing, combined with standard techniques such as pattern identification and transcription activities added to the validation, integrity, trustworthiness, and accuracy of this study (Creswell, 2007; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Lincoln & Guba; 1985; Mellon, 1990). Lincoln and Guba (1985) further identify the researcher as the "instrument" where the traditional concept of validity is established though its focus on trustworthiness and authenticity of the process to determine credibility. The establishment of thematic codes was the result of pattern identification generated from the responses of the participants.

Credibility was established through the use of qualitative investigation techniques, familiarity with the culture of organization under study, tactics to ensure honesty, member checks, and peer debriefing (Fontanta & Frey, 1994; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Shenton, 2004). The study used two rounds of interviews with each participant on separate days, and three levels of coding to identify thematic patterns from the data (Anfara et al, 2009). The frequency (two separate rounds of interviews with each participant) and duration of the interviews (60-90 minutes per interview round) allowed for more opportunity to develop thick descriptions of the participants' experiences and develop connections from the examination of the existing body of research on mentoring

practice and career changers. Prior to the start of data collection, participants were informed that their participation was voluntary and confidential. During the interviews and review of data, I utilized bracketing techniques to ensure my personal beliefs and biases did not interfere with the interpretation of the participant's personal responses. I also used probing techniques, iterative questioning, and inductive reasoning to gather detailed data and establish applicable themes (Anfara et al., 2009; Seidman, 1998; Shenton, 2004). During the interviews, I paid special attention to participant's body language and ensured that they were comfortable throughout the process in order to establish rapport. I transcribed the participants' interviews and provided them with copies to validate their responses. The use of member checks was utilized for participants to verify the identified themes, initial findings, and interpretations. I also utilized a peer debriefer to ensure objectivity in the presentation of data and findings. The peer debriefer confirmed the findings of the study, and suggested considerations for the presentation of the study's findings to the district.

Shenton (2004) posited that the transferability of qualitative studies is determined by the contextual information provided by the researcher and the determination of readers to apply such findings to the context in which they compare the results. Due to the humanistic nature of qualitative studies, the transferability of research reflects the contextual settings, factors, variables, and participants of the study. The study provides thick descriptions and contextual information of participants' experience which may provide readers with the necessary information to determine the level of transferability to their contextual needs and apply to the larger existing research available.

As discussed in Section 3 of this study, the research design provided the necessary detailed steps taken to ensure dependability and confirmability of this study. The semi-structured interviews were conducted with attention to both verbal and non-verbal cues, with an emphasis on building participant rapport, truthful responsiveness, and ensuring confidentiality (Fontana & Frey, 2000; Hollway & Jefferson, 2008; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Participant responses were further compared with current research findings from other studies and the data were analyzed using a multileveled approach to coding to generate themes, working from larger chunks of information to the establishment of core relationships and categories (Anfara et al., 2002; Meyers & Sylvester, 2006; Patton, 2002). The researcher obtained National Institutes of Health (certificate number 1882925) certification and the study was conducted with both local university IRB (CHRS# 15-93) and Walden University IRB approval (# 04-29-16-0159099).

Summary

For this section a descriptive analysis was used to present participants' perceptions of their mentoring experiences during their first years in the teaching profession. These descriptions provide a picture of the struggles and successes new CCTs face during their first experiences as a teacher. As such, participants' direct words were used to provide an understanding of their experiences.

The themes that emerged as a result of their perceived mentoring experiences (see Research Question 1) include mentor availability, induction & orientation, professional development, professional practice, and professional independence. As it relates to future

support needed for new CCTs (see Research Question 2), themes of accountability, instructional support, emotional support, practical support, and mentor quality emerged as talking points for the participants. In summary, CCTs indicated a desire to participate in formal mentoring opportunities. These teachers were positive in describing the amount of support they received from colleagues through informal collaborations and discussions, but pointed out concerns with the lack of consistent and formalized support for their mentorship during their first years in the profession.

In Section 5, I provide a discussion of the study findings and relate it to research data and the theoretical framework to determine conclusions and implications for future study. I further discuss the implications for social change and provide recommendations for further study. I further reflect on the importance of mentoring for novice career changers and personal insights to the continued support for new teachers.

Section 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Teacher attrition and retention is a continual issue for the United States' public education system. It is a reframed talking point of the old adage of "sink or swim" for which the process of teacher mentoring is intended to shift the balance to the later. This study added to the body of knowledge that supports the need for teacher mentorship as an essential practice that impacts teacher retention. A phenomenological research design was utilized to explore CCTs perceptions of their mentoring experience during their first years of teaching. As such, 15 novice CCTs voluntarily provided their perspectives of transitioning into the field of education to gain insight into two research questions:

Research Question 1: How do career changing teachers perceive their mentoring experiences during their first years in the teaching profession?

Research Question 2: What are career changing teachers' needs for support during the first years of teaching?

The key findings of the study revealed that career changers desired mentoring experiences upon entry into the profession. However, most career changers in the study expressed that these experiences were limited, informal, and did not fully address their individual needs. The following discussion and interpretation of findings, recommendations, and implications for social change provide a snapshot of CCTs experiences in the classroom. Moreover, a final reflection and conclusion is provided as a call for action to further support, and cultivate the potential of these teachers as they navigate the pitfalls and embrace the successes that the teaching profession provides to them.

Interpretation of Findings

The theoretical framework for this study was based on the elements of social constructivist theory, social learning theory, and hierarchy of needs theory. The premise of these theoretical components guided the interpretation of novice CCTs' perceptions through the informal social support system provided by colleagues or the formalized mentorship available to them. As constructivist theory suggests, these novice teachers developed their understanding of the teaching profession and the pedagogical practices within, through the experiences afforded to them. As such, the experiential process and the practice of "learning by doing" create their reality of the profession (Kirschner et al., 2006; Mayer, 2004). For 11 participants in this study, this reality was shaped through informal interactions and support from colleagues, independent experiences in the classroom, ongoing professional development experiences, and organized group or team activities. While these experiences were common for all participants in the study, four participants also received guidance through their participation in a formal mentoring program. The themes generated from the research findings include career changers' motivations and viability as teachers, perceptions of professional practices for teacher efficacy, and support and retention needs.

Career Changing Teachers as Viable Candidates

In this study, participants commented on the views of teaching as a temporary career, their intentions for entering teaching, the differences and connections to their previous careers, and their prior perceptions of teaching. These discussions further identify the motivations and transitional skills and experiences that point to the viability

of these career changers as new teachers. The themes of CCTs motivations, intentions, and transitional skills gained from their previous profession provides contextual information in understanding the lived experiences of career changers as a select group entering the field of education and impacts how they viewed their mentoring experience, and the types of support they desired to impact their retention.

Participants identified a range of background skills obtained from their previous profession that they felt they could apply to teaching in the classroom. These identified job related skills ranged from organizational skills such as time management, collaboration and networking skills, and an ability to multitask; to practical skills such as communication, familiarity with technology, and leadership skills. These findings confirmed the present research on career changers as viable candidates who offer diverse experiences and skills, and possess a perceived sense of maturity, real world experience, and accountability that may transfer into the field of education. These findings further confirm what researchers determined as soft skills that career changers possess as they transition into teaching (Marinell & Johnson, 2014; Williams, 2015).

Participants identified flexibility of time and schedules as well as the altruistic reasons such as “making a difference” as primary motivations for career changers. Still, while researchers found that career changers enter the teaching profession as a result of altruistic, and goal-oriented motivations rather than to establish a career footing or to generate income; the majority of participants in this study noted that they entered teaching as a result of more practical purposes (Castro and Bauml, 2009; Cuddahpah and Stanford, 2015). The findings of the study indicate that five (33%) participants entered

teaching as a result of current job instability or displacement, while 10 (67%) of the participants "settled" for teaching as a temporary option before their next career decision. This extends the knowledge on career changers intentions to enter the field of education as most studies characterize career changers as individuals who have established a clear professional footing and are seeking new challenges ahead (Nielson, 2016; Marinell & Johnson, 2014; Peske et al., 2013). However, it is important to note the context of this study, as the participants are localized to the U.S territory of Guam, a small island setting, where larger opportunities are limited when compared to the continental United States.

These participants, in relation to their current stage in life, have met or are meeting Maslow's (1943) first two stages of needs. The participants have met their physiological needs and safety needs as they currently hold employment and are generating income to sustain their livelihood. However, the findings also suggest that the participants' professional well being were still in flux and illustrates Maslow's assertion that individuals fluctuate between levels as they navigate their life changes (Maslow, 1943). The challenge of categorizing teachers as meeting specific levels of need in Maslow's hierarchy is the assumption that we can separate their personal lives from their professional lives. In some cases this is difficult, as the conceptual framework of this study asserted that novice career changers will develop their professional identity and self efficacy from their socialization with their colleagues and their experiences. However, as noted in the findings, the participants may also still be making the determination if teaching is the right option or the only viable option to fit their needs.

Motivations and intentions. While elements of practicality such as income can be applied to most job offerings, only three novice teachers identified income, insurance, or other health benefits as a motivating factor. In comparison, these same teachers, in addition to others, provided multiple dimensions to their motivation and also noted a combination of benefits including personal time off (nine participants) such as weekends, summers, and holidays or to pursue additional certifications, job stability (eight participants), and time for family (three participants).

Additionally, all the teachers paralleled their practical needs with their personal motivations for entering education. The career changers further emphasized the importance of making a difference in their community (six participants), working with the youth (five participants), and acting on their love of teaching (four participants). These practical and multidimensional motivations seem to suggest that career changers consider responsibilities that extend beyond "finding a job", but rather balance the practicality of employment with personal enrichment and altruistic intentions. Researchers further emphasized the motivations and intentions of career changers as multidimensional and contextual to their personal experiences (Nielson, 2016; Wagner and Imanuel-Noy, 2014). While most did not initially intend to enter the teaching field, they found that their professional backgrounds were either a catalyst for change in their professional environment or support for a transition to education (Marinell & Johnson, 2013; Peske et al., 2013; Robertson, 2014). Emma explained:

> I thought about it early in my life, but it wasn't until I started working when I realized that I just couldn't work in a field where I didn't interact much with

> anyone. I was literally in an office left to myself with a deadline or a project to complete. It was really boring.
>
> Paula reflected on an advantage of working in a previous career:
>
> My previous career helped prepare me for teaching by sharpening the following skills: time management (prioritizing my workload, maximizing productivity during the workday), customer service (on the phone and in person), multi-tasking, and computer skills (prepping emails, creating editing documents in Microsoft Word and Excel, etc.). I think the most useful tool I gained was the ability to switch duty "hats" within the span of an hour, a day, or even a week.

These differences extends the knowledge on career changers as multidimensional individuals who, while still considering whether teaching is for them, may also recognize the skills and experiences they possess to become successful in the profession. Additionally, participants' responses appear to indicate a disparity between their motivations to teach and their intentions to teach. While all 15 participants indicated that they were motivated by the flexibility of teaching schedules, 10 (66%) participants initially viewed teaching as a temporary profession for them while they planned the next stage of their careers. However, participants also indicated that their intentions to teach were the result of altruistic purposes such as working with students and being viewed as a role model.

Experience and transitional skills. Career changers' former work experiences and the skills developed through previous employment also seem to support the arguments for career changers as viable candidates for teaching. The career changers'

work experiences came from a variety of different fields including the medical, military, financial, retail, food and beverage, communications, marketing, insurance, government, university, and private industries. Many felt a positive desire to enter the field of education as a "next step" in their professional growth. However, while most participants received encouragement from family and friends or were motivated to act on an inner call to teach, others also felt it was an inevitable decision considering factors such as limited opportunities in their primary field of choice, or a desire for flexibility in time and schedule to pursue other goals or fulfill family obligations. Still, however the path that led to career changers' decisions to enter the field of education, they felt that they brought with them a variety of profession-ready "soft skills" that supported their transition.

Career changers considered themselves initially prepared to enter teaching as many felt that their prior work experiences and duties developed job-related skills that could translate into the field of education. The teachers felt that they possessed experience and skills that included relationship building, multitasking, leadership, organization, and technology use. Eleven of the 15 teachers that participated in this study highlighted relationship building as a significant skill they possessed. These skills included their comfort in working with teams, collaborating with others, and utilizing proper communication skills.

Organization was also identified by 11 teachers as a skill they developed through previous work experiences. These skills included time management, scheduling, meeting deadlines, and completing agendas. Five teachers identified themselves as serving in a

leadership role in their previous career. These roles included supervisory positions, administrative positions, spokesperson, and military. As such, these teachers considered themselves as having a high respect for authority, accountability, and developed necessary leadership skills, presentation skills, and communication skills. Five teachers also considered themselves competent in various forms of technology. Additionally, four teachers recognized their strengths in working independently including the ability to problem solve and find answers or solutions on their own. Finally, three teachers acknowledged that they possessed abilities to multitask and perform a variety of duties and roles within their former job duties. These transitional skills support career changers as they access familiar work experiences to navigate the unknown challenges of today's teaching environment.

Participants in this study further relied on these experiences as a foundation to their professional identity. Williams (2013) posited that career changers knowledge of their abilities and skills sets is closely tied to their development of their professional identity. This knowledge and predisposed conceptions of teaching and learning becomes more easily accessible for career changers during their transition into teaching than the educational theory they may have received during training (Tigchelaar et al.; 2014). Additionally, CCTs , who already possess a degree or diploma in another field of study, may seek immediate fulfillment of their needs in relation to Maslow's hierarchy. These professionals are accustomed to a professional environment and knowledgeable of workforce dynamics. As such they are more likely to leave the field of teaching if they are cannot obtain permanent position within a given timeframe or if they feel that the

demands of the job outweigh their initial motivation and intentions (Fontaine et al., 2012).

Participant responses to their professional backgrounds and skills sets extend the knowledge of career changers' predisposed understanding of self. This knowledge is accessed, compared, cultivated, or changed as career changers' develop their self-efficacy beliefs as a teacher during their first years of experience (Bandura, 1977). Additionally, career changers' previous knowledge, skills sets, and self-efficacy beliefs provides them with a differing perspective of education and job preparedness upon entry when compared their traditionally trained counterparts. In relation to Vygotsky's (1978) ZPD, while career changers may parallel traditionally graduates in their pedagogical needs and understanding of the school specific culture, career changers may enter the profession with a perceived advantage of job-related experiences, maturity, communication skills, and organizational skills that may ease the navigation through the ZPD. By understanding the skill sets and professional experiences that career changers possess, schools may be able to develop and provide mentoring experiences that address their individual needs and leverage those skills to help transition novice teachers into teacher leaders (Linek et al., 2012; Tigchelaar et al., 2014; Wilkins & Comber, 2015).

Perceptions of Professional Practices for Teacher Efficacy (Research Question 1)

The findings of the study, in response to Research Question 1 (RQ1), suggest that the mentoring experiences provided to CCTs is both limited and lacking of formalized components for most participants. The findings revealed participants' response patterns to include their insights to perceptions of first year preparedness, availability of

mentoring, induction and orientation, professional development, and professional practice. A further review of these patterns suggests a response to RQ1 to include the career changers' preparation, efforts, and the practices available to them to that help transition into the field.

Perceptions of first year preparedness. Participants expressed that they were not fully prepared for their first year of teaching. The participants' perceptions of preparedness ranged from feelings of inadequacy with instruction to considerations of leaving the profession entirely. They frequently identified their challenges with classroom management, administrative duties, and a lack of resources. Participants noted that they struggled with classroom management, including student behavior and learning needs, differentiated instruction, maximizing classroom time, and the selection of appropriate instructional strategies. They also felt unprepared to handle the amount of administrative paperwork that they experienced during their first year. Some felt that the demands of daily and unit lesson planning, discipline and attendance reports, IEPs, assessment plans, and other PD or PLC expectations often left them overwhelmed when paired with the everyday instructional duties of teaching. The lack of resources was also noted by five career changers who relied on their own research on content specific instructional strategies, obtained their own resources, or initiated contact with those who could help them. However, some career changers also felt that their personality and life experiences helped them to cope with the new challenges. Three career changers felt that their ability and preference to work independently compensated for the lack of formalized mentoring. Another five career changers felt that by having kids of their own it kept

them grounded in understanding the nature of young children and adolescents and the expectations of "handling your duties".

These findings are supported by researchers who confirmed that career changers experience classroom struggles in their first years that are no different than other novice teachers despite their professional backgrounds (Anderson et al., 2014; Cuddapah & Stanford, 2015; Kee, 2012). Participants also noted that the reality of their first year teaching experience was different than what they expected. This confirms researchers' assertion that while career changers have a positive outlook of their abilities to teach, that most feel unprepared for the challenges they faced during their first years of teaching (Anderson et al, 2014; Ashiedo & Scott-Ladd, 2012; Cuddapah & Stanford, 2015; Nielson, 2016). Participants noted that they struggled in areas of classroom management, lesson planning, teaching methodology, managing student personalities and needs, and lack of resources. Researchers confirmed that these are familiar areas of struggle for novice teachers not just for career changers (Adoniou, 2017; Stallions et al., 2012; Schaefer et al., 2012; Wilkins & Comber, 2015). Still, some participants also noted that when they were confronted with challenges they relied on the experiences or skills that made them successful in their previous profession. This further confirms researchers' assertion that career changers more readily access their professional skills sets and background experiences than their teacher training experiences (Tigchelaar et al., 2014). This may also be dependent on career changers' teacher preparation experiences as many of the participants did not enter teaching through a traditional preparation route.

Researchers have found that alternately trained teachers participate in training experiences that were limited and lacked field experience comparable to traditional teacher preparation programs (Kee, 2012). The participants in this study, in lieu of a formal mentoring program, sought out support from their colleagues or undertook personal research to fill in the gaps between what worked in their previous professional lives, the training they received prior to entry, and the current realities of teaching. These experiences and efforts undertaken by the participants negatively impacted the development of their self-efficacy beliefs, as their initial feelings of preparation were changed by the realities of teaching (Bandura, 1977). Additionally, the interactions, or lack thereof, by the participants with the support systems provided to them also impact how career changers perceive the field of teaching (Vygotsky, 1963). As such, the participants' needs for belonging and development of self-esteem were actively sought by the career changers through informal mentoring experiences in lieu of the unavailability of formal mentoring experience (Maslow, 1943). The participants' perceptions of their first years of teaching impacted their desire for more mentoring and training opportunities by motivating them to seek out informal support or undertaking their own research on instructional strategies and methodology.

Perceptions of the availability of mentoring. From the findings, eleven of the 15 career changers shared that they did not receive any formal mentoring experience via a district or school mentoring program. Additionally, while four career changers participated in a formal mentoring program, the degree of experience varied as one teacher received a mentor during her first year; two others did not receive a mentor until

after the third year of teaching, and one teacher only received a mentor after initiating a request halfway through her first year.

Still, for those who received a mentor, they noted that they felt that they had an advocate to turn to, participated in a variety of activities, gained opportunities to observe other teachers, received immediate feedback, and was made aware of resources and practices that helped them throughout the year. The findings confirm the importance of mentoring, as a system of support to help novice teachers' transition into their new professional role (Achinstein & Davis, 2014; Hudson, 2013; Ingersoll, 2012; Hobson & Malderez, 2013; Nollan & Molla, 2017; Smeaton & Waters, 2013). Researchers confirmed that current mentoring practices vary from school to school and many do not meet the individual needs of novice teachers (Kane &Francis, 2013; Kearney, 2014; Watters & Diezmann, 2015). The findings may further extend the knowledge on career changers, whose individual needs differ from their traditionally trained counterparts (Anderson et al., 2014; Wagner & Imanuel-Noy, 2014).

By contrast, the career changers that received only an informal mentoring experience relied heavily on their colleagues, teams and departments, or school administration to provide some guidance or support. These informal experiences differed for 11 participants as they felt that they had to rely on the goodwill of their colleagues to provide support or time to accommodate their needs. In these instances, the "mentorship" of the new teacher was the result of multiple and varied interactions with colleagues, but lacked the targeted activities such as observation, feedback, reflections, or one to one debriefings that many needed or desired. While a majority of career changers

were thankful for the informal support they received, all the participants felt that some form of formal mentoring was needed to help them.

In this way, the career changers perceived their mentoring experience as limited or non-existent with regards to having someone who they may exclusively work with to guide them through their growth. For those who received formal mentoring, they felt that the exclusive work with their mentor allowed them to understand the teaching experience as one of developmental work wherein challenges may be assessed and solutions prescribed through a support system of give and take. In contrast, those who received only informal support perceived their experiences as trying to stay afloat or survive. These career changers felt that they were reacting to situations, often times seeking informal guidance on "what to do", rather than gaining an understanding of the "how" and "why" that formal mentorship may provide.

Researchers agreed that one to one mentorship provides the necessary support needed by novice teachers to learn pedagogical skills and instructional strategies (Ingersoll, 2012; Hudson, 2013). Further, personalized mentorship increases its effectiveness when mentors and mentee meet frequently, provide feedback, and implement reflective practice as part of the mentoring relationship (Hudson, 2016; Polikoff et al., 2015). While most participants stated that they did not participate or receive any formalized mentoring, most sought out informal support from their colleagues. Participants' desire for mentorship supports Maslow's third level in the hierarchy of needs, as participants actively sought to fulfill their need to belong through their interactions with their colleagues (Maslow, 1943). Bandura (1977) explains that the

positive and negative reinforcements that individuals experience impact their self –efficacy beliefs. In this context, the participants' feelings of "trying to survive" are a reflection of low self-efficacy beliefs due to negatively reinforced events during their teaching experience. However, the participants who received formal mentoring experiences felt supported and part of the professional growth process resulting in an increase in self-efficacy.

Additionally, the participants who were part of a formal mentoring program had the benefit of a mentor or who Vygotsky (1978) terms the MKO. In this context, the mentor acts as the MKO to help support the novice career changer through the ZPD and transition into the teaching profession (Vygotsky, 1963). These levels of support included emotional and psychological support to help with instances of isolation and resiliency, instructional support for instructional practices and classroom management, and administrative support for lesson planning, transition into the school culture, and guidance in administrative duties. The career changers' initial perceptions of support were also impacted by their experiences with schoolwide programs outside of their mentoring relationship including induction and orientation, and professional development activities.

Perceptions of induction and orientation experiences. Participants who received only informal mentoring support spoke candidly of their experience with induction and orientation practices as they viewed these activities as an extension of their mentoring experience. Most career changers perceived these experiences as confusing or leaving them anxious due to the amount of new information covered that they had yet to

experience. Career changers commonly described these experiences as an overview of new changes in the school year, an introduction of new personnel, summary of school rules and procedures, a dissemination of a few supplies, and concluding with teachers to work on their own in their assigned classrooms. Career changers felt that while this process covered general needs; it also lacked specific guidance while new career changers were left to rely on others to help them. Career changers' most vivid experience of their induction and orientation was recalled as receiving a key to their classroom, some small supplies, and being left to prepare for the first day of school. As noted previously, induction and orientation activities signaled the initation phase for new teachers where they receive their first introduction into their new school (Kram, 1985; Kearney, 2014; Lunenberg, 2011; Pogodzinski, 2015). Induction and orientation activities also introduce the novice teacher into the Zone of Proximal Development to determine areas of knowledge and needs for support (Vygotsky, 1963). While researchers have identified these activities as schools' first efforts to ingrain their new employees, most participants cited a desire for a more intensive and thorough introductory experience (Green, 2015; Kidd, Brown, and Fitzallen, 2015). One respondent described his experience as being "left to the wolves," while another noted that "they told us who to find things from like keys, supplies, schedules, and stuff, and sent us on our way for the rest of the day to get our classrooms in order."

Participants' induction and orientation experiences were described as a singular activity rather than part of the larger process of support for new teachers. Most described the experience as disorganized and impractical to address their initial needs.

Additionally, some participants felt confused by jargon, policies, or information that was already familiar to veteran members of the faculty. De Leon (2012) found that knowledge of the appropriate professional language is integral to novice teachers acclimating to their new school environment. Vygotsky (1963) further emphasized the importance of language in the formulation of knowledge for new learners. Most participants noted that they were not assigned a mentor to help them through the information that they were not familiar with, and orient them to the inner workings of the school culture. Based on the findings of this study, the participants were still viewed as outsiders within their school and were still seeking to fulfill their needs of belonging to their respective schools (Maslow, 1943). However, without the benefit of a mentor, or MKO, to provide support and bridge the gap between their preservice training and first days of teaching, most were left feeling unprepared and with an initially low self efficacy (Bandura, 1977; Vygotsky, 1963). One respondent reflected, "There wasn't anyone assigned to identify and locate new teachers, or help new teachers feel welcomed, and less anxious".

While mentorship may be a necessary component of an induction and orientation program, the same may not be said of a school induction and orientation program being a sole component of mentorship. The dynamics of a mentorship program relies primarily in an established relationship between a mentor and mentee. Those who did have a formal mentor were assigned one from the district and did not have the benefit of an on campus support system to exclusively provide immediate feedback when needed. Researchers emphasized the importance of the proximity of mentors as there is a greater likelihood for

achievement by novice teachers when their mentors are easily available to them (Polikoff et al., 2015). However, since most career changers did not participate in a formalized mentorship program, they viewed mentorship from a "village" perspective, where a learning relationship was provided from the school rather than an individual source. In this way, the participants viewed collaborative activities such as professional development, professional learning communities, and their work in a team or content area departments as sources for mentorship.

Perception of professional development and practice. The learning relationship between the career changers and the school is further mentioned in their experiences with professional development opportunities throughout the year. The participants, on average, participated in six professional development days and three full day professional development trainings. The career changers, in general, felt that the professional development days were helpful but still noted that there were not enough days to meet their needs. Researchers asserted that novice teachers' participation in professional development activities had an impact on their decisions to stay or leave the profession (Battersby & Verdi, 2015; Hamilton, 2013; Ingersoll & Perda, 2013). The NCTAF (2016) further asserted that professional development activities, when successfully implemented, helped teachers to strengthen their academic knowledge and improve their instructional practices. Researchers have also highlighted the value of professional development in-service as a way to foster teacher collaboration, acquisition of pedagogical skills, and reflective practice (Demonte, 2013; Desimone, 2011; Gulamhussein, 2013; Tricarico et al., 2015). However, much like their experience with their first day orientation, career

changers felt that at times the professional development days were lecture-filled, disorganized, disjointed, and lacking a targeted approach to address new teachers' needs. This further confirms the findings of researchers who noted that professional development practices vary and may not address the individual needs of novice teachers (Bambrick-Santoyo, 2013; Gulamhussein, 2013; Jacobs, Burns, & Yendol-Hoppey, 2015).

By comparison, the participants felt that the district implementation of professional learning communities (PLCs) to increase professional collaboration and instructional and assessment practices were more useful to their everyday needs. The use of PLCs at all the schools was considered a positive experience for eight career changers who cited that their PLCs consisted of regular meetings with their group. These career changers also noted that they benefitted from the support from other teachers, being able to collaborate and share techniques or strategies, participating in assessment approaches, and receiving emotional support as a result of regular interactions. Hellston et al. (2009) further asserted that this model for mentoring where novice teachers access the knowledge of veteran teachers creates a wider pool of experience for novice teachers to gain the support they need. Researchers further argued that the availability of multiple sources for support and guidance through activities such as PLCS creates a new paradigm for mentoring and relationship building (Battersby & Verdi, 2015). The novice teachers enter the cultivation phase through their experiences during the PD and PLC activities (Kram, 1985). However with the lack of a true mentor to provide one to one guidance and support for some, the novice teachers' continued to struggle to meet their needs of

belonging and self esteem development (Maslow, 1943). While their work within PLC groups or teams and departments may meet the scaffolding supports discussed by Vygotsky, the intermittent nature of these occurrences lacked the reinforcement needed to impact positive beliefs in their self efficacy (Vygotsky, 1963; Bandura, 1977). One respondent spoke of the need for professional development to focus on practical skills teachers can use in the classroom. Another spoke of the general lack of productivity that occurs when in-service is not organized or there is a lack of direction for the work intended. As a result of these experiences, many participants were left to rely on their informal interactions with other teachers or to educate themselves to understand the practices needed to help them succeed.

The career changers who received informal support spoke of their experiences in their professional practice in lieu of formal mentoring. While those receiving a formal mentoring experience considered themselves well supported through regular meetings and feedback from their mentors, others felt that they had to rely on their own efforts to make the transition. These efforts included independent research, seeking advice from veteran teachers or administrators, acquisition of personal resources, and instructional trial and error in the classroom. These practices left some career changers exhausted, frustrated, isolated, and in one interview left one career changer on the verge of tears. These experiences confirmed researchers' findings that novice teachers experience high incidences of isolation, frustration, and burnout during their first years of practice (Aloe et al., 2014; Buchanan et al., 2013; Fontaine et al., 2012; Janzen & Phelan , 2015; Hong , 2012). The experiences of the participants extends the

knowledge on the importance of one to one mentoring, as those who relied on collaborative activities despite its frequency, did not have the individualized guidance that a mentor may provide. The participants' reliance on intermittent feedback given in passing, personal research, and trial and error of practice resulted in similar feelings of frustration that could be mitigated by an assigned mentor. Hudson (2016) reiterates that mentoring relationships establish two-way interactions where participants develop trust and share experiences, practices, and resources.

These experiences impacted career changers' overall perception of preparedness in continuing to teach. These responses included feelings of inadequacy in implementing classroom management, being overwhelmed by the teacher workload, maintaining student motivation, and feelings of isolation. The availability of teacher in-service/ professional development practices (PDs) or professional Learning Communities (PLCs) was intended to help circumvent these feelings, however the candidates still expressed the desire for these practices to be more organized, targeted, and tailored to their needs. Individualized mentoring creates an opportunity for the cultivation of professional practice by providing the guided support and feedback desired by novice teachers (Gulamhussein, 2013; Jacobs et al., 2015).

In summary, for most career changers, their perceptions of mentoring is described as informal, limited, and reliant on the novice teacher to be proactive and self sufficient. Despite the perceived life experiences or skills career changers may possess, the application of transitional support practices is needed to cultivate teaching

professionals for the long term. Career changers further suggest their needs for future support and the improvement of mentoring practices for future novice teachers.

Support and Retention Needs (Research Question 2)

The findings of the study, in response to research question 2 (RQ2), suggest that career changers' needs for support is both multifaceted and reflective of their life experiences prior to entering the profession. The findings revealed participants' response patterns to include the practices and support needs that they felt would help them and their perceptions of continuity in the field. Career changers identified needs in the areas of emotional support, instructional support, and administrative support. They also shared insight into accountability needs, mentor quality, professional independence and their continuity in teaching.

Emotional support. Emotional support was a common need for most career changers. The career changers, despite varying degrees of opinion on how much regular interaction they needed with others, acknowledged that they needed someone to provide moral support throughout the process. They cited their needs to have someone who could encourage and foster their confidence, listen to their concerns, advocate for their needs, provide advice when needed, and generally understand what they were going through. Many of the novice teachers turned to their veteran colleagues for support, however acknowledged that this help was often piecemeal or provided with limited opportunity to discuss details. While four career changers acknowledged that their personality often did not dictate a need for one to one "talks"; most of the career changers desired the opportunity to receive one to one feedback and moral support that a mentor-mentee

relationship may have provided. Janzen and Phelan (2015) and Hong (2012) described novice teachers as most susceptible for teacher burnout as a result of the increased stress and emotional toll that they experience. Researchers further noted that feelings of isolation, a burdensome workload, and increase stress levels associated with the pressures of doing a good job or the feelings of obligation to perform well lead to decreased job satisfaction and influence teacher attrition (Aloe et al., 2014; Battersby & Verdi, 2015; Buchanan et al., 2013). The availability of mentorship, or access to a network of teachers willing to provide guidance in lieu of one to one mentorship, may provide the necessary support to alleviate the emotional toll that the new experience of teaching has on career changers. The need for emotional support is deeply connected to the participants' needs for belonging and self esteem as identified by Maslow's hierarchy of needs. As participants struggled through their first years of teaching, they experienced a lower sense of self-efficacy. This experience prevents the novice teacher from moving forward to address their needs for self actualization (Maslow, 1943). The emotional toll of teaching also impacts novice teachers' feelings of self-efficacy as the novice teachers' struggles affect how they view themselves as professionals (Bandura, 1977). This extends the knowledge on career changers' initial view of their self efficacy prior to entering the field of education and the importance of cultivating teacher resiliency as a value in their personal growth. Career changers enter the field with a perceived sense of self-confidence (Ashiedo & Scott-Ladd, 2012; Chun et al. 2010; Tan, 2012). However, this self-confidence is tested which results in the novice teacher forming a new professional identity based on their experiences. According to Bandura (1977), this new

identity or self-efficacy will be formed as a result of positive or negative experiences. Researchers have asserted that the professional identity that teachers establish for themselves is developed through their resiliency and tested through the challenges they face (Doney, 2013; Hong, 2012). As novice teachers weather the challenges they experience, the more resilient they become to the emotional stresses of the job (Doney, 2013).

Instructional support. The need for regular instructional support was also voiced by career changers in their desire for more guidance in areas of classroom management, and lesson and strategy selection. The career changers' desire for instructional support stemmed from a perceived lack of experience as many did not go through the traditional route of student teaching and internship. Those who received their teaching credentials through alternative or fast track programs noted instances of action research, theory review, observation, and isolated or controlled teaching experiences. However, career changers noted their desire for practical and hands-on training opportunities that coincided with their study of theory and observation.

This confirms the findings of researchers who asserted that alternatively certified teachers have limited experiences in the pedagogical practices of teaching (Anderson et al., 2014; Koehler et al., 2013). As one career changer noted "I needed someone to look at what I was doing and tell me if I was doing it right or wrong." In a study by Achinstein and Davis (2014), the researchers found that a focus on content specific mentoring helped novice teachers strengthen their understanding of subject specific instruction and assessment practices. The participants in this study who received formal mentoring

guidance noted that the instructional support they received included discussions of instructional options or how to improve lessons. These participants noted that their formal mentoring experience helped some of them to understand how to select the most appropriate instructional strategies or disciplinary action to take. On the other hand, the participants who only participated in informal supports stated that their feedback was limited and piecemeal at best.

The novice teachers also pointed to classroom management, in particular its effect on student behavior, as a challenge for new teachers. They wanted more support and training on how to positively impact student behavior, improve student motivation, and gain or maintain a level of respect in the classroom. The findings confirmed what researchers have identified as a factor that leads to novice teachers' struggles with classroom management and their decisions to leave the profession (Aloe et al., 2014; Ashiedo & Scott-Ladd, 2012; Hudson, 2013; Koehler et al., 2013). In a study by Aloe et al.,(2014), the researchers further found that teachers' struggles with classroom management led to emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and lowered personal accomplishment. Findings of this study revealed that 10 (67%) of the 15 participants identified classroom management as a major concern during their first years in the profession.

The participants' need for instructional support further extends the knowledge on their development of their self-efficacy beliefs. Gibbs and Miller (2014) added that as the career changers experience instructional challenges, they may experience stress and anxiety that leads to discouragement or in the development of their resiliency. The

availability of mentoring provides the necessary support to bridge the theoretical knowledge learned in preservice training with the new reality of the teaching experience. In this way the mentor, who is in the role of Vygotsky's MKO, provides the guidance and expertise to scaffold the necessary skills for the novice teacher to be successful (Vygotsky, 1963). This in turn helps the novice teacher to increase their level of pedagogical knowledge and close the gap in Vygotsky's ZPD. In closing the gap of the ZDP, the novice teacher also comes closer to meeting their needs by strengthening their self-efficacy by becoming more proficient in their teaching skills.

Practical and administrative aupport. Career changers in this study also identified administrative support as an area of need. The need for administrative support was in the form of knowing how to complete job specific forms, reports, or the process of "how to do things" at their respective schools. Career changers felt that their respective school cultures, such as how to obtain supplies, who to talk to for specific help, where to locate areas of the school, how to input grades in the school system, and how to fill out forms were immediate issues that they had to learn quickly. For three career changers, their previous career experiences in the military or in roles of communications, helped them prepare to manage the classroom. Still, they often found themselves needing help with the administrative paperwork that filled their time between class instructions. For four career changers the paperwork involved with developing lesson plans, filing reports on special populations, and corresponding with parents through phone calls, emails, or letters was considered burdensome. One career changer felt that school policies, protocols, and evaluations needed to be clearly explained. While the career changers felt

that amount of paperwork was frequently an issue for them, most understood that it was part of the job. Again, career changers referenced their collaboration with their peers as a significant support system in providing examples or guiding them through the administrative work load expected of all teachers.

Researchers underscored the importance of administrative support in helping novice teachers flourish in their profession (Hughes et al., 2015; Shaw & Newton, 2014; Tricarico et al., 2015). As one participant noted on the support that administrators may provide, "There needs to be a session for just new teachers during orientation". Other participants succinctly described their struggles with the administrative workload as "the administrative paperwork was more stressful than the actual classroom". This further extends the knowledge on career changers' needs for administrative support in developing the framework for mentoring to be successful. Researchers asserted that administrators play an integral role in providing a structure for mentoring, the selection and training of viable mentors, and guidance for the type of mentoring activities that novice teachers may experience (Kearney, 2014; Lunenberg, 2011). Additionally, administrators undertake responsibilities for successful mentor training, mentor pairings, collaborative opportunities, and make decisions that take advantage of career changers' experiences and skill sets (Cancio et al., 2013; Pogodzinski; 2015; Veale et al. 2013;) While the support from administrators is needed in the areas of structure and organization, researchers also caution that administrators must also be cognizant of micromanaging the interactions and activities by mentors and

mentees. Some participants noted that while they needed support in areas, they also noted that they were able to work independently.

The desire for administrative support by the participants confirms the theoretical points provided by Vygotsky and Bandura on the impact of environment on individuals' understanding of what they think and how they think. The teaching environment and the support systems afforded to novice teachers impacts novice teachers' cognitive development, perceptions of the profession, and their level of self efficacy within that environment (Vygotsky, 1963; Bandura, 1977). In this way, the levels of support provided, not just by mentors, but also the systems in place by school administrators, creates an understanding of the culture that schools project to the novice teachers, and the importance of the values they place on teacher success. Adoniou (2016) further asserted that the structure of mentoring programs and alignment of those structures are integral to the development of the novice teachers. When mentoring structures such as mentor pairings, professional development, and collaboration time are missing, the novice teacher will feel disconnected and the process itself may be detrimental to their development and professional growth (Adoniou, 2016; Veale, 2013).

Mentor quality and accountability needs. While none of the participants spoke directly of the specific problems they had with their mentors or of those who provided informal support, most suggested that mentor quality and the establishment of some form of accountability system was needed. Career changers suggested that an investment in mentor quality should come in the form of training for mentors, compensation, and the selection of high quality veteran teachers. The novice teachers agreed that the quality of

mentors should start with veteran leadership and with those teachers who are considered highly respected at the school. This is contrary to most of the participants' experience. While the mentors that were paired with the novice teachers were considered high quality teachers selected by the district, most were considered off-site mentors who visited the school intermittently or as requested by the novice teacher. In contrast, while those who did not receive a district mentor, gained informal support on campus from a variety of teachers, the level of mentoring quality was difficult to gauge the effectiveness of these experiences. Researchers further underscored the importance of high quality mentor trainings and pairings with novice teachers in providing meaningful supports and encouraging teacher growth and retention (Bell & Treleaven, 2010; Dungy, 2010; NCTAF, 2016; Polikoff et al., 2015). The findings of this study confirmed the importance of mentor training and pairings for participants as components needed for high quality mentor programs.

As part of their desire for high quality mentors, the participants suggested other ideas that the district could undertake to improve its mentoring program. Participants suggested that mentors be compensated through additional preparatory periods or some form of financial stipend. One career changer suggests that mentors need to be more proactive in the support provided to new teachers. Three career changers suggested that mentoring become part of the certification process prior to entry into the profession, while another recommended that the mentoring process be tied to teacher evaluation. While this study did not collect data from the mentors themselves, the suggestions

provided by the participants further confirmed the research on the importance of mentor training and compensation (Stanulis et al.; 2012; Waterman & He 2011).

Intentions of continuity. As participants embarked on their first years in teaching, many noted the change in their initial perceptions of the teaching field. All the participants agreed that they intended to continue in the field of teaching. However, some participants desired more practical training before entering the profession, while others reflected on the new respect they had for teachers with regards to all the challenges they faced.

Albert reflected on his alternate route into the classroom: "If I could restart my approach on becoming a teacher, I would have enrolled in the teacher certification program so that I could have learned the basics about being a teacher before I ever stepped foot into a classroom". Rex reflected on his plans going forward and his new found respect for teachers:

> I would take more classes that would equip me as a teacher. I would like to invest in knowing other Science content areas. After my first year, my respect for teachers and the teaching profession became a lot higher. I wanted to call my former teachers and show them my gratitude for their patience and their devotion to their profession as teachers.

Heidi added:

> In comparison to my first year teaching, I view it in a different manner. As years went by, I have come to accept it is a difficult job that lacks many rewards. Since then I have learned to manage time with professional development and school

work while relaxing away from school. I would still choose to teach regardless of the struggles.

Larry reflected on his previous views of teaching: “I was one of those people that thought teaching would be a piece of cake. Well it isn’t. It is definitely one of the few government positions where workers are overworked and underpaid and Underappreciated”. Gerry also added some perspective on ongoing training for new teachers: “It would be nice to see these best practices or “what to do” demonstrations during professional development – things that would actually develop us professionally”.

James emphasized the importance of ongoing training, especially in instructional practices:

> I’d like to see our professional development address more things I can readily do in my classroom. I don’t want to sit in these workshops and learn theory after theory, and not be given real examples of how to apply it in my classroom.

Other participants were encouraged to improve their instruction and invest more time in preparation and organization prior to beginning their next teaching year. These changes include improvements in classroom management techniques, the establishment of rules and procedures, the research and application of best practices in teaching, and preparations of continued advancement in the field of education.

Emma shared her plans going into the next school year:

> I would make sure I was prepared with multiple lesson plans ahead of time. I would also make sure I have the assignments, quizzes, and tests prepared for my students, especially if they have pre-arranged absences, then I could make sure

> they have all the assignments they would miss ahead of time. I would make sure that I come up with a better system of updating my students of their progress.

Rhea reflected on the importance of establishing a foundation:

> I have learned what worked in the past and continue to learn from my students on what I need to do to adjust to each student's needs – something that couldn't be taught from any book or institution. I would tell my first-year self that setting ground rules at the beginning of the year and enforcing it pays off at the end. If I knew that taking things lightly at the beginning of the year not only hurts the dynamics of the relationship that I have with my students, it makes enforcing these rules even harder at the middle and end of the school year much harder.

Beth added: "The changes I would make would start with classroom management and continue to let students know of my expectations". Rex reflected on his motivation to improve on his first year experience:

> The first year enabled me to reflect on the things that I needed to work on as a teacher. I spent the summer re-writing my classroom rules and procedures. The next school years that followed allowed me to improve in other areas such as planning, instruction, and assessment strategies.

Maya added: "I plan to come back next school year more prepared, knowing all the things that didn't go well this year".

Fourteen (93%) participants felt that they would continue to teach, but needed to spend more time in the development of their instructional practices and personal teaching

philosophy. Participants also added that despite the challenges, that they did not regret choosing to teach as their new career, noting that the challenges only encourages them to continue to improve their craft.

Emma acknowledged the challenges but also intended to continue teaching:

> I see myself continuing as a teacher, because I very much enjoyed my first year. The students were not as bad as I was expecting. There is a lot more I need to learn when it comes to filling out the paperwork involved, but that does not deter me from it.

Beth also shared her intentions of continuing to teach:

> My first years in teaching actually give me the fire to become a better teacher and learn from my mistakes and build on my successes. Each year, I learn and take something away and apply it to the next school year.

Henry also intended to stay in teaching, but emphasized the importance of support for career changers:

> I plan on continuing to teach, but I'd really like to see more support, or resources, or training, you know? It's like people think teachers can just deal with it. They can figure it out. But there really needs to be more support for new teachers especially for guys like me. Just because we've had a different job doesn't mean it's the same job.

Julia shared her intentions as the school year comes to an end:

> Now that I have a few years under my belt, I feel like I'm getting into a rhythm of what to do. I want to take the summer to do more reading, and write new lessons.

I plan on doing more research into creative ways to teach my content, and classroom management techniques.

Participants' intentions to continue in the teaching field give insight to the impact on teacher retention and attrition. The theme of teacher resiliency (seven participants) and continued preparation and training (eight participants) were identified though the research data as mitigating factors for participants' desire to remain in the profession. Additionally, career changers in the study reflected on their change in perspective of teaching and the new found respect they had for those in the profession. While all participants initially agreed that they would continue teaching into the foreseeable future, follow up results found that while thirteen (87%) participants continued to teach, one (6%) teacher moved into the role of a school administrator, and one (6%) teacher left the profession entirely.

Limitations of the Study

The study is limited to the opinions and perceptions of 15 CCTs who have completed only one to five years of teaching service. Due to the qualitative nature of the study, the context of the findings may not be generalized to all CCTs or mentoring experiences. Additionally, the findings of the study reflect data gathered from individual interviews wherein participants were asked to recall their experiences after an extended amount of time had passed. As such, the reality of these experiences is dependent on participants' memories and ability to recall their experiences. The study is also limited to career changers who teach at the 6-12 grade level of public schools and do not include the perceptions of elementary school teachers or other teachers employed in private, charter,

or neither home schools nor career changers employed at the college or university level. The findings are also limited to the responses of teachers currently employed in the district of Guam and may not reflect the experiences of teachers across the various districts of the continental United States

Still, within the parameters of these limitations, the trustworthiness of the study was established by undertaking a variety of approaches to ensure credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Shenton, 2004). Credibility of the study was established through the peer debriefing, member checking, and the use of multiple individual interviews. I also utilized iterative questioning and probing techniques as well as employed tactics to ensure honesty. This included ensuring that participants understand their right to withdraw, and building rapport prior and during the interview process.

Recommendations

Teacher retention continues to be a goal for most school districts in the United States (Garcia & Huseman, 2009; Viadero, 2010). Consequently, teacher attrition impacts instructional quality in the classroom, and places a strain on the financial costs to a school system (Buchanan et al., 2013; Goldhaber & Cowan, 2014; Howes & Goodman-Delahunty, 2015). As such, career changers provide a compelling source of potential new talent to the teaching workforce in addition to traditionally trained novice teachers. Career changers may help address shortages in key areas such as math and science (Ingersoll, 2012), provide real world career skills (Reese, 2010; Tan, 2012; Wagner & Imanuel-Noy, 2014), and offer a pool of diverse teaching candidates hoping to transition

into the teaching profession (Bauer et al., 2017). In recent years, a greater focus has been placed on providing mentoring support for new and novice teachers. Research has supported the use of mentorship to improve teacher retention (Clark & Byrnes, 2012; Ingersoll, 2012; Malow-Iroff et al., 2007; Smeaton & Waters, 2013; Wilcox & Samaras, 2009 ;), and help increase job satisfaction (Guarino et al., 2006; Ragans, 2000). The participants in this study spoke of their desire to participate in a formalized mentoring process; however only a few were able to do so. Still, those that did not participate in the formal mentoring program did speak highly of their interactions and the support provided by colleagues or school leadership. Still, the findings of this study supported further research that argue that the human experience of mentorship whether formal or informal will vary due to the quality of support provided by the mentors and the desired needs of the mentee. (Chun et al., 2010; Hellston, 2009; Kahr &Wells, 2012; Zellers et al., 2008)

The perceived mentoring experiences and the continued support needed for these CCTs was the guiding focus of this study. As such, 15 CCTs provided their perceptions of their mentoring experiences, formal or informal, and the supports needed to further transition into the field of education. These novice teachers shared their challenges, feelings of appreciation and frustration, successes and failures to provide a picture of their experiences during the first five years in teaching. While only a few received formal mentoring, some only after a few years of teaching, and most only at an informal level; all the teachers agreed that mentorship was needed in the first years of teaching. This reality was reflective of their respective school district as its formal mentoring

program is still in its infancy and mentor availability is still limited to accommodate all schools' and new teachers' needs in the district

The following recommendations are supported by the perspectives and support needs as voiced by the participants. These recommendations may be achievable through open communication and partnership with the school district, proper funding, supportive school leadership, and the targeted leveraging of available school site programs such as induction, professional development or professional learning communities. The achieved partnership between the district, preparatory programs, and schools is essential for the continuity of practice and the appropriate support needed and provided to novice teachers.

Mentorship as Regular Practice

Participants revealed their desire for regular mentorship upon entry into the profession. These desires whether, formal or informal, centered on the need to establish a relationship with a guiding individual or support system. It is recommended that the school district expand its district mentoring program by investing resources in the training, retention, and assignment of identified mentors into various schools. Additionally, where financing of the district mentoring program becomes limited, individual school sites should develop a formalized mentoring program guided by the district to employ at the school level. It is recommended that mentorship be implemented as part of schools' induction programs and school districts consider the participation in mentorship as a part of continued certification or teacher evaluation.

Additionally, the recruitment and training of established professionals in the field to become mentors is needed to create a viable pool of trainers to service the needs of new teachers in the district. The availability of a quality mentoring program for all new teachers upon entry into the profession is essential to the development of best practices and investment in the retention of teachers in the classroom. By reflecting on the impact that mentorship may have on the development of novice teachers, especially when utilized in conjunction with focused induction programs and professional development activities, it becomes imperative that school district mentoring programs continually review the progress and success of its programs to ensure consistent implementation, and personalization to meet the needs of the individual teacher.

Personalized Mentoring Program

Career changers spoke candidly of their mentoring experience and shared their motivations to become a teacher, perceptions of preparedness prior to entering the school year, and their thoughts on continuing to teach. The findings support existing research on the benefits of career changers as teachers citing elements of life experience, maturity, and the soft skills learned from previous work experiences (Bauer, 2017; Williams, 2013). As such, it is recommended that an established mentoring program implement specific components into its practice including content area pairing of mentors and mentees, establishment of an identified and regular mentoring time to allow for targeted feedback and guidance, observation opportunities, and activities focused on instructional practice including classroom management, strategy implementation, and content specific practices. The research findings revealed that career changers frequently voiced their

desires for emotional support, instructional support, and administrative support. The personalization of a mentoring program through content area pairings, activities focused on classroom instruction and management, and observation opportunities will provide career changers with the instructional support needed to make the transition into the classroom.

It is also recommended that mentorship programs ensure that mentor and mentee pairings are within content areas and include established veteran teachers at the forefront of the mentors' selection pool. In the findings, participants voiced their preference for veteran teacher leadership with a reputation for respect and classroom competency. Through these pairings, a regular meeting time should be established to ensure consistent contact time between the mentor and the mentee. Additionally, school leadership should explore and create opportunities for mentors and mentees to observe each other during classroom instructional time in order to provide mentees the chance to examine classroom instruction as it happens and vice versa. The content area pairings and established meeting time between mentors and mentees is essential to ensure a common understanding of the challenges faced by novice teachers. The benefit of these pairings include a clear understanding of the emotional support needed for novice teachers, while providing content specific guidance with instructional strategies and practices to help them achieve. The establishment of time to provide regular face to face meetings between mentors and mentees creates opportunities for instructional guidance, targeted feedback and emotional support for novice teachers. Additionally, the time established for teacher

mentoring should also be consistent and continuous for an extensive amount of time for long term support and development.

Leveraged Professional Development

The research findings revealed that most career changers in this study received a limited amount of formal mentoring experience and relied on informal relationships established with colleagues as their primary form of support. In addition to the informal interactions provided by colleagues, career changers participated in other training opportunities through professional development workshops or through the establishment of professional learning communities. While professional development sessions were limited to 6-8 training days a year, and professional learning communities were limited to one or two meetings a month; the activities provided some formalized collaborations among the teachers. It is recommended that school leaders leverage professional development opportunities or other school collaborative training programs as opportunities to provide mentorship for novice teachers. These school wide training activities provide an opportunity for schools to provide targeted feedback and support for career changers to acquire best instructional practices. The findings also revealed that career changers entered the profession with perceived transitional skills acquired from their previous career experiences. Again, it is recommended that schools leverage these skills to cultivate the capacity for teacher leadership by developing mentorship activities that is relevant to these experiences and skills while ensuring that they remain practical to their teaching content and needs.

Recommendation for Future Studies

This study was limited to the perceptions of 15 CCTs . The study was also limited to public, secondary grade level teachers with only one to five years of completed teaching service. For future studies, a larger sample of teachers from both the elementary and secondary grade level will be beneficial in gaining a wider perspective of the challenges that first years teachers face within their respective school environments. Additionally, the context of this study focused on CCTs who experienced some form of informal or formal mentoring support. For future studies, it will be beneficial to focus on career changers who participated or received formalized mentoring through the district mentoring program. By focusing efforts on analyzing career changers' experiences specific to the local district's formal mentoring program, future researchers may gain a clear understanding of the specific components and changes needed to improve implementation for future participants in the program. Additionally a program evaluation design may benefit the district in gathering data to improve the quality of mentoring programs and the support provided for both mentors and mentees.

Implications for Social Change

Research supports the benefits of mentorship to help address the ongoing issues of teacher attrition and retention (Fontaine, 2012; Hudson, 2016; Ingersoll, 2012; Paris, 2013). The findings of this study added to the body of research on mentorship and may provide support for developing strategies to improve mentoring programs and increase teacher retention. These perspectives provide the district with an opportunity to hear the "voices" of career changers as they face the challenges of their first years of teaching and

their desires for consistent support that a formal mentorship program may provide. As rooted in constructivist theory, these career changers discovered and developed their practice through their experiences of learning by doing. However, schools may impact the "trial and error" efforts of novice teachers by establishing working relationships wherein skill acquisition and instructional guidance is leveraged for greater success through mentorship. Mentorship is also rooted in social learning theory as novice teachers' environment impacts the behavior of the individual. By establishing positive mentoring experiences, schools may structure professional relationships between mentors and mentees that may foster positive self-efficacy. By fostering these mentoring opportunities, schools in turn also foster values of resiliency, effort, and persistence which may provide novice teachers with the tools needed for further teacher retention. Furthermore, Maslow's hierarchy of needs further supports novice teachers' journey to self actualization and professional practice (Maslow, 1943). As novice teachers attain their basic physiological and safety needs, mentorship plays an integral role in helping them navigate the achievement of their psychological and self fulfillment needs. Mentorship provides the support necessary to develop a sense of professional belonging, and cultivate an environment where novice teachers realize their potential and self confidence in their practice. As such, program designers may utilize this knowledge to address the needs of CCTs in conjunction with existing research that identifies viable design elements for a framework of mentoring (Dawson, 2014). The findings of the study further provide insight for program directors and policy makers to make decisions that improve and enhance district mentoring programs or practices.

Through this awareness, program directors and policy makers may ensure that the supports provided to new career changers are viable and sustainable in developing and retaining highly effective teachers. Furthermore, by understanding the challenges faced by career changers, partnerships between the district and university preparation programs may be explored to further strengthen the transition from preservice to employment.

Additionally, the investment of career changers, many of whom enter the teaching profession with varied life experiences, educational degrees and backgrounds, and job-related skills, creates a diverse pool of teaching candidates to lead the ever-changing and culturally diverse classroom. By supporting and developing these novice teachers, and providing the formal guidance to not just "survive" the first years but rather to "thrive"; schools not only impact the culture of its classrooms but also the students and communities from which these teachers serve. The development of highly effective teachers through mentoring and subsequent investment of highly qualified mentors and mentoring programs, may impact social change in the form of increased student achievement.

Conclusion

School districts in the United States continue to struggle with teacher retention and the impact of teacher attrition throughout the school systems. This phenomenological study examined the perception of CCTs mentoring experiences during their first years in the school system. The findings of the study revealed that mentorship was highly desired by CCTs. Still, many of these novice teachers did not receive formal

support in their first year, while many relied on the informal support they received from colleagues. Despite the research that supports the benefits of mentoring in addressing teacher retention, most novice teachers continue to enter the profession with minimal mentoring support throughout the year.

Researchers have characterized novice teachers as less effective when compared to their more experienced counterparts (Bastian et al., 2017). However, while teacher experience impacts teacher effectiveness, researchers also emphasized that teacher quality impacts student achievement more so than time served in the profession (Heineke, Mazza, & Tichnor-Wagner, 2014; Goldhaber, 2016). Still, Helms-Lorenz et al. (2016) assert that by "replacing experienced teachers with beginning teachers is likely to lead to a reduction in skill in the overall teacher population for some time. This could reduce the national achievement levels of students" (p. 179).

The findings of this study revealed that the impact of induction and professional development activities in providing the support desired by CCTs teachers is limited or often not aligned with the needs most expected or desired. Participants identified themes of emotional, instructional, and administrative support as practices most needed for mentoring programs. The establishment of a supportive relationship to help them transition into the profession was a consistent theme identified by the novice career changers while issues with classroom management and administrative paperwork continued to weigh heavily on their concerns. This study revealed that while most career changers entered the profession with diverse professional backgrounds, transitional skills, and life experiences, most did not receive any support to leverage these qualities to help

them transition into the classroom. This study supported the importance of mentorship in creating a culture of support for novice teachers, especially career changers who offer a diverse candidate to the traditional teaching pool. It is through these increased efforts to invest in the training of novice teachers that we in turn invest in the quality of our practice, and as a result our students. While some may argue that teacher attrition is inevitable and perhaps even healthy in the natural selection process of our profession; teacher retention must also be viewed as an investment in the long term quality control at the heart of teaching. The investment and implementation of mentoring is integral to impacting teachers early in their careers and influencing classroom effectiveness for an upward trajectory of performance (Atteberry, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2015). As such, it has become increasingly important to develop and retain a skilled and experienced teacher workforce to positively impact student achievement. In this way, the investment in the process of mentoring and the dynamics between mentor and mentee act as the first introduction to the value we place on education.

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Appendix A: Letter of Invitation

Hello and Hafa Adai,

Buenas my fellow colleagues! My name is Ronald A. Canos, and I am a doctoral student at Walden University and currently employed as a teacher in the Guam Department of Education, but this study is separate from my role as a teacher. You are invited to participate in a doctoral study of *"Career Changing Teachers' perceptions of their mentoring experiences in the first years of teaching on Guam"*. As noted, the researcher is inviting new teachers who are undertaking a career change and are in the first five years of the teaching profession to be in the study.

This study is voluntary and all information provided by you will be kept confidential by the researcher. Everyone will respect your decision of whether or not you choose to be in the study. The researcher will not use your personal information for any purposes outside of this research project, and you will not be personally identified in the study itself.

The study is significant as research related to career changing teachers' training and mentoring experiences on Guam are limited. These results may be significant if results may lead to curricular modifications to the mentoring programs or supports offered to new teachers. Participants will be asked to provide some demographics about themselves, such as classroom experience, area of instruction, and certification route as well as participate in 2 interviews.

The results of this study will be compiled and analyzed in a doctoral study being conducted by Ronald A. Canos. If you are interested in participating or have additional questions you may contact the researcher via ronald.canos@waldenu.edu. Thank you.

Respectfully,

Ronald Canos
Doctoral Student
Walden University

Appendix B: Notification of Participation in Research Study

Hello and Hafa Adai,

Thank you for your recent submission of participant data and acknowledgement of consent forms. You have been selected to participate in a doctoral study of *"Career Career Changing Teachers' perceptions of their mentoring experiences in the first years of teaching on Guam".* As noted in your previous consent forms, you will take part in a research study of career changing teacher's perceptions of their mentoring experience during their first five years in the teaching profession. The study is significant as research related to career changing teachers' training and mentoring experiences on Guam are limited. These results may be significant if results may lead to curricular modifications to the mentoring programs or supports offered to new teachers.

As mentioned in your previous invitation letter, this study is voluntary. Everyone will respect your decision of whether or not you choose to be in the study. Any information you provide will be kept confidential. The researcher will not use your personal information for any purposes outside of this research project.

You interview will be scheduled for _____ (date) at _____ (time) located at _____ (location). The time for the interview session is allotted for 90 minutes, but may sooner as needed or due to any circumstances. You may stop the interview at any time. Additionally, audio and/or digital equipment will be used to ensure that the data you provide is documented properly and accurately. You will not need to bring anything specific, however you are encouraged to bring additional items you may need to ensure your comfort during the allotted interview time (i.e. bottle of water, personal items, etc.).

In preparation for the interview, please consider your thoughts on the following interview questions:

1. What was your level of work/career experience prior to becoming a teacher?
2. How would you describe your feeling of preparation **prior to beginning** your first year of teaching?
3. How would you describe your mentoring experiences **during** your first year of teaching?
4. What kinds of support did you **receive** or **need** in your first years of Teaching?

The results of this study will be compiled and analyzed in a doctoral study being conducted by Ronald A. Canos. If this you are unable to meet this interview date and/or time, or if you have any questions, please contact me via ronald.canos@waldenu.edu or ron.canos@yahoo.com. Thank you again for your participation in this study.

Respectfully,

Ronald Canos
Doctoral Student
Walden University

Appendix C: Participant Information Form

Hello and Hafa Adai,

You are invited to take part in a research study of career changing teacher's perceptions of their mentoring experience during their first five years in the teaching profession. The researcher is inviting new teachers who are undertaking a career change and are in the first five years of the teaching profession to be in the study. The study is significant as research related to career changing teachers training and mentoring experiences on Guam are limited. These results may be significant if results may lead to curricular modifications to the mentoring programs or supports offered to teachers.

As mentioned in your previous invitation letter, this study is voluntary. Everyone will respect your decision of whether or not you choose to be in the study. Any information you provide will be kept confidential. The researcher will not use your personal information for any purposes outside of this research project.

This form is part of a process to collect demographic information about you as a participant in the study.

The results of this study will be compiled and analyzed in a doctoral study being conducted by Ronald A. Canos. You may ask any questions you have now. Or if you have questions later, you may contact the researcher via ronald.canos@waldenu.edu or ron.canos@yahoo.com. Thank you again for your participation in this study.

Please check the most appropriate box:

1. Please identify your GENDER:
   - ☐ Male
   - ☐ Female

2. Level of classroom experience in the Guam Department of Education (GDOE).
   - ☐ 0-5 years
   - ☐ 6-10 years
   - ☐ Over 10 years

3. What grade level do you teach in?
   - ☐ Primary grade level (K-5)
   - ☐ Secondary grade level (6-12)

4. In which type of teaching certification program did you receive training?
   - ☐ Traditional 4 year College
   - ☐ Alternative Teaching Certification Program

5. What is your degree completed to date?
   - Bachelors
   - Masters
   - Specialist/Masters plus additional course credits
   - Doctorate
   - Other: _____

6. Please select your (most recent) career experience prior to employment with the GDOE. (Please select only one)
   - Medical & Health Care Industry
   - Military Service
   - Food Service Industry
   - Entertainment Industry
   - Political Service
   - Retail & Marketing Industry
   - Financial Industry
   - Government Agency (other than education)
   - Other: _____

7. What subject(s) do you teach? Please check all that apply
   - Business Education (Marketing, Accounting, Keyboarding)
   - English/ELA
   - Fine Arts (Visual Arts, Band, Choir, Drama, Dance)
   - Health/Physical Education
   - Math
   - Science
   - Special Education
   - Social Studies
   - World Languages
   - Other: _____

8. In your first years of teaching, did you have a mentor or other professional who provided guidance and support to you as a novice teacher?
   - Yes, I had a mentor
   - No, I did not have a mentor

9. As a novice teacher, were you part of any mentoring program?
   - Yes, I was part of a formal mentoring program
   - No, I was not part of any formal mentoring program support

Appendix D: Interview Protocol

Step 1: Prior to the start of the official interview, ensure that all recording devices are working and ready for use. Prepare all transcription tools (pencils, pens, writing tablets, etc.). Ensure all amenities (i.e. water) are available to ensure comfort for both the interviewer and the interviewee.

Step 2: Introduce yourself to the interviewee. Thank them for their time and participation in the study.

Step 3: Ask the interviewee if they need anything before the interview begins. The researcher will present a hardcopy of the consent form for the participant to acknowledge and sign prior to conducting the interview.

Step 4: If necessary, share with the interviewee the types of questions that will be asked of them to ensure that they are comfortable and ready to begin the interview. Ask the interviewee if they are ready for the interview.

Step 5. Turn on all recording devices and prepare all writing tools. Begin the interview.

Step 6. When the interview is over, thank the interviewee again for their participation. Ensure the interviewee that they will receive a copy of the transcript for their review and confirmation. If the interview was unable to be completed due to time or circumstance, ask the interviewee another interview session can be scheduled according to their time schedule.

Research Questions:

1. What are career changing teachers' perceptions of their mentoring experience?

2. What are career changing teachers' concerns and needs to address future support for first year teachers?

Round 1:Interview Questions:

Researcher: "Good morning/afternoon. I am Ronald Canos. This interview is being conducted to gain an understanding and perceptions of your experiences during your first years as a teacher and the support you may have received in the form of mentoring at your school or within the Guam Department of Education. To ensure that I properly and accurately present your responses, I will be making an audio digital recording of this interview. I assure you that your responses will remain confidential. I will not use your name or any of your responses for any purpose outside of this research. If you agree to the interview and the audio recording, your name will be coded ensure your confidentiality. Is this acceptable for you?

(Wait for participant confirmation. If no confirmation, the interview will cease.)

Researcher: May I ask you to sign this consent form before we begin the interview? (*present the confidentiality and consent form, if the participant did not already sign one)*. Thank you.

(Wait for participant confirmation. If no confirmation, the interview will cease.)

Researcher: May I begin the interview?

(Wait for participant confirmation. If no confirmation, the interview will cease.)

Round 1 Interview Questions

Question 1: Please share your work/career experience prior to becoming a teacher.

Probing Question: What did you do in your career before you decided to become a teacher?

Probing Question: What type of skills do you think you've gained from that work experience?

Question 2: Please describe for me why you decided to become a teacher.

Probing Question: Have you though about becoming a teacher before?

Probing Question: How is this decision different from your first career decision(s)?

Question 3: Has your teaching experience been what you expected it to be?

Probing Question: How has it differed from your previous work experience(s)?

Probing Question: How do you think the skills you've gained from your previous work experiences have helped you transition into teaching?

Question 4: Can you describe how prepared you felt before your first year of teaching?

Probing Question: Was teaching something you felt you would readily be prepared for?

Probing Question: Can you describe some of the things you were not prepared for?

Question 5: How has your perception of teaching changed?

Probing Question: Knowing what you know now, what changes would you make?

Question 6: Thinking about your previous career, would you still consider changing careers to the teaching profession?

Probing Question: How does your first years in teaching affect your desire to continue in the profession? Do you see yourself continuing as a teacher?

Researcher: Thank you again for your time and sharing your experiences. This concludes our interview. May I ask for your time to further share your experiences in another interview at a later date?

(Wait for participant confirmation. If not confirmation then the interview is complete)

Researcher: May I take a few more minutes of your time, so we may schedule our next interview round?

Researcher: (Once scheduling is complete). Thank you again for your time. I look forward to our next interview.

Round 2: Interview Questions:

Researcher: "Good morning/afternoon. I am Ronald Canos. Thank you for continuing your participation in this study. Again, this interview is being conducted to gain an understanding and perceptions of your experiences during your first years as a teacher and the support you may have received in the form of mentoring at your school or within the Guam Department of Education. To ensure that I properly and accurately present your responses, I will be making an audio digital recording of this interview. I assure you that your responses will remain confidential. I will not use your name or any of your responses for any purpose outside of this research. If you agree to the interview and the audio recording, your name will be coded ensure your confidentiality. Is this acceptable for you?

(Wait for participant confirmation. If no confirmation, the interview will cease.)

Researcher: May I once again explain your rights as noted in your previous consent form and ask that you verbally acknowledge your approval to participate. (*present the confidentiality and consent form, if the participant did not already sign one)*. Thank you.

(Wait for participant confirmation. If no confirmation, the interview will cease.)

Researcher: May I begin the interview?

(Wait for participant confirmation. If no confirmation, the interview will cease.)

Question 1: Please describe your experience during your first years of teaching?

Probing question: Can you describe some of the feelings you experienced? How did these feelings affect you as a teacher?

Question 2: How would you describe your mentoring experiences during your first year of teaching?

Probing Question: What were your expectations for support prior to entering the teaching profession?

Probing Question: How does your prior training or mentoring expectations

compare or differ from your first teaching experience?

Probing Question: How were you trained in your previous career and how does that compare to the training you received as a teacher?

Question 3: What kinds of support did you **receive** in your first years of teaching?

Probing Question: Did you have a mentor? If so, how would you describe your mentorship experience? If not, can you describe how you or your school prepared for your first teaching experience?

Probing Question: What kinds of support were available to you from the school? District? Faculty members?

Question 4: What kinds of support did you **need** in your first years of teaching?

Probing Question: Have you received the kind of support you needed to preparefor your first year of teaching? If so, what kinds of support helped you transition into your first year of teaching? If not, what kinds of support did you need to prepare for your first year of teaching?

Probing questions: Was there someone or somewhere you could turn to for support formally or informally?

Question 5: What improvements in the mentoring process, if any, do you feel is needed to help future preservice teachers?

Probing Question: What are some components that you feel are necessary to have a meaningful or impactful mentoring program?

Interview Question (IQ) Concepts	Round 1: IQ1	Round 1: IQ2	Round 1: IQ3	Round 1: IQ4	Round 1: IQ5	Round 1: IQ6
Teachers' self- efficacy belief before and after the first years of service. (Context)		X				X
Teachers' perceived skills prior to the first years service. (Context)	X	X				
Teachers' perceptions before and after their first years of service. (Context)			X	X	X	
Teachers' Mentoring Experience before and after their first years of service. (Research Question 1)						
Teachers' Mentoring support needed and/or provided before and after their first years of service. (Research Question 2)						

Interview Question (IQ) Concepts	Round 2: IQ1	Round 2: IQ2	Round 2: IQ3	Round 2: IQ4	Round 2: IQ5
Teachers' self- efficacy belief before and after the first years of service. (Context)		X			
Teachers' perceived skills prior to the first years service. (Context)		X			
Teachers' perceptions before and after their first years of service. (Context)	X				
Teachers' Mentoring Experience before and after their first years of service. (Research Question 1)		X	X	X	

Teachers' Mentoring support needed and/or provided before and after their first years of service. (Research Question 2)			**X**	**X**	**X**

Appendix E: Debriefer Confidentiality Agreement

Hello and Hafa Adai,

You are invited to take part as a peer debriefer in a research study of career changing teacher's perceptions of their mentoring experience during their first five years in the teaching profession. As a peer debriefer, you will be asked to review research and take part in analytical review of the researcher's perspectives, assertions, and assumptions towards the research study.

This study is being conducted by a researcher named Ronald Canos, who is a doctoral student at Walden University.

Background Information:
The purpose of this study is to determine career changing teachers (CCTs) mentoring experiences and needs during their first years of their teaching experience.

CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

During the course of my activity as a peer debriefer for this research: "**Career Changing Teachers' perceptions of their mentoring experiences in the first years of teaching",** I will have access to information, which is confidential and should not be disclosed. I acknowledge that the information must remain confidential, and that improper disclosure of confidential information can be damaging to the participant.

By signing this Confidentiality Agreement I acknowledge and agree that:

1. I will not disclose or discuss any confidential information with others, including friends or family.
2. I will not in any way divulge, copy, release, sell, loan, alter or destroy any confidential information except as properly authorized.
3. I will not discuss confidential information where others can overhear the conversation. I understand that it is not acceptable to discuss confidential information even if the participant's name is not used.
4. I will not make any unauthorized transmissions, inquiries, modification or purging of confidential information.
5. I agree that my obligations under this agreement will continue after termination of the job that I will perform.
6. I understand that violation of this agreement will have legal implications.

7. I will only access or use systems or devices I'm officially authorized to access and I will not demonstrate the operation or function of systems or devices to unauthorized individuals.

Signing this document, I acknowledge that I have read the agreement and I agree to comply with all the terms and conditions stated above.

_____

Debriefer Name (Print)

_____ _____

Debriefer Signature: **Date:**

Signature Acknowledged by Researcher: Ronald A. Canos **Date**