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A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY
ON NOVICE TEACHERS’ PERCEPTIONS
OF INSTRUCTIONAL COACHING SUPPORT

By

SHAMEKA J. BROWN

A doctoral dissertation submitted to the
College of Education
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree Doctor of Education
in Curriculum and Instruction

Southeastern University
March 2021
A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY ON NOVICE TEACHERS’ PERCEPTIONS
OF INSTRUCTIONAL COACHING SUPPORT

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who has given me grace, favor, strength, and the tenacity to endure until the end. God has been better than good to me. I want to thank my husband, Trisston, for his emotional support and love. Thank you for all the cooked meals, laundered clothes, and for taking care of our children, Shariah and Ryan. Thank you to my children for understanding all the times I was glued to my laptop during late nights and family vacations. I am thankful for my village of family and friends. Each of you, in your own way, have provided kind words and encouragement.

I want to thank the woman who walked up to me 11 years ago in a restaurant and planted the idea and seed in my mind that I could one day obtain a doctoral degree. Thank you, Mr. Dwyane Kohn, who would later water that seed and inspire me to complete a doctoral program. God truly orchestrated this journey through the both of you.

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ABSTRACT

Experiencing instructional supportive structures that help teachers to overcome barriers to meeting the diverse needs of their students is vital to the success of novice teachers (Kraft et al., 2018). The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore the perceptions novice teachers developed while experiencing instructional coaching support. Five novice teachers in elementary Title I schools participated in the study. Two themes emerged from the data analysis and indicated that novice teachers perceived first year success as a result of the instructional coaching support they received. Novice teachers perceived that a collaborative work environment with instructional coaches and grade-level peers supported their overall professional growth during the first year of teaching. This study suggested that novice teachers should transition into the role of a teacher by experiencing an instructional framework within the first semester of teaching that exposes them to a systematic approach to instructional practices to meet the needs of their students. The instructional framework recommended in this study is an instructional coaching cycle of goal setting, planning, implementing, assessing, and reflecting on instruction. As school districts work on induction program designs, insight from this study may aid in the reduction of novice teacher attrition across school districts.

Keywords: Novice teachers, instructional coaching, instructional coach, Title I schools, elementary schools, instructional coaching cycle, first-year teachers, first-year teaching perceptions
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I. INTRODUCTION

Novice teachers, or teachers with fewer than three years of teaching experience, find the early years of teaching filled with challenges that can lead to high teacher turnover. Experiencing supportive professional development that helps teachers to overcome barriers to meeting the diverse needs of their students is vital to the success of novice teachers (Kraft et al., 2018). According to Warsame and Valles (2018), educational institutions universally face the issue of prioritizing retention of novice teachers. Redding and Henry (2018) noted that a recent development was in retaining novice teachers during the school year. In their study of teacher turnover, Redding and Henry (2018) found that at least 6% of novice teachers switch schools or leave the teaching profession during the school year. Although there are many reasons for teacher turnover, Yildirim (2018) suggested teacher readiness is one indicator of a teacher's potential longevity in the classroom. Retention practices support the readiness of teachers who are new to the classroom. The basis for this study was to identify and understand the perceptions novice teachers develop when experiencing instructional support during the first years of teaching.

Background of the Study

Historically, teachers are responsible for providing standards-based instruction (Desimone & Pak, 2017). Ultimately, high stakes testing highlights the demands policymakers and school leaders place on teachers (Connor, 2017). Due to rigorous instructional expectations, federal legislation was passed in the late 1990s that focused on the role of instructional coaches within the teaching and learning process (Kraft et al., 2018). Learmond’s (2017) qualitative research study showed that teachers were willing to meet the educational demands but require
support in their initial career stages to become effective instructors. Instructional coaches prove valuable because of the ability to provide one-on-one professional development that helps novice teachers improve reading instruction (Desimone & Pak, 2017). Furthermore, Desimone and Pak (2017) agreed with the use of instructional coaches to bridge gaps in knowledge and effective practices during times of educational shifts. Oftentimes, these educational shifts cause teachers to embrace a new way of teaching regardless of the teachers’ background knowledge, experience, or personal beliefs about how students should learn (Connor, 2017). Kraft et al. (2018) asserted that continuous professional development was one way to improve teachers’ instructional practice.

Presently, solutions are needed to fill teacher shortages across the United States (Warsame & Valles, 2018). According to Warsame and Valles (2018), retaining new teachers is a goal of many of the country’s educational entities. Warsame and Valles (2018) conducted a study involving 451 novice teachers who benefitted from effective professional development for the purpose of retention during the early stages of teaching. The purpose of the mixed-method study was to determine the effectiveness of induction programs at the school district and university level for novice teachers. Support structures at the school level involved classroom mentors and professional development. Support structures at the university level involved university liaisons and electronic mentoring. The study was based on the need for novice teachers to participate in structured induction programs at the start of their teaching career. Using surveys and interviews, the study revealed that novice teachers felt structures that allowed for collaboration with other teachers were the most helpful form of support during the early stages of teaching. In addition, professional development received prior to the start of the school year was deemed least helpful (Warsame & Valles, 2018). Furthermore, novice teachers thought
support from administrators through classroom visits and feedback, as well as school-based support structures, were most beneficial to their needs.

Curry et al. (2016) conducted a content analysis of novice teachers transitioning from a seven-week alternative teacher certification program to their first classrooms. Novice teachers depicted their experiences about the various ecosystems they felt existed in the workplace during the first semester as a classroom teacher. The analysis focused on induction programs in the state of Louisiana, which were ranked fifth nationally for alternative teacher programs. After learning about the five-system ecosystem theory (microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem, and chronosystem), 58 novice teachers participated and displayed, through illustrations, concern about overall demands of the job, student achievement, and adapting to the climate and culture of working with colleagues (Curry et al., 2016). The drawings represented the various ecosystems novice teachers felt were present in their role as a classroom teacher. Curry et al.’s (2016) study supported the need for novice teachers to receive instructional support and professional development focusing on pedagogy and effective instructional practices.

After conducting a study on 1,400 novice teachers, Moir (1999) asserted a need to support novice teachers during the early stages of teaching. The study was in collaboration with the Santa Cruz New Teacher Project (SCNTP). The study was developed to ensure novice teachers received support within a caring environment. The project integrated professional development, teacher assessment, peer observation, and reflection on teacher practice with a culmination of a documented teacher portfolio. The positive results of the project included a survey of 95 principals who reported novice teachers’ performance in the classroom improved, and teachers became well-rounded in instruction, classroom management, and problem-solving strategies (Moir, 1999).
A novice teacher’s ability to transition theory to practice was highlighted in a qualitative study concerning novice teachers’ perception of their readiness level. According to Yildirim (2018), teachers’ failure to reach a particular readiness level may lead to an increase in teacher attrition rates. However, programs that address theory and practice simultaneously can lead to improvements in professional development and teacher readiness (Yildirim, 2018).

Redding and Henry (2018) posed a reality about novice teachers in their examination of novice teachers’ turnover. Redding and Henry (2018) noted teachers’ willingness to accept the idea of changing schools or leaving the teaching profession during the school year, despite teacher induction programs that provided new teacher mentors throughout the school year. The study tracked novice teachers in North Carolina monthly and found that novice teachers left schools even when instructional support was available (Redding & Henry, 2018).

The researcher hopes to fill a gap in the literature by identifying the perceptions novice teachers develop throughout their experiences of working with an instructional coach. Instructional coaching is defined as a one-on-one plan focusing on the skills necessary to improve a teacher’s instructional practice and providing continuous modeling, with timely feedback (Kraft et al., 2018; Stefaniak, 2018). For the purposes of this study, the focus will be on the experiences novice teachers have with instructional coaches during their first year of teaching.

Understanding the perceptions novice teachers develop during side-by-side instructional coaching within the first semester of teaching may give insight on how to develop the instructional practices of novice teachers in the elementary school setting. This study will focus on novice teachers’ perceptions during the induction period, wherein teachers acclimate to the
field of teaching during their first year (Zhang et al., 2019). Induction programs are a standard structure for supporting novice teachers (Warsame & Valles, 2018; Zhang et al., 2019).

**Theoretical Framework**

This study stems from the principles of adult learning theory. The theory of andragogy (adult learning) originated in Malcolm S. Knowles’ (1980) work in the 1970s and 1980s (Muneja, 2015). Knowles (1980) considered andragogy to be the “art and science of helping adults learn” (Muneja, 2015, p. 55) and acknowledged an alternative way of learning for adults that is “self-directing” (Muneja, 2015, p. 55) as opposed to prior research on the way children learn (Illeris, 2018). During the 1990s, a Russian educator by the name of Serguey I. Zymeyov worked to advance Malcolm Knowles’ (1980) andragogy principles. Andragogy involves the learner being active and engaged, versus passive, in the learning process (Muneja, 2015). In Muneja’s (2015) study, Zmeyov was cited as defining andragogy as a conglomerate of adult learning activities involving “planning, realizing, evaluating and correcting” (p. 55).

Additionally, in Muneja’s (2015) study, Zmeyov was cited for expounding on the concept of the adult learning theory by introducing nine fundamentals for adult education, which includes: self-directed learning; co-operative activities in learning; experiential learning; individuation of learning; systemic learning; contextual learning; actualization of the results of learning; elective learning; development of educational needs; and consciousness of learning. Among the nine fundamentals of adult education described in Muneja’s (2015) review, experiential learning is the one which characterizes the educational workplace. The collaborative nature of experiential learning allows instructional coaches to support novice teachers through the learning process (Muneja, 2015). Adult learning theory plays a pivotal role in the professional development of novice teachers, because it encompasses instruction and feedback to support the teacher’s growth.
Instructional coaches provide teachers with teaching methods to improve instructional practice (Desimone & Pak, 2017).

**Conceptual Framework**

The purpose of this study was to examine the perceptions novice teachers develop when working with instructional coaches during the early stages of teaching. This phenomenological study examined novice teachers' common interactions and lived experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The researcher hopes to extend existing research by examining school-based instructional coach support for novice teachers within the early stages of teaching and how novice teachers perceive the support and experiences.

Although there are several adult learning theories explored throughout the research, Kolb’s theory of learning was chosen for this study. The Kolb theory of learning is beneficial when schools develop teachers professionally (Reshmad’sa & Vijayakumari, 2017). Kolb's theory incorporates “hands-on” (Reshmad'sa & Vijayakumari, 2017, p. 1) experiential learning strategies and serves as a foundational theory for the conceptual framework of this study. This learning theory exposes learners to Kolb’s experiential learning cycle elements: concrete experience, reflection observations, abstract conceptualization, and active experiment (Reshmad'sa & Vijayakumari, 2017). Kolb’s theory of learning was chosen as a theoretical framework for this study, because it explores conceptual elements similar to the school-based instructional coaching cycle novice teachers experience with an instructional coach.

As novice teachers develop pedagogical skills to meet students’ needs, the need for instructional coach support is inevitable (Desimone & Pak, 2017). Teachers should exhibit intentionality towards improving daily instructional practice (Sherrington, 2019). The literature
on adult learning is extensive. The researcher considered other adult learning theories before deciding on the Kolb’s theory of learning.

Kegan’s constructive development approach emphasizes that concepts evolve through lived experiences (Stewart & Wolodko, 2016). As novice teachers develop perceptions of their lived experiences with instructional coach support, it is possible their perspectives on instructional practice shifts (Stewart & Wolodko, 2016). Kegan’s theory focuses on the “thinking and meaning” (Stewart & Wolodko, 2016, p. 247) process individuals develop over time and the influences learning has on individuals’ experiences (Stewart & Wolodko, 2016). Kegan’s theory explains the construction of developing meaning during the learning process as adults. Stewart and Wolodko (2016) explained Kegan’s theory as one’s “belief system” and “emotional response” (p. 253) which creates a need for differentiation during the learning process.

Another adult learning theory is transformative learning. Transformative learning theory is the changing of one’s outlook on a matter through experiencing “uncomfortable situations” (Strange & Gibson, 2017, p. 86) that enlighten our understanding. The transformative learning theory focuses on cognitive shifts (Strange & Gibson, 2017). Novice teachers may experience these shifts during the early phases of teaching while working with an instructional coach. Maiese (2017) noted transformative learning affects one’s overall ability to relate to a learning environment. The perceptions developed from novice teachers’ lived experiences may influence a transformation in pedagogy.
Figure 1

*Conceptual Framework for the Instructional Coaching Cycle Anchored by Kolb’s Learning Theory Components*

![Diagram of the conceptual framework](image)


The conceptual framework for this study will be the instructional coaching cycle as an experiential learning opportunity for novice teachers in the early phases of teaching. Based on Figure 1, using experiential learning as a professional development tool for improving instructional practice involves the teacher having an experience (concrete experience), participating in meaningful reflection (reflective observation), engaging in the learning process (abstract conceptualization), and transferring the knowledge gained (active experience) to enhance instructional practice within the classroom (Reshmad’sa & Vijayakumari, 2017).
Meaning derived from experiential learning exists within the lived experiences (Strange & Gibson, 2017).

As shown in Figure 1, the center of the framework addresses the phases of the instructional coaching cycle. During the assessment phase, the instructional coach observes the novice teacher’s instruction, and goals to improve instructional practice are set in collaboration with the novice teacher (Stefaniak, 2018; Suarez, 2017; Trenton Public Schools Instructional Model, n.d.). The goal-setting phase incorporates the development of the coaching cycle plan (Suarez, 2017; Trenton Public Schools Instructional Model, n.d.). During the implementation phase, the plan is executed, leading to reflection, feedback, and a continuation of the coaching cycle, based on the progress of the novice teacher's instructional practice (Stefaniak, 2018; Suarez, 2017; Trenton Public Schools Instructional Model, n.d.). Suarez (2017) emphasized the collaborative nature of coaching and the value added when goals are met during the learning and reflection process. Overall, the conceptual framework in this study is being used to provide a visual of the experiences novice teachers may encounter while working with an instructional coach.
Problem Statement

Retaining novice teachers beyond three to five years is a concern across the United States. Kraft et al. (2018) found that over 3 million teachers in the United States were needed to meet the diverse needs students bring into the classroom. In an exploratory mixed-method study, Warsame and Valles (2018) found that school-based support is beneficial to novice teachers' retention, because it improves their level of confidence. They came to this conclusion based on quantitative data collected through survey responses and qualitative data collected through semi-structured interviews based on novice teachers' perceptions of school-based versus university-based support (Warsame & Valles, 2018). Novice teachers may benefit from prescribed professional development, such as side-by-side instructional coaching, within the first semester of teaching. How novice teachers perceive the instructional support may play a role in the transfer of instructional practices into the classroom. The focus of this phenomenological study was to examine perceptions novice teachers develop when experiencing instructional coaching support in the reading content area at Title I elementary schools.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore the perceptions novice teachers develop while experiencing instructional coaching support. A phenomenological study involves studying lived experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This study examined the common themes derived from novice teachers’ interactions and experiences with an instructional coach the first year of teaching reading standards. Novice teachers were defined as teachers with less than three years of experience in a grade level or content subject area. For this study, an instructional coach was defined as a school-based or district-level coach who observes, models, co-teaches, and provides feedback to teachers in a reading content area.
Significance of the Study

Kraft et al. (2018) asserted a need to study specific aspects of instructional programs. The results of this phenomenological study revealed common themes among novice teachers’ perceptions of experiencing instructional coaching support during the first year of teaching. Through this research study, novice teachers described their experiences during the first year of transitioning into teaching. Other scholars have conducted research about novice teachers' perceptions of school-based support but from a quantitative perspective. The research did not involve perceptions developed after novice teachers experienced instructional coaching support. This study may fill the gap in research surrounding instructional school-based and district-based coaches in the content area of reading, as it relates to the interactions and experiences novice teachers may encounter. As school districts work on induction program designs, insight from this study may aid in the reduction of novice teacher attrition across school districts.

Overview of Methodology

Research Design

A qualitative methodology using the phenomenology approach is the research design for this study. The researcher is interested in the lived experiences of novice teachers’ interactions with instructional coaches. The phenomenological approach was used to describe common perceptions among novice teachers based on their experiences with instructional coaches (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The study explored the experiences of novice teachers who received instructional coaching during the first year of teaching. The researcher discussed professional experiences of working with novice teachers as a school-based and district-level instructional coach to “bracket” (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 77) out of the study and describe the lived
experience of the participants instead. The goal of bracketing is to approach the phenomenon to gain a deeper understanding of novice teachers’ experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

**Research Questions**

- What are the perceptions of elementary school novice teachers regarding instructional coaching received during the first year of teaching?
- What are the lived experiences of novice teachers who receive instructional coaching in reading?

**Data Collection**

Data collection occurred through face-to-face and/or web-based interviews in the field using open-ended questions. Follow up questions were asked to elicit additional details and explanations. A sample size of 3 to 5 novice teachers who have experienced working with an instructional coach during the first year of teaching was desired. It was the researcher’s intent to use the interview data to describe the perceptions novice teachers, who are in the early stages of teaching reading in an elementary school setting, have about instructional coaches.

**Procedures**

After approval from the university’s Institutional Review Board and the selected school district, novice teachers who met the interview criteria were asked to participate in the interview process. The criteria for participating included novice teachers who had less than three years of teaching experience, including experience working with an instructional coach in the reading content area. The interviews lasted 13 minutes or less per participant. To maintain a safe and secure atmosphere, participants were given the option to choose the interview location. The interviews were expected to occur during the months of September and October of the research year. The researcher recorded and transcribed interviews verbatim. The interview location was at
the participants’ choosing. To validate transcript data, the researcher conducted a phenomenological data analysis to determine common themes and patterns across the data retrieved from the participants’ interview responses. Participants reviewed transcribed responses to verify accuracy.

A secured information and consent form provided participants with information about the study and how interview responses would be used for the study. Unique labels prevented the use of participants’ names and will protect participants’ identification when data is displayed. Confidentiality and anonymity were provided throughout the interview and data collection process. The researcher annotated the transcribed responses by labeling key words and phrases through the use of the coding process. The data were then categorized to group similar codes and analyze the data to determine themes across the participants’ responses.

Limitations

Data collection in this study was limited to novice teachers at Title I elementary schools located within one state and one school district. The sample size may be limited to novice teachers who are willing to participate in the study. This study focused on novice teachers’ perceptions and lived experiences and did not assess the instructional effectiveness of novice teachers or the ability of instructional coaches to improve novice teachers’ instructional practices.

Definition of Key Terms

For the purpose of this phenomenological study examining the perceptions novice teachers develop while working with instructional coaches, the following key terms are defined:
• **induction**: The beginning years of a teacher’s career, where teachers become acclimated to the teaching profession by transitioning from preservice teacher to novice teacher (Zhang et al., 2019).

• **instructional coach**: An individual who provides professional development support to improve teacher practice through a collaborative partnership (Stoetzel & Shedrow, 2020).

• **instructional coaching cycle**: A series of continuous steps involving planning, teaching, and reflection, conducted by an instructional coach to improve a teacher’s instructional classroom practices (Stefaniak, 2017).

• **novice teacher**: A teacher with fewer than three years of experience in the field of education (Curry et al., 2015).

• **phenomenological data analysis**: The generation of themes from participants’ significant statements (Creswell, 2018).

• **phenomenological study**: A study of individuals’ lived experiences surrounding a concept or phenomenon. (Creswell, 2018).

• **title I schools**: Schools receiving additional funding to service the high percentages of low-income families and students within the school (United States Department of Education, 2018).
Summary

An overview of the research study was detailed throughout this chapter. The researcher introduced a phenomenological study to explore the lived experiences of novice teachers, and the shared perceptions developed while working with instructional coaches. Background literature gave context to the idea that this research can possibly add to the body of knowledge in the education profession by providing insight on the relationships between novice teachers and instructional coaches at the school level. The conceptual framework incorporated the instructional coaching cycle anchored by the four elements of Kolb’s theory of learning, which provides insight on how adults learn. Novice teachers’ ability to gain knowledge through an individualized instructional coaching cycle affords the opportunity for continuous feedback and job-embedded learning (Stoetzel & Shedrow, 2020).

This research sought to answer the questions:

(a) What are the perceptions of elementary school novice teachers regarding instructional coaching received during the first year of teaching?

(b) What are the lived experiences of novice teachers who receive instructional coaching in reading?

Understanding the lived experiences of novice teachers may lead to shared perceptions developed while working with instructional coaches.
II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Novice teachers spend the early years of teaching gaining professional knowledge in content-specific areas to impact student achievement. Induction programs are known to be a vital part of transitioning pre-service teachers into the education profession and supporting novice teacher retention (Hanson & Moir, 2008). Induction programs provide a framework to support novice teachers during the early stages of teaching (Curry et al., 2016). Existing research has addressed the roles instructional coaches, mentors, and school administrators play in developing novice teachers’ instructional practice in the classroom, as well as in developing a teacher’s overall teaching experience (Curry et al., 2016; Hanson & Moir, 2008; Zhang et al., 2019). Analyzing effective support structures for novice teachers has been a common topic throughout decades of research studies; however, improving induction programs by understanding novice teachers’ experiences and perceptions of those support structures is a new priority for many school districts (Hanson & Moir, 2008).

Induction Programs

Engaging novice teachers in professional learning experiences that support the development of instructional practices can lead to meaningful impact on student achievement (Moir, 2009). Implementing a balanced induction program to support novice teachers within a school district is critical to retention efforts (Bruno et al., 2019). Induction programs that offer mentors, professional development, and continuous support to novice teachers during the early stages of teaching, are considered comprehensive and highly effective in retaining teachers and building instructional capacity (Warsame & Valles, 2018).

Ellen Moir (2009) is co-founder of the New Teacher Center induction program and collected data over a 20-year period to capture feedback and experiences of novice teachers
participating in the program. The New Teacher Center encompassed a mentor program that provided support to novice teachers by selecting qualified mentors and building novice teacher capacity through an intentional focus on student achievement (Moir, 1999). The study that influenced the development of the New Teacher Center was the Santa Cruz New Teacher Project (SCNTP), which was in collaboration with the “Santa Cruz County Office of Education and 16 school districts in the greater Silicon Valley and Santa Cruz area” (Moir, 1999, p. 107). The SCNTP study involved 1,400 K-12 teachers and provided the new teachers with veteran mentor teachers and instructionally focused advisors. To build working relationships, the SCNTP provided teachers partnerships with veteran teachers. Instructionally focused advisors met with teachers for two hours on a weekly basis to provide feedback and training (Moir et al., 1999).

Throughout the New Teacher Center induction program study, Moir (2009) identified 10 lessons learned:

- A new teacher induction program requires a system-wide commitment to teacher development.
- Induction programs accelerate new teacher effectiveness.
- Standards-based formative assessment tools document impact.
- Induction programs build a pathway for leaders.
- Good principals create a culture of learning.
- Effective induction programs combine high-quality mentoring with communities of practice.
- Teaching conditions matter to supporting and keeping new teachers.
- Online communities provide timely, cost effective mentoring.
- Policy complements practice.
Good induction programs are accountable, not just compliant. (p.16)

Some of the lessons learned from the New Teacher Center induction program were evident throughout Taranto’s (2011) induction program study, which incorporated an online professional community and accelerated the effectiveness of new teachers through providing a professional development framework using technology.

Taranto (2011) presented a digital solution to the traditional induction program. The purpose of the New Teacher Induction 2.0 program was to integrate an “online learning community” (Taranto, 2011, p. 4) with a comprehensive induction program and to evaluate the effectiveness of the program. According to Taranto (2011), technological advances and the internet gave schools the opportunity to provide new teachers with professional development and support that went beyond the school building. The professional learning community framework was used to emphasize the need for new teachers to collaborate with others outside of their assigned mentor, while also encouraging the use of the new Web 2.0 technology within the school district (Taranto, 2011).

The study was derived from a prior pilot study and was used as a conceptual framework to “design, implement and evaluate” (Taranto, 2011, p. 6) the New Teacher Induction 2.0 program. The ultimate purpose of the study was to integrate an online experience into the school district’s new teacher induction program in order to determine acceptance of an online component in a new teacher induction program. The pilot study evaluated three key areas within The New Teacher 2.0 program: content, delivery of information, and collaboration. The study included content focused on classroom application: (a) technology, (b) assessment and grading, (c) differentiation of instruction, and (d) special education (Taranto, 2011). The researcher used
virtual platforms to deliver the professional development topics and evaluated both content and delivery of information within the study.

The online learning community gave new teachers access to a network of colleagues. School-based, local, and district-level colleagues participated in the collaborative network to support the new teachers (Taranto, 2011). Once the program was implemented, Taranto (2011) evaluated the program throughout the course of a school year. New teachers, administrators, veteran teachers, and university professors participated in the study. The use of “Wikispaces” (Taranto, 2011, p. 8) for the online platform, along with surveys, questionnaires, and focus groups, allowed the researcher to collect data and analyze the effectiveness of the program. Taranto (2011) triangulated qualitative and quantitative data to evaluate online components of the induction program. The quantitative data was derived from the “surveys and tallies of the types of interactions that took place on the wiki” (p. 10). A pre-survey was developed to collect baseline data from new teachers and other contributors (Taranto, 2011). Taranto (2011) coded the qualitative data by using the “discussion thread content to identify common themes among the threads” (p. 11).

The implications of the study suggested that school districts enhance new teacher induction programs with an online experience to provide a broader collaboration base for teachers to reflect and gain instructional support beyond the school building (Taranto, 2011). This study reflected the importance for school districts considering enhancement of teacher induction programs with technology to broaden the reach of their influences and the experiences novice teachers can have during the early stages of teaching.
Novice Teachers and Mentors

Researchers Moir (1999) and Taranto (2011) addressed components of the induction program and the critical stakeholders, which novice teachers would encounter during the early stages of transitioning into the classroom. Veteran teachers served in the capacity of mentors to novice teachers throughout the new teacher induction program (Hanson & Moir, 2008). Hicks (2016) conducted a case study on novice teachers and their mentors to determine if such interactions were deemed most influential in improving novice teacher retention. The researcher used a qualitative method, which included a criterion sampling of participants from a Georgia school district’s Strategic Mentoring and Retention Training (S.M.A.R.T.) Program (Hicks, 2016). Twelve teachers from two different middle schools were selected for the study. The teachers were past S.M.A.R.T. program participants who were in their second year of teaching during the time of the study. After conducting interviews, Hicks (2016) had participants check the responses for accuracy and analyzed the data through the coding process to determine emerging themes in the interactions between mentors and novice teachers from the novice teachers’ perspective. The results of the study showed that novice teachers remained teaching at the same schools. The themes from the qualitative data revealed: (a) 50% of novice teachers in the study perceived their mentor to be influential in their decision to continue teaching, (b) 100% of the novice teachers expressed expectations concerning the skills and abilities mentors should possess, and (c) novice teachers had perceptions of the attributes of an effective mentor (Hicks, 2016). For school districts, the overall implication to consider from this study was to understand that novice teachers enter the profession with expectations of mentors’ abilities to support and increase their knowledge of instructional practice, in order to perform successfully in the classroom.
Expectations of Principals in the Induction Program

Induction programs have evolved from “one-on-one mentor” support to a more collaborative and “comprehensive system” (Wood & Stanulus, 2009, p. 2). While induction programs involve multiple stakeholders at the university, school, and district level, the school building is where novice teachers expect to receive the most real-time support with instructional and professional development (Wood & Stanulus, 2009, p. 2). Hicks’ (2016) study on the relationship and interactions of novice teachers and school-based mentors revealed that preservice teachers transition into the field of education with expectations of what support from mentors should include, as well as what type of support school administrators should provide throughout the induction period (Hicks, 2016).

In a recent study, Zhang et al. (2019) examined the role expectations preservice teachers had for principals in the teacher induction program. To identify the preservice teachers’ expectations, the grounded theory approach to qualitative research was used. The theoretical frameworks for the study incorporated two theories: role theory and cognitive role theory. Both theories were used to analyze the unknown expectations of preservice teachers. Twenty-one preservice teachers participated in phase I and phase II of the practicum field experience. A variation of participation existed between phase I and phase II, and the subject areas represented in the study ranged from English, Science, Social Studies, and Special Education. Phase I required the preservice teachers to observe pedagogy, and phase II required application of the knowledge gained from being in the role of a teacher within the classroom setting while under the supervision of an in-service teacher. During the analysis of the data, the researcher triangulated data from questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, and re-interviews using the grounded theory approach, by conducting a microanalysis using open, axial, and selective coding.
process to increase validity of the participants’ responses and to determine common themes (Zhang et al., 2019).

The results of the study revealed the expectations preservice teachers have of principals. The expectations were presented in terms of two major roles principals should play throughout the induction period for new teachers: school leader and instructional leader. Showing a continuum of expectations, the data was organized into negative, neutral, and positive categories. For the school leader role, although categorized as a negative expectation, preservice teachers expected principals to be absent at times and micromanagers when principals were present, all due to the nature of the job. Preservice teachers expected principals to fulfill certain administrative roles due to the nature of the job, while more positive expectations were related to principals being visionaries and cultivating school culture (Zhang et al., 2019). Overall, preservice teachers expected principals to provide “clear” (Zhang et al., 2019, p. 78) direction on expectations and policies, while also building a positive working culture for teachers to be successful.

Preservice teachers expressed expectations surrounding principals’ roles as being instructional leaders. Along the continuum of expectations, preservice teachers’ responses were categorized as negative, neutral, or positive, as associated with the role of a principal. As an instructional leader, preservice teachers expected principals to serve in the role of a critic (negative) when giving feedback on instruction and as an evaluator or observer (neutral) when observing classroom instruction. However, principals were expected to serve in the role as an advocate and mentor (positive) when welcoming new teachers and supporting new teachers with transitioning into a classroom setting (Zhang et al., 2019).
The implications for the study revealed the importance of having the principal’s and school-based leadership’s support and presence throughout the induction process (Zhang et al., 2019). The study exposed the expectations of preservice teachers bring when transitioning into the school setting. The induction program can serve to communicate clear expectations as related to the role the principal, mentor, and school-based support personnel will play during the transitional stage of novice teachers (Wood & Stanulus, 2009; Zhang et al., 2019). According to Zhang et al.’s (2019) study, novice teachers did not have perceptions about the principal’s role in the hiring process or the pairing of mentors for novice teachers; however, Zhang et al. (2019) suggested the importance of having input from novice teachers when selecting mentors, along with setting a purpose and encouraging a collaborative culture throughout the process.

**Administrative Influence**

Novice teachers have expectations entering the teaching workforce, and those expectations turn into overall perceptions based on the novice teacher experiences with the school-based administrators (Pogodzinski et al., 2012). Based on the study conducted by Pogodzinski et al. (2012), retention may be indicative of novice teachers’ perceptions of school-based administrators and the overall school climate. The purpose for the study was to determine novice teachers’ perceptions of “administrative climate” (Pogodzinski et al., 2012, p. 253) related to the “quality of administrators’ policies and practices and administrator-teacher relationships” (Pogodzinski et al., 2012, p. 253). The researchers examined how novice teachers’ perceptions of climate affected the retention rate at the schools and specifically made a comparison between “teacher level and group level” (Pogodzinski et al., 2012, p. 256-257) perceptions related to administrative climate.
Novice teachers in six Michigan districts and five Indiana districts were surveyed during the Fall of 2007 and Spring of 2008. The criteria for inclusion in the study included schools that served a diverse race and economic status population and had a minimum of 10 novice teachers who taught various subject areas in elementary and middle schools (Pogodzinski et al., 2012). Pogodzinski et al. (2012) invited 380 novice teachers to complete the survey in the Fall of 2007, and in the Spring of 2008, in exchange for a gift card incentive. A total of 184 novice teachers from 99 elementary and middle schools completed both Fall and Spring surveys (Pogodzinski et al., 2012). According to Pogodzinski et al. (2012), 76% of the teachers who completed the survey remained in their schools the following year. In the spring, only 48% completed the survey; in terms of participant demographics, 83% of participants were female and 90% identified as white. The majority of the participating novice teachers taught elementary students. The novice teachers completing the surveys varied in teaching experience; 27% of participants were first year teachers, 44% of participants were second-year teachers, and 29% of participants were third-year teachers (Pogodzinski et al., 2012).

At the group level, Pogodzinski et al. (2012) compared perceptions of administrative climate across the school to determine where novice teachers’ perceptions fit within the concept of teachers remaining at their schools. To determine group-level perceptions, Pogodzinski et al. (2012) included a question on the novice teacher survey that allowed novice teachers to identify mentors and colleagues that were sources of support for the novice teachers. A total of 351 colleagues received the survey in the winter of 2008 with a 60% respondent rate; however, the colleagues selected did not represent an overall population, representing only the most influential teachers for novice teachers (Pogodzinski et al., 2012).
The data analysis was conducted in three stages using a multilevel logistic regression model. Researchers Pogodzinski et al. (2012) applied a logistic regression analysis model to the first stage of analysis to identify the variance between novice teachers’ intent to remain at their schools. The second stage of analysis involved identifying the association between novices’ perceptions of the administrative climate and the intent to remain. The third stage of analysis focused on the group-level effects of perceptions of the administrative climate on novice teachers’ intent to remain within the school (Pogodzinski et al. 2012).

The findings of the study revealed the importance of novice teachers’ perceptions of administrators and the impact their perceptions have on deciding whether to remain at their school. Perceptions at the group level were not statistically significant (1.4505 with a standard deviation of 1.9134). However, a variance existed among the novice teachers’ perception and evaluation of how they perceived and evaluated the interactions between school administrators and teachers (Pogodzinski et al., 2012). The study revealed how novice teachers’ personal evaluation and perceptions about working environment impacted their decision to remain at the same school.

Novice Teacher Placement

Exploring studies discussing how novice teachers are placed in their first teaching assignments, and the results of novice teacher experiences in various school settings, was necessary. According to Ronfeldt (2015), higher performing, well-functioning schools with low teacher turnover provided better teaching experiences for student teachers. Novice teachers were more likely to remain in the teaching field when in a balanced school environment that (a) encompassed a positive school climate, (b) encouraged collaboration, (c) produced high student achievement, and (d) retained teachers (Ronfeldt, 2015).
Ronfeldt (2015) wanted to determine the relationship between in-service teachers and their effectiveness with student achievement in their field placement schools, as compared to the schools in which they became fully employed as teachers. The study used a quantitative research approach and included a sample size of 752 teachers from New York City schools who taught reading or math for students ranging from third through tenth grades during the time of the study (Ronfeldt, 2015).

Three research questions were essential throughout the study:

1. What kind of schools promote in-service and preservice teachers’ instructional effectiveness?
2. Are teachers more effective at raising math and reading achievement when they learn to teach in different kinds of field placement schools?
3. Are teachers more effective at raising math and reading achievement when they student teach in schools similar to the ones in which they eventually gain employment? (Ronfeldt, 2015, p. 307)

The researchers triangulated the data using regression models throughout the analysis process. For research question one, eight years of administrator and teacher survey data were used to “generate an indicator variable” (Ronfeldt, 2015, p. 311). For research question two, the researcher used a “two-stage” (Ronfeldt, 2015, p. 311) approach when working with the teachers’ valued-added model (VAM) scores in tested grade levels, and then used that data to derive “dependent variables used in the multi-level regression model” (Ronfeldt, 2015, p. 311). The data from the third research question was derived through characteristic traits of “field placement” (Ronfeldt, 2015, p. 311) schools and “current schools” (Ronfeldt, 2015, p. 311). An
The absolute value was used to determine any differences in characteristic traits of the schools (Ronfeldt, 2015).

The results of the study contradicted previous assumptions that field placement schools were schools with high-performing students. Ronfeldt (2015) found that field placement schools consisted of schools with high vacancies, low-income students, and less than favorable state test scores. Additional results revealed that teachers’ math VAM scores reflected effective impacts on student achievement, as opposed to teachers’ reading VAM scores; the reading VAM scores resulted in fewer significant impacts on field placement characteristics. Furthermore, when teachers taught high-performing students, the teachers’ reading VAM scores were higher. Teachers who were specialized in a specific subject showed more overall effective VAM scores than general education teachers in elementary schools. The researcher did not find a positive or negative difference in teachers’ performance at a field placement school, as compared to the school of employment (Ronfeldt, 2015).

The implications of this study suggested that teacher preparation programs place preservice teachers in schools that exhibit high-performing and collaborative environments for a positive field experience, as well as to provide more high-performing schools as options for employment as new teachers, rather than placing new teachers in lower performing schools. Ronfeldt (2015) asserted that the study provided the “strongest evidence” (p. 319) that, by offering high-performing and high-functioning schools, the school district would yield a more equipped slate of teacher candidates. Further, school districts should increase the number of field placement schools and continue to professionally develop preservice and in-service teachers (Ronfeldt, 2015).
Title I Schools

Title I schools receive funding allocations to meet the needs of schools. These funds are to be used to close the achievement gap among the underserved population of students (Grant & Arnold, 2015). When in Title I schools, novice teachers faced additional challenges to teaching, due to the high needs of the students (Samos & Fink, 2013).

However, the high needs of Title I students may not automatically translate to reasons for leaving a school. Johnson et al. (2012) asserted that new teacher turnover may not be attributed to a school’s demographics but rather due to the level of satisfaction with the support teachers received at the school. More recently, Papay and Kraft (2016) suggested that the learning environment and organizational supports influence the professional development and satisfaction of teachers who are early in their teaching careers. Schools that lack organization were susceptible to high turnover rates (Glennie et al., 2016). Novice teachers were more likely to remain at their assigned school if they experienced professional connections with their colleagues and felt a sense of accountability towards the vision and academic goals of the school (Pogodzinski et al., 2013).

In some instances, novice teachers at Title I schools may even find a greater purpose at their school, finding themselves in the position of leading and mentoring during the early stages of their teaching careers. Such an opportunity can empower novice teachers to remain at a school. Catapano and Huisman (2013) conducted a qualitative study using a case study approach to find emerging themes from two novice teachers’ experiences of taking on mentor roles in an urban school. The schools faced challenges with filling teaching positions. The novice teachers participated in a program called Mentoring Beginning Urban Teachers (MBUT), which was a partnership between a university and an urban school district to support new teachers. Although
the MBUT program was set up to match veteran teachers with new teachers, after two years of being in the program, two of the novice teachers were asked to simultaneously continue in the role of a mentee and mentor. One female novice teacher was a fourth-grade teacher in her third year of teaching during the time of the study and was assigned two novice teachers at the same Title I urban school. The other novice teacher was a kindergarten teacher entering her third year of teaching. The teacher taught at another school within the same district and was assigned a novice teacher to mentor (Catapano & Huisman, 2013). The schools involved in the study, according to Catapano and Huisman (2013), fit the criteria of Title I schools due to a low-performing academic status, as well as a high percentage of low-income and African American students.

The researchers analyzed the two novice teacher mentors’ interviews, field notes, and reflections and found three emerging themes: “reflection of practice, need for time management, and personal reasons for mentoring” (Catapano & Huisman, 2013, p. 264). The mentors’ motivation to participate in the MBUT program as mentors was due to their desire to collaborate with another educator. Ultimately, the mentor position provided an opportunity to support and guide new teachers through a positive experience (Catapano & Huisman, 2013).

The findings and implications of the study provided mentor programs and school districts with insight on the benefits of considering novice teachers in their third year of teaching as possible mentors for new teachers. Catapano and Huisman (2013) posited that, as a part of school reform in Title I schools, school districts should integrate mentoring programs into the new teacher process and incorporate novice teacher mentors to add a fresh perspective to teaching and learning versus relying solely on veteran teachers.
Novice Teacher Supportive Structures

The retention of novice teachers can be attributed to the existence of common support structures. Ingersoll (2012) asserted that the better the professional development, teacher collaboration, and overall teacher support, the lower the turnover rates in schools. In such schools, teacher support structures consisted of comprehensive induction programs, mentors, and teacher collaboration (Ingersoll, 2012; Warsame & Valles, 2018).

Martin et al. (2015) further examined novice teacher support structures in a case study of five middle school novice teachers in schools deemed as Title I schools. The case study revealed the successes and challenges of the teachers’ first year in Hawaii’s public schools. The participants were selected through purposive sampling based on whether the teachers’ schooling and certificate was earned in the United States (mainland), Hawaii (locally), or through Teach for America (TFA) (Martin, 2015).

For novice teachers, time is a form of support. With adequate use of time, novice teachers can learn context, work with colleagues, and understand the diverse needs of the students in their classroom. In the study, the middle school teachers spoke about the challenges of teaching middle-school-aged students versus high school students. The teachers also shared experiences of observing veteran teachers or being provided modeling of instructional practices to better understand how to implement instruction in the classroom (Martin et al., 2015).

Another form of support for novice teachers was having access to mentors. Administrative and instructional support were two descriptions the middle school teachers used to describe two types of mentors who were supportive during their first year. The administrative mentor was described as one who supported the novice teachers with basic needs to help the teachers get acclimated to the administrative paperwork that goes along with being a novice
teacher in the school district. The instructional mentor was supportive in improving the teachers’ instructional practice and was able to build the teachers’ capacity related to content. Supporting novice teachers with both types of mentors was ideal (Martin et al., 2015).

The teachers reflected on the significance of professional collaboration during the first year of teaching. The teachers felt a need for, and satisfaction from, collaborating with the professional community within the school building about curriculum and instructional strategies, which can occur during common planning with content area teachers. Novice teachers valued the collaborative time spent with the professional community. The novice teachers preferred professional development that addressed actual needs, as opposed to broad professional development topics (Martin et al., 2015).

The researchers’ findings on the middle school teachers’ experiences varied, which impacted the effectiveness of the identified perceptions. Ultimately, the teachers felt basic needs were met; however, all of the middle school novice teachers desired feedback on practices but felt it was most beneficial when the feedback was paired with observations of skilled mentors and teachers. The implications of the study revealed the teachers’ need for relationships with mentors who are consistent and trustworthy (Martin et al., 2015).

**Enhancing the Field of Education**

Supporting novice teachers during the early years of teaching is vital to the teachers’ success and future instructional practice (Martin et al., 2015). In a study conducted by Teague and Swan (2013), the researchers found that the New Teacher Academy (NTA) supported new teachers through a comprehensive induction program developed for the McNairy County School District. The NTA program was designed to serve and benefit the McNairy County by mitigating teacher attrition. Embedded within the NTA program were components to enhance support for
new teachers beyond the traditional mentoring. For instance, three New Teacher Orientation workshops were provided for first-year teachers and addressed policies, procedures, and other new teacher administrative business. Comprehensive components of the NTA program included instructional planning workshops, professional development literature resources, and “Thinking Maps” (Teague & Swan, 2013, p. 43). The on-site induction coach was an integral part of ensuring the fidelity of the teacher induction program (Teague & Swan, 2013).

Evaluation and interview survey data was collected from 37 of the 58 teachers who participated in the program between 2006 and 2010. Data methods used in the study involved the ranking method, in which respondents ranked the components of the induction program based on overall satisfaction. The researchers also coded and analyzed open-ended questions and focus group interview responses of 21 of the teacher participants. The results of the study yielded three themes to further the enrichment of the New Teacher Academy. The three themes were (a) new teachers’ desire to glean knowledge from newer teachers versus veteran teachers, (b) teachers who are hired later in the school year did not feel supported, and (c) novice teachers wanted to feel valued by being a part of decision-making in the school (Teague & Swan, 2013).

According to Teague and Swan (2013), the implications of this study showed the importance of supporting novice teachers through school district induction programs. To enhance the future of the education system, the scaffolding levels of support for novice teachers should range from “intensive” to, “as needed” (Teague & Swan, 2013, p. 46). To increase the longevity of teachers in the teaching profession, novice teachers should receive a full range of support in the first year of teaching, a moderate level of support in the second year, and support based on the need of the teacher during the third year (Teague & Swan, 2013).
Experiential Learning Theory and Novice Teachers

As novice teachers transition from pre-service to in-service teachers, a closer look into David Kolb’s experiential learning theory may provide ways to support novice teachers and enhance the field of education (Raschick et al., 1998). Kolb’s experiential learning theory is a framework in which novice teachers can “learn, grow, and develop” (Baker et al., 2005, para. 6). The Kolb experiential learning cycle is an opportunity for novice teachers to engage in new learning and develop meaning of concepts through “concrete experience, abstract conceptualization, reflective observation, and active experimentation” (Baker et al., 2005, para. 7) as shown in Figure 2.

The basis for Kolb’s experiential learning theory holds that knowledge occurs through the process of experiences (Guthrie & Jones, 2012). The process of learning and adopting teaching skills through the lens of an adult learner is what makes the experiential learning theory relevant to this body of research. Experiential learning occurs naturally, as teachers are introduced to instructional practices and expectations for meeting the achievement needs of students at the school level (Baker et al., 2012). Kolb’s theory focuses on learning cycle activities involving “experiencing, thinking, reflecting, and acting” (Peterson et al., 2015, p. 230). Ultimately, the completion of the learning cycle produces increased knowledge and the transformation of information resulting in meaning for the learner (Peterson et al., 2015).
Novice teachers experience extensive training throughout the induction period (Teague & Swan, 2013). Throughout the induction period, the level of support needed to ensure teacher success involved instructional coaches and school administrators designing and implementing hands-on learning experiences for novice teachers (Baker et al., 2012). Professional learning
communities, common planning, and instructional coaching cycles were active forms of support to develop and enhance the pedagogical skills of novice teachers as they provide classroom instruction (Teague & Swan, 2013).

**Summary**

The focus of this literature review was to explore novice teachers’ experiences with, and perceptions of, instructional coaching support received during the early years of teaching. Novice teachers gain knowledge through experiencing the cycle of learning, as they develop instructional practice and pedagogical skills to improve student achievement (Peterson et al., 2015). Comprehensive induction programs, along with school-based mentors and administrators, provide a level of support during the cycle of learning (Wood & Stanulus, 2009). To address novice teacher retention in school districts, researchers have shown the benefit of considering the perceptions and expectations novice teachers bring with them when entering the field of education (Hicks, 2016; Pogodzinski et al., 2012; Teague & Swan, 2013).
III. METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This qualitative phenomenological study aimed to explore the perceptions and lived experiences novice teachers develop while experiencing instructional coaching support. A phenomenology study was selected to gain an understanding of the lived experiences of novice teachers. According to Creswell and Poth (2018), a phenomenological approach aims to gain a deeper understanding of lived experiences. Creswell and Poth (2018) suggested the data analysis in a phenomenological study support the researcher in conducting a structured and organized analysis. The methodology selected for the study led to discovering the essence of lived experiences through textural and structural descriptions to derive the meaning of the lived experiences novice teachers encountered when they received instructional coaching support during their first year of teaching. Chapter 3 details phenomenological procedures to identify and examine common themes from novice teachers’ interactions and experiences with an instructional coach during the first year of teaching reading standards. The themeing approach involves coding, categorizing, and analyzing the interview data (Saldaña, 2016). A thorough examination of the novice teachers’ responses helped to identify common patterns within the novice teachers’ lived experiences. Structural and in vivo coding methods provided a more in-depth analysis of novice teachers' interview responses.
Research Design

The phenomenological approach is the qualitative methodology used for this study to answer two research questions. An assessment of five qualitative approaches was a part of the process to select the qualitative methodology best suited for the research problem. The narrative approach studies others' life experiences and primarily tells the participants' story instead of the participant sharing their own life experiences about a phenomenon (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This study's primary focus is the lived experiences of novice teachers' interactions with instructional coaches, as told by the novice teacher, and how they describe the experiences; therefore, eliminating the narrative approach was necessary to ensure inclusion of the novice teachers’ voice. The perspective of the novice teacher for this study was essential to hear a firsthand account of the lived experiences. The grounded theory approach focuses on developing the data versus understanding the essence of the lived experience (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This study's purpose was not to determine a theory from the data on instructional coaching; therefore, the grounded theory approach was not an appropriate fit for the study. The ethnographic approach studies a culture or group, while the case study approach focuses on individuals within a single case or multiple cases (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Because this study did not focus on a specific cultural group, the ethnographical approach was not appropriate to guide this study. The phenomenological approach describes common perceptions among novice teachers, uncovering the meaning and the phenomenon based on novice teachers' experiences with instructional coaches (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The phenomenology approach is best suited for this study's research problem due to examining shared lived experiences of novice teachers receiving instructional coaching support.
**Participants**

The participants for this study needed to have instructional coaching support during their first year of teaching. Novice teachers received an invitation to participate in the study, who taught at Title I elementary schools located within one school district (Appendix C). Five novice teachers accepted the invitation, received the interview guide, and completed the interview consent form. Interviews took place within seven days after accepting the invitation. All five of the participants were female teachers at the beginning of their second or third year of teaching in a Title I elementary setting.

The interviews occurred two weeks into the new school year in August 2020. The participants described their first-year experiences as novice teachers. Participants F and G described experiences that occurred during the 2019-2020 school year, and Participants H, I, and J described their first-year experiences that occurred during the 2018-2019 school year.

**Table 1**

Participant Background Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unique Identifier</th>
<th>Year Began Teaching</th>
<th>Number of Year(s) Completed</th>
<th>Current Teaching Position</th>
<th>School Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Novice Teacher F</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4th grade</td>
<td>School A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Novice Teacher G</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Kindergarten/1st grade</td>
<td>School B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Novice Teacher H</td>
<td>2018</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Kindergarten/1st grade</td>
<td>School B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Novice Teacher I</td>
<td>2018</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4th grade</td>
<td>School C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Novice Teacher J</td>
<td>2018</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1st grade</td>
<td>School C</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Role of the Researcher

In order to minimize researcher bias, bracketing out of the research was necessary to focus on novice teachers' lived experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Setting aside personal and professional experiences was vital to elicit new ideas, thoughts, and feelings from a novice teacher perspective. The practice of reflexive journaling to reflect on data and the comparisons of novice teachers’ experiences helped to gain a deeper understanding of the data (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The educational background of the researcher included 13 years of serving in an elementary school setting as a teacher, instructional reading coach, reading interventionist, assistant principal, school principal, and regional assistant principal/reading specialist. Bracketing aims to approach the phenomenon from the participants' lived experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Bracketing of "preconceived experiences" (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p.314) focused the study on the novice teachers' experiences during the data analysis process. During the interview sessions, to maximize the focus on novice teachers' information, the sharing of personal experiences as a novice teacher, or as an administrator working with novice teachers, was prohibited (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Measures for Ethical Protection

Ethical considerations within a phenomenological approach warranted protections for novice teachers and guided the handling of the interview process and data analysis. A standard form provided novice teachers with the ethical behaviors and considerations the researcher would abide by throughout the dissertation study (Creswell & Poth, 2018). A secured consent form provided novice teachers with information about the study. Unique labeling of participants prevented the use of novice teachers’ names and protected their identification during data display. The unique labeling facilitated confidentiality and anonymity throughout the interview.
and data collection process. Interview recordings from a voice recorder app used to capture the novice teachers' responses were secured on an external hard drive to measure ethical protection.

For anonymity purposes, the schools’ names referred to in this study were School A, B, and C. Novice teachers’ information came from the selected school district's Director of Human Services and the Human Resource Supervisor of Evaluations. The Human Resource Supervisor provided a spreadsheet of novice teachers assigned to Title I schools, including the school number, school name, first and last name of the teacher, job description, years of experience, category, principal name, and principal position. Principals at Schools A, B, and C remained unaware of novice teachers participating in the study.

**Research Questions**

According to Joyner et al. (2018), a qualitative study provides an opportunity for a researcher to apply a phenomenological perspective focused on participants’ experiences. The following research questions guided the phenomenology study:

1. What are the perceptions of elementary school novice teachers regarding instructional coaching received during the first year of teaching?

2. What are the lived experiences of novice teachers who receive instructional coaching in reading?

For organizational purposes, the two research questions guided the explanation of data collection and data analysis (Joyner et al., 2018). Research questions were aligned to the seven open-ended interview questions during the data collection period to yield answers from novice teachers related to their lived experiences with instructional coaching support (Joyner et al., 2018). Interview question numbers one, two, and six asked novice teachers to describe their experience as a first-year teacher and aligned to research question number two. Interview
question numbers three, four, five, and seven asked novice teachers to share their thoughts and feelings about instructional coaching support and aligned with research question number one.

**Data Collection**

*Instruments Used in Data Collection*

The data collection instrument used for the study involved an interview guide with seven pre-determined questions (Appendix A) and a digital recording device. Interview guides and recording devices are appropriate instruments for the qualitative study's data collection process (Joyner et al., 2018). The interview guide was the primary instrument used for collecting data in this phenomenology study (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Follow-up questions elicited additional details and explanations when needed. Five novice teachers with previous experience receiving instructional coaching support during the first year of teaching represented the sample size. The interviews lasted from 8 to 13 minutes in length per participant. The interview data was incorporated into the study to describe the perceptions novice teachers had about instructional coaches during the early stages of teaching reading in an elementary school setting.

**Validity**

Phenomenological techniques for analyzing the data consisted of organizing, taking notes, themeing the data, and visualizing the data throughout the data collection and analysis process (Creswell & Poth, 2018). To ensure the validity of the data collected, the researcher used a voice recording device app to capture the details of the novice teachers’ answers to the seven interview questions. The novice teachers provided detailed reflections on experiences as a first-year teacher. Novice teachers verified interview transcripts for accuracy as a form of member checking (Saldaña, 2016). Novice Teacher F provided clarification on some of the initial responses during the transcription review, and the researcher made a note of the corrections once
Novice Teacher F returned the transcript. Common qualitative strategies, such as member checking, structural and in vivo coding cycles, including textual and structural descriptions from novice teachers' interviews, strengthened the phenomenology study's validity (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

**Reliability**

Procedures to establish reliability of this qualitative study involved using structural and in vivo coding, developing a code list and a codebook for the examination of codes applied to the interview transcripts (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Developed using an Excel spreadsheet, the codebook provided information in accordance to Creswell and Poth’s (2018) criteria to support a thorough analysis for understanding and defining parameters for each code. Relevant codes for each novice teacher are listed in the codebook including name of the code, definition of the code, when to use the code, novice teacher’s quote from the interview transcript, page number, research questions aligned with the specific code, and ultimately, the theme that aligned with the code. The development of a pivot table helped to group the data in a meaningful way. The pivot table supported the organization of each of the columns to allow for summarizing, sorting, and reorganizing the codes, and information related to the codes, to determine the emerging themes.

**Procedures**

Southeastern University’s Institutional Review Board (IRB), and the selected school district's Accountability and Assessment Department, approved the research request. An email sent to the human resource department requesting a list of novice teachers at Title I schools began the initial data collection process. Novice teachers who met the interview criteria received an email to participate in the interview process (Appendix C). Based on phenomenological
procedures, the following framework for data collection and data analysis occurred throughout the study:

- Create and organize data files.
- Read through text, make margin notes, and form initial codes.
- Describe personal experience through epoche.
- Describe the essence of the phenomenon.
- Develop significant statements.
- Group statements into meaning units.
- Develop a textual description- “what happened.”
- Develop a structural description- “how the phenomenon was experienced.”
- Develop the “essence,” using a composite description (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p.199).

The sample size included novice teachers with less than three years of teaching experience and shared the experience of working with an instructional coach in the reading content area. The interviews lasted 8 to 13 minutes per participant. Participants chose the interview location to maintain a safe and secure atmosphere. Interviews occurred in August, two weeks into the 2020-2021 school year. Recorded and transcribed interview responses reflected statements verbatim from each novice teacher. Novice teachers reviewed interview responses to verify the transcript's accuracy. Data retrieved from responses revealed common themes and patterns (Creswell & Poth, 2018). A secured consent form provided novice teachers with information about the study and the use of interview responses during the study. Data displayed by unique labels prevented the use of novice teachers' names and protected the identification of the novice teachers. Confidentiality and anonymity existed throughout the interview and data collection process. Annotation of transcriptions involved labeling keywords and phrases.
throughout the coding process. Themes determined by analyzing the novice teachers' responses derived from grouped and categorized data.

**Methods to Address Assumption of Generalizability**

Data collection was limited to novice teachers at Title I elementary schools located within one state and one school district. The sample size was limited to novice teachers willing to participate in the study. This study focused on novice teachers' perceptions and their lived experiences. The study did not assess novice teachers' instructional effectiveness or instructional coaches' ability to improve novice teachers' instructional practices. The characteristics of the study participants limit the generalizability of this study. The study population included novice teachers at Title I schools. The generalization of results to other novice teachers outside of Title I schools based on a larger sample size may occur.

**Data Analysis**

The phenomenological study required a systematic process to glean the essence of the novice teachers' experience of the phenomenon (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The novice teachers' interviews amassed a large amount of "raw" (Joyner et al., 2018, p. 217) data during the data collection phase. A phenomenological approach applied to the novice teachers' interview transcripts extracted broader information and relevant statements. The data was then analyzed, coded, and reduced to categories based on commonality to identify patterns in novice teachers' perceptions and lived experiences of instructional coaching support (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Saldana, 2016)). Multiple data analysis of the interview transcripts aided in the identification of the themes (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Creswell & Poth (2018) stated data analysis involves a “interrelated” (p. 185) process throughout the duration of a research project, referred to as “the data analysis spiral” (p. 185).
This phenomenological study incorporated the analytic process to determine the essence of the phenomenon (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The organization of the data included converting the digitally recorded interview into transcript form and securing the files on an external hard drive (Creswell & Poth, 2018). To gain a holistic perspective of each transcript, memoing occurred during the first several readings of the five interview transcripts. Notes written in the margins of each transcript helped to capture initial thoughts about the data. Prior to applying coding to specific sections of the data, memoing resulted in a deeper understanding of the novice teachers’ responses (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Upon further reflection of the data, the use of in vivo coding created the foundation for more in-depth analysis based on the novice teachers' reflections and thoughts. In vivo coding derived from the novice teachers’ words or phrases that were expressed during the interview. The in vivo codes supported evidence of the novice teachers’ lived experiences during the first year of teaching as they received instructional coaching support. The in vivo coding was used to “prioritize and honor the participant’s voices” (Saldaña, 2016, p. 106) and were direct quotes from the participant (Creswell & Poth, 2018). During the second coding cycle, codes associated with both research questions required additional condensing and grouping to reduce the data into categories (Saldaña, 2016). The most relevant codes were transferred to a codebook to describe the “distinctive boundaries” (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 190) and role of each code. Additional analysis of final codes within the codebook for the phenomenological study reflected novice teachers' responses across all transcripts (Saldaña, 2016). Classifying the codes to identify the themes required the use of the memoing, notes, and quotes captured during the initial process of coding the data (Creswell & Poth, 2018). A visualization of the data further supported the development of the themes based on patterns and outliers (Creswell & Poth, 2018).
Summary

This study's interview data is the central focus of the phenomenological approach (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The research design, data collection, procedures, and data analysis provided the researcher insight into the novice teachers' lived experiences with instructional coach support during the early years of teaching. The aligned research questions guided the sorting and categorizing of the data collected from the seven interview questions (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Saldaña, 2016). The coding process was necessary to breakdown raw data into units of information for analysis (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

The labeling of novice teachers with unique identifiers was evidence of ethical protection measures implemented during the interview process. Additional measures taken included the participants verifying transcripts for accuracy. Bracketing out of the research ensured the neutrality when asking questions. The first coding cycle applied in vivo coding, and the second coding cycle focused on themeing the data (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Saldaña, 2016). The synthesized data identified meaningful connections between the codes and categories. A visual representation of the themeing process showed codes developed and grouped based on the novice teachers' responses about instructional coaching support (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Chapter 4 addresses the data analysis and the results of the study.
IV. RESULTS

This qualitative phenomenological study aimed to explore the perceptions that novice teachers develop while experiencing instructional coaching support. A fundamental part of the phenomenological framework was to derive meaning from data collected and analyzed through a systematic coding process (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The examination of lived experiences to determine common patterns among the five novice teachers experiencing the phenomenon remained a priority throughout the study. Data organized by research questions and "textual and structural descriptions" (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 239) validated the findings.

Research Questions

The interview guide (Appendix A) included seven open-ended interview questions aligned to two research questions, which guided this study:

1. What are the perceptions of elementary school novice teachers regarding instructional coaching received during the first year of teaching?

2. What are the lived experiences of novice teachers who receive instructional coaching in reading?

To answer the research questions, four interview questions aligned with research question 1, and three interview questions aligned with research question 2. Organizing a study that contains at least two research questions is an appropriate methodology (Joyner et al., 2018). To answer the two research questions, the data analysis involved coding, categorizing, and themeing the data. The coding cycles focused specifically on the lived experiences of the novice teachers to determine the relationship among coded data.
Initial findings in the data reflected four, out of the five novice teachers, indicated that instructional coaching support was integral to their ability to engage and enable their students' academic progress effectively. One of the novice teachers did not have lived experiences with instructional coaching, because the school did not have an instructional coach. Novice Teacher I reflected on the support received from grade-level peers. Figure 5 shows a data display that provides the 18 codes assigned to instructional coaching support statements, along with codes associated with peer instructional support. Based on similarities found in novice teachers’ responses, codes are grouped under three categories.

**Figure 3**

*Data Display*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interactions and Outcomes of Instructional Coaching Support</th>
<th>Instructional Coaching Components</th>
<th>Peer Instructional Support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Attributed Success</td>
<td>• Collaborative Environment</td>
<td>• Attributed Success to Peers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Growth Opportunity</td>
<td>• Increase in Confidence</td>
<td>• Grade-Level Lesson Planning with Peers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Increase in Confidence</td>
<td>• Lesson Planning</td>
<td>• Peer Coaching/Modeling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Teacher Retention</td>
<td>• Models Expectations</td>
<td>• Peer Collaboration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Transfer of Knowledge</td>
<td>• Observation and Feedback</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Build Rapport</td>
<td>• Build Rapport</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Knowledgeable Resource</td>
<td>• Knowledgeable Resource</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. A display of 18 codes associated with instructional coaching support with four outlier codes associated with peer instructional support codes grouped into three categories based on commonalities across novice teachers’ responses.
Research Question 1

What are the perceptions of elementary school novice teachers regarding instructional coaching received during the first year of teaching?

In this study, four out of the five novice teachers experienced direct instructional support from an instructional coach and perceived that the instructional coaching support aided in their success as a first-year teacher. The instructional coach was perceived as a knowledgeable resource that helped meet their professional needs throughout the first year. Novice teachers' perception of success stemmed from feeling that the instructional coaches provided growth opportunities to improve teaching practices. Novice teachers expressed they could transfer the knowledge received into the classroom to support students, which increased teacher confidence. Novice teachers perceived that the instructional coach developed a positive rapport by answering and researching questions and remaining accessible to address their needs. Novice Teacher J formed a level of comfort with the instructional coach and affirmed, "She really was there for me." Novice Teacher G developed a reliance on the instructional coaches: “I mostly rely on them. I don't know how they do what they do but they do.” Novice Teacher H stated, “Any questions I needed the site coaches to answer they would give me a response. If they didn’t know it, they would go research it and contact other people that would have the answer for math or reading.” Novice teachers considered instructional coaches' feedback as positive feedback with strategies for improving lesson plans and instruction.

Four of the novice teachers described perceptions about the instructional coaching support received throughout the first year, specifically in growth opportunities. Novice teachers felt they received opportunities to practice instructional skills, which increased their teacher confidence. Novice Teacher G stated, "I think that instructional coaching is good on classroom
management and learning." Novice Teacher F expressed, "I am always excited to work with coaches. I think they have a special expertise in coaching teachers to be good teachers to the students." Novice Teacher J explained, "She helped me understand, like the diagnostic tests and what exactly that meant and where to go moving forward." Novice Teacher J tied her overall success to the support of the instructional coach, "My data looked pretty good, and as the year went on, I was more and more confident." Novice Teacher F perceived her success was in connection with the instructional coach support she received: "I would say there is a strong correlation. It has helped me with my confidence as a teacher."

Although four of the novice teachers in this study perceived the instructional coach as beneficial for their growth as a teacher, Novice Teacher I attributed her success to her grade-level peers and teammates' instructional support, because she did not have an instructional coach the first year of teaching. Novice teachers' perceptions during the first year of teaching about the support from an instructional coach may increase teacher retention due to teachers identifying personal and professional growth. After experiencing instructional coaching support, novice teachers may transition into the next school year with a more robust understanding of instructional practices and their role as teachers.

Research Question 2
What are the lived experiences of novice teachers who receive instructional coaching in reading?

Instructional coaches modeled and provided support on lesson delivery and expectations for instructional practices. Throughout the coaching process, the instructional coach built a rapport with novice teachers while planning instructional lessons. Instructional coaches also observed the novice teachers and provided feedback aligned with improving instruction in the classroom. Novice teachers lived experiences existed within a collaborative environment, which
supported individual teacher needs. Novice Teacher F shared, "My reading coach was a lifesaver" and was "wonderful." Novice Teacher H declared, "We have really good site coaches," and affirmed, "It was a pleasant experience." Novice Teacher G stated, "I feel really positive and excited about professional development."

The collaborative environment supported the novice teachers in gaining teacher insight through hands-on experiences with instructional practices. Novice Teacher F experienced working at three different schools during her first year of teaching and reflected on experiences with instructional coaching support at one of the schools: "When I was at my first school, we would meet after school once a week to go over lesson plans or things that we could do to improve our lessons." Novice Teacher G recalled instructional coaches modeling a lesson: "Any time I've had a weakness or anything else that I could work on, they were very quick to model." Novice Teacher H stated, "They come and model, so we are able to see where we need improvement." According to the four novice teachers' responses, the guidance and support from the instructional coaches equipped the novice teachers with the necessary teaching skills to meet the students' needs. The collaborative interactions reached beyond that of the instructional coaches. Novice teachers felt any feedback received during the first year helped improve instructional practice in the classroom. Novice Teacher H experienced positive feedback from the instructional coach, assistant principal, and principal. Novice Teacher J echoed similar sentiments when she shared the experience of receiving timely feedback addressing instructional delivery misconceptions.

The data further revealed grade-level colleagues and teammates were instrumental in a novice teacher's instructional success in the absence of an instructional coach. Although all five novice teachers experienced support from colleagues, Novice Teacher I described lived
experiences that involved support from only grade-level teammates. Initial experiences were a "little bit of a shock" and "overwhelming" for Novice Teacher I, but she felt the overall support she received "exceeded my expectations." These experiences mirrored the instructional support elements described by the other four novice teachers who had an instructional coach experience. Novice Teacher I explained working in a peer coaching and modeling capacity: "I just had my teammate, which we would combine classes when that was possible, and you would just kind of go through the lesson with my class or the first round." Relying on teammates was vital to Novice Teacher I: "The teamwork aspect of it kind of helps when I'm not meeting the students' needs." Novice Teacher I concluded that "having a great support system made all of the difference that first year." Peer collaboration was a shared lived experience among the five novice teachers and emerged as another form of instructional support.

Themes

Creswell & Poth (2018) asserted the need to transition from coded data to themes within a qualitative study to gain a shared perspective during the analysis. Two themes emerged from the coded data to represent novice teachers shared lived experiences with the phenomenon. Those themes are discussed in the following paragraphs.

First-Year Success Attributed to Instructional Support

Novice teachers attributed first-year success to the instructional coaches for possessing the ability to develop the novice teachers’ instructional practices to impact their students. The collapsed codes, which supported the emergence of the theme, were: (a) attributed success, (b) growth opportunity, (c) increase in confidence, (d) teacher retention, (e) transfer of knowledge, (f) build rapport, and (g) knowledgeable resource. Verbatim statements by novice teachers support the theme. Novice Teacher G stated, “So any gains that I’ve made over the past year
would be due to instructional support.” Novice Teacher F recalled a growth opportunity she experienced: "I would see her model it, and that allowed me to replicate that in my teaching style to better meet the needs of my students." Novice Teacher G considered the instructional coach dependable, especially in knowledge related to the novice teacher's instructional weaknesses. Novice Teacher H found the instructional coach knowledgeable and helpful when modeling lessons and answering questions. Novice Teacher J referred to the help she received from the instructional coach to develop student reading centers and professional development on the students' standards throughout the year. Lacking a college of education background, Novice Teachers F and G described the influence the instructional coach had on their success and confidence as they worked through the learning curves of being an educator. Overall, novice teachers attributed their first-year success to the instructional coaches' competency, professionalism, and the ability to improve their instructional skills during their first year of teaching.

This study identified the instructional support received from grade-level peers in the absence of an instructional coach to support the teachers' success. Grade-level lesson planning and feedback provided Novice Teacher I with helpful ideas, and the novice teacher's end of year success attributed to the peer coaching support received: "I attribute that to test scores that my students received, feedback from my peers, overall felt like a really good successful year."

**A Collaborative Work Environment as a Form of Support**

Instructional coaches utilized various coaching components as they worked with novice teachers during their first year of teaching. By incorporating instructional coaching components, novice teachers experienced one-on-one support, which provided collaborative opportunities for the instructional coach to focus on each teacher's specific needs. This theme emerged from the
responses of the four novice teachers who shared lived experiences with (a) coaches building rapport, (b) increases in confidence to replicate instructional strategies, (c) relying on the instructional coach as a knowledgeable resource, (d) lesson planning, (e) receiving observations and feedback to improve instructional practice, (f) working in a supportive and collaborative work environment, and (g) coaches modeling expectations for instructional practices. When describing the work environment that existed to support novice teachers, Novice Teacher F noted, "So everyone was willing to help me, and they understood the difficulties I may be facing. Also, the administration is very supportive of new teachers." Novice Teacher F also mentioned her overall experience with the instructional coaches, “They worked pretty closely with me, and I really valued their expertise and patience.”

Novice Teacher H stated, “On a professional level, they not only gave me feedback, but they gave me strategies or ideas on how to better structure your lesson plans or whatever, they always found a way to improve my instruction.” Support with evaluation preparation was an experience Novice Teacher J indicated, "Whenever we have our evaluations, she would sit down with me, and she'd run through my lesson and make sure I was covering everything.” Novice Teacher J also referred to the relationship she had with the instructional coaches in her school: “I know instructional coaches one-on-one.” From Novice Teacher F’s perspective, “A coach should work alongside the teacher to ensure a lesson is engaging and rigorous for students. Sometimes, novice teachers, like myself, have difficulty with these elements of a lesson plan.”

Peer-to-peer coaching was a lived experience shared among all five novice teachers and emerged as another form of instructional support. However, Novice Teacher I was the only teacher without an instructional coach and, instead, was supported by the administrators and grade-level peers. Novice Teacher I described the experience of exchanging best teaching
practices with veteran grade-level teammates. The instructional support from grade-level peers existed within a collaborative work environment with evidence of modeling, lesson planning, and feedback, similar to coaching components experienced by the four novice teachers.

**Evidence of Quality**

This phenomenological study used a qualitative method outlined by Creswell and Poth (2018). First, the researcher bracketed by explaining personal and professional experiences with the phenomenon to focus on the novice teachers' experiences with instructional coaching support. Next, novice teachers' statements about lived experiences were compared through "horizontalization" (p.201) and further analyzed to reduce the information to significant statements, then categorized into groups based on commonalities (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Two overall themes emerged from the data by interpreting and associating each cluster's meaning. Then, "textural descriptions" using "verbatim examples" (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 201) explained what the novice teachers experienced, strengthening the credibility of the study. Examples of significant statements and the constructed meanings are shown in Table 6, entitled "Significant Statements from Transcripts and Meanings." A detailed account of "structural descriptions"(Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 201) revealed how the novice teachers experienced the phenomenon. Detailed significant descriptions show evidence for the two emerging themes.
Table 2

Significant Statements from Transcripts and Meanings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme 1</th>
<th>Significant Statement</th>
<th>Formulated Meanings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I mostly rely on them. I do not know how they do what they do, but they do. Anytime I've had a weakness or anything else that I could work on, they were very quick to model.</td>
<td>Novice teachers find instructional coaches knowledgeable and dependable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I don't know how successful I would have been without her.</td>
<td>Instructional coaches influence novice teachers’ perceptions of how successful they are at the end of their first year and may lead to teachers’ willingness to teach another year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I am always excited to work with coaches. I think they have a special expertise in coaching teachers to be good teachers to the students.</td>
<td>Instructional coaching supports the development of teachers and when teachers are effective in the use of instructional practices, students can achieve their academic goals.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme 2</th>
<th>Significant Statement</th>
<th>Formulated Meanings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I was put on a team of six people. And my co-teacher and I were departmentalized; it was her first-year teaching as well. It was nice to go through it together. And we are still great friends. We still teach next to each other.</td>
<td>Support from colleagues within the work environment may be beneficial to novice teachers’ transition into the classroom.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I had a lot of support from the admin staff as well as my team. And so having all that support, I mean, it’s overwhelming to be a first-year teacher anyway. So having that support system definitely helped me grow.</td>
<td>Support from essential roles within a school may help novice teachers get through first-year challenges.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A coach should work alongside the teacher to ensure a lesson is engaging and rigorous for students. Sometimes, novice teachers, like myself, have difficulty with these elements of a lesson plan.</td>
<td>Novice teachers lived experiences should include one-on-one experiences with instructional coaches to improve instructional practices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>It was definitely trial and error, but a whole lot of things that did not necessarily work; I was able to go back with my team again, being so supportive, I was able to find different ways that worked for my kids.</td>
<td>Instructional coaching may occur within a peer-to-peer model when grade level teachers collaborate and support one another with instructional practices.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Triangulation of the data established validity and credibility; the researcher triangulated the data, which helped to "establish credibility" (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 256). Frequent communication occurred with the dissertation chair, methodologist, and the assigned third reader.
to further review research activities, interview processes, data analysis procedures, and member checking. The revision of errors based on the committee's feedback was ongoing (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

**Summary**

The results presented in Chapter 4 provide evidence of novice teachers' lived experiences when they received instructional coaching support. The data analysis process involved a phenomenology approach and an in-depth examination of the five novice teachers' responses involving lived experiences with the phenomenon. Novice teachers' perceptions described specific feelings and thoughts about the first year of teaching. After coding, patterns were found that supported the essence of the novice teachers' lived experiences and led to six themes. Textual and structural descriptions revealed novice teachers' perceptions of instructional coaches. Chapter 5 will discuss and interpret the results from this phenomenology study and provide the study's limitations. The chapter will contain recommendations as it relates to novice teachers and instructional coaching support.
V. DISCUSSION

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore the perceptions novice teachers develop while experiencing instructional coaching support. A phenomenological study involves studying lived experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This study examined the common themes derived from novice teachers’ interactions and experiences with an instructional coach during the first year of teaching reading standards. Novice teachers were defined as teachers with less than three years of experience in a grade level or content subject area. For this study, an instructional coach was defined as a school-based or district-level coach who observes, models, co-teaches, and provides feedback to teachers in a reading content area.

Method of Data Collection

A phenomenological approach describes the perceptions novice teachers have about instructional coaches during the early stages of teaching reading in an elementary school setting. The phenomenological research design consisted of collecting and organizing data from interview participants to develop themes that described the phenomenon (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The purpose of the data collection was to discover emerging themes in the study. The phenomenological approach described common perceptions among novice teachers based on their lived experiences with instructional coaching support (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

The selected school district granted permission to conduct the qualitative research study. The qualitative data collection instrument was an interview guide (Appendix A) with seven open-ended questions. Interviews were recorded with a digital device and stored on a secured external hard drive (Joyner et al., 2018). After sending email invitations (Appendix C) to 31
eligible candidates, a sample size of five novice teachers in Title I elementary schools participated in the study. Novice teachers in their second and third year of teaching shared lived experiences with the phenomenon. Participants signed a secured consent form to participate in the study.

**Interpretation of the Findings**

Four novice teachers shared lived experiences that reflected learning strategies employed by the instructional coaches; however, Novice Teacher I’s lived experiences occurred with grade-level peers in the absence of an instructional coach. The findings in this study derived from interview data collected from all five novice teachers to answer the two research questions guiding the study.

**Research Question 1:**

*What are the perceptions of elementary school novice teachers regarding instructional coaching received during the first year of teaching?*

A knowledgeable, resourceful, and positive instructional coach can influence a novice teacher’s professional growth and confidence, while positively affecting instructional practices in the classroom. This study is evidence that a first-year teacher's lived experiences are memorable. When asked about their first-year experiences, the novice teachers recalled strong emotions, self-doubt, frustrations, thoughts of inadequacy, and challenges with acclimating into the role as a teacher. Based on the evidence from the novice teachers’ responses in this study, the participants perceived the knowledge gained in the area of instructional practices with the instructional coach, or through peer-to-peer collaboration, as valuable. The novice teachers also valued their reliance on the instructional coach as they navigated professional expectations. For instance, Novice Teacher F expressed that she felt excited to work with her instructional coach and valued the “input” and “guidance” she received from the instructional coach during her first year.
Novice Teacher G felt good about the positive feedback, and thought the feedback was helpful because of her desire to be successful as a teacher. Providing ways to improve instructional practice through research-based strategies was “impressive” to Novice Teacher H when she received feedback and support for lesson planning from her instructional coach. Valuing the constructive criticism and feedback from her grade-level peers came easy for Novice Teacher I, because she was "open to feedback" and shared that her experiences were positive. Novice Teacher J felt like her instructional coach was there to help her become a "better teacher" whenever the instructional coach provided feedback to clear up misconceptions to improve the instruction delivered to her students. Based on the data collected from novice teachers in this study, perceptions about instructional coaching support developed during the interactions novice teachers had with instructional coaches, as they transitioned into their role as a teacher.

District and school leaders need to understand how novice teachers gained their confidence through experiences with instructional coaches. Novice teachers in this study attributed first-year success to instructional coaching support or peer-to-peer collaboration when they experienced professional growth through coaches and peers modeling and planning lessons with them. Furthermore, novice teachers experienced an increase in confidence and professional growth when transferring the instructional practice skills to their classroom. Novice teachers in this study attributed this success to the instructional support received by their coaches and/or peers.

Research Question 2:

What are the lived experiences of novice teachers who receive instructional coaching in reading?

Novice teachers’ lived experiences provided additional insight to perceptions associated with instructional coaching support and perceptions relating to transitioning into the role of a
teacher. Awareness of novice teachers’ initial lived experiences was vital to successfully implementing transitional procedures to support novice teachers at the start of their teaching journey. Novice teachers in this study described feeling “initial shock” during the first semester of teaching and feeling “settled” later in the school year. Novice Teacher F transferred to three different elementary schools within one school year and described her first-year experience as “unique” and “challenging.” She felt the first two schools’ administrators lacked patience with developing her as a teacher before transferring her to another school. Novice Teacher G transitioned into the field of education as an alternative certification teacher, which increased feelings of inadequacy, as she described feeling like a "fish out of water." She explained the difficulty in navigating the certification process during the first year. The first semester of teaching for Novice Teacher H felt as she was on a “learning curve” as she dealt with changes in her grade level and trying to determine instructional strategies that helped students in the exceptional student education program. Novice Teacher I felt that the instructional support system in place as she transitioned from college to working in a Title I school made all the difference her first year. Similarly, Novice Teacher J perceived the initial transition to teaching as challenging but felt settled after adjusting to a new school district. Based on the novice teachers' responses, providing instructional coaching support during the transition period was beneficial for supporting novice teachers with a smooth transition and reducing first-year challenges, such as feelings of ambiguity and anxiety-filled thoughts about expectations as a teacher.

Novice teachers expressed experiencing reduced levels of anxiety and increased levels of confidence after interacting with instructional coaches. The support from the instructional coaches involved side-by-side instructional coaching within the first semester of teaching. Experiencing the first semester of a school year can create feelings and thoughts of uncertainty
and instability. Novice teachers needed answers to questions about pre-planning activities, such as setting up a classroom, setting up a grade book, developing lesson plans for the first week of instruction, determining classroom management rituals and routines, and managing administrative duties and paperwork. How novice teachers in this study perceived the support they received during the first semester of teaching played a role in effectively transferring instructional practices into the classroom. Instructional coaches became a valuable resource for novice teachers as they transitioned into their role as a teacher. Instructional coaches supported novice teachers as they navigated teacher responsibilities, such as managing classroom behavior, lesson planning, communicating with parents, collaborating with peers, and managing the administrative duties of a teacher.

**Study Limitations**

Data collection and analysis in this study were limited to novice teachers at Title I elementary schools located in the same school district in the state of Florida. The sample size was limited to the five female novice teachers willing to participate in the phenomenological study. According to Creswell and Poth (2018), a sample size with less than ten participants for a qualitative research study on individuals is acceptable. The data collected were only from the novice teachers' interviews. This study focused on novice teachers' perceptions of their lived experiences. The study did not assess novice teachers' instructional effectiveness or evaluation rating. Prior experience of the researcher was omitted entirely through member checking during the transcribing of the interview responses. Setting aside related experiences proved vital to elicit new ideas, thoughts, and feelings from the novice teacher's perspective; therefore, the practice of reflexive journaling to reflect on data and comparisons of the novice teacher experiences helped to decrease bias (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The extraction of textual and structural descriptions
from the novice teacher responses helped to increase the credibility and validity of the data analysis and interpretations within the study (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

**Implications for Future Practice**

Novice teachers enter the field of education with a desire to succeed; however, they possess a range of undeveloped instructional skills and strategies to meet students' needs (Curry et al., 2016). The instructional demands of teaching and managing professional duties during the early stages of a teacher’s career can be an overwhelming experience leading to novice teachers resigning (Bruno et al., 2019). Implications for practice exist at the district and school levels. For school districts to address teacher attrition, a focus on the role of instructional coaches may be critical in reducing barriers to novice teachers' success within the first year of teaching and beyond. School districts should continue to allocate resources for instructional coaching support, specifically in Title I schools, where a higher percentage of novice teachers work, ensuring allocation of instructional coaches in every school is essential when supporting novice teachers' needs (Bruno et al., 2019). Based on the novice teachers' perceptions, the study confirmed that novice teachers found the instructional coaching support a critical part of becoming equipped with the instructional teaching strategies needed to be successful. Two themes emerged from the study based on the novice teachers’ lived experiences. Common themes among novice teachers’ lived experiences and perceptions found in the study included (1) first-year success attributed to instructional support and (2) a collaborative work environment existed as a form of support.

At the school level, an intentional alignment of instructional coaching support is needed to prevent the development of poor instructional practices in the classroom within the first semester of teaching. The novice teachers in this study found value from the side-by-side instructional coaching. The novice teachers perceived support from the instructional coach as a positive experience and felt confident in transferring the knowledge gained to instructional
practices in the classroom. The perceptions derived from how the novice teachers felt when they worked with the instructional coach. School leaders should prioritize instructional coaching support for novice teachers to ensure engagement in instructional practices and to ensure novice teachers know what is expected of them in the classroom as they support their students.

Novice teachers in this study also benefited from instructional support received from other colleagues such as administrators and grade-level peers, creating a collaborative work environment. The collaborative working environment met the professional needs of the novice teachers through incorporating professional development, modeling instructional expectations, observing lessons, and providing feedback, lesson planning, and serving as a knowledgeable resource for teachers’ questions and concerns, as novice teachers transitioned into their roles as teachers. Novice teachers in the study perceived support from grade-level peers as valuable collaboration when discussing instructional strategies and modeling lessons for one another to determine the best approach to support students’ needs.

**Recommendations for Future Practice**

Based on the themes that emerged from the study, school leaders should establish and implement an instructional coaching framework to support novice teachers during the first semester of the school year. Novice teachers in this study attributed their first-year success, an increase in teacher confidence, and knowledge gained, to the instructional support received during the first semester of teaching. The findings suggested school leaders should consider having instructional coaches implement an instructional coaching cycle with novice teachers. Kraft et al. (2018) described an example of instructional coaching cycle activities recommended to support novice teachers:

(a) individualized—coaching sessions are one-on-one; (b) intensive—coaches and teachers interact at least every couple of weeks; (c) sustained—teachers receive
coaching over an extended period of time; (d) context specific—teachers are coached on their practices within the context of their own classroom; and (e) focused—coaches work with teachers to engage in deliberate practice of specific skills. (p. 553)

Novice teachers in this study identified instructional coaching cycle activities when they described their lived experiences with receiving instructional support. An instructional coaching cycle provides the hands-on experiential learning opportunity for novice teachers to develop and improve pedagogical skills (Reshmad’sa & Vijayakumari, 2018). Learmond (2017) attested that instructional coaches should use a framework when coaching to ensure the interaction between coach and teacher is collaborative and structured. The instructional coaching cycle framework provides a side-by-side coaching experience, as well as professional development activities that allow for debriefing and reflecting on instructional practices to ensure novice teachers can identify instructional strengths and areas of improvement in a collaborative format.

**Recommendations for Further Research**

This study's results provided recommendations for further research to add to the body of knowledge regarding perceptions novice teachers have about instructional coaching support in the area of reading. The following recommendations are suggested for the selected school district and outside school districts with instructional coaching in Title I schools:

1. Leaders at the district level should replicate the current study to include perceptions of elementary novice teachers who receive instructional coaching support in the math subject area.

2. Leaders at the district level should replicate the current study to include perceptions of secondary novice teachers who receive instructional coaching support in the reading subject area.
3. School leaders should implement a study on the perceptions novice teachers develop when participating in an instructional coaching cycle. The instructional coaching cycle should incorporate a cycle of goal setting, planning, implementing, assessing, and reflecting on instruction within the first semester of the school year, as outlined in this study's conceptual framework.

4. School leaders should modify this study's research design and analyze first-semester evaluation ratings of novice teachers to determine the relationship of evaluation ratings to student achievement.

Summary

This qualitative method design with a phenomenological approach examined the perceptions and lived experiences of novice teachers who encountered the phenomenon of receiving instructional coaching support during the first year of teaching. Findings from the research study supported previous literature in that, providing support structures that incorporate professional learning communities for teachers to experience instructional coaching support and peer-to-peer interactions reduces novice teachers' chances of leaving the teaching field early in their career (Ingersoll, 2012). An analysis of the study indicated that novice teachers perceived their first year of teaching resulted in success due to the instructional coach support. Novice teachers perceived that a collaborative work environment with instructional coaches and grade-level peers supported their overall professional growth during the first year of teaching. The data revealed that novice teachers’ lived experiences with instructional coaches set the foundation for their first year of teaching. Novice teachers’ perceived first-year success came from instructional coaches providing growth opportunities for learning and implementing instructional practices, which increased teacher confidence. Novice teachers found success in transferring knowledge to improve instructional practices in the classroom and perceived that the instructional coach
successfully built rapport through collaboration during lesson planning, modeling, observing lessons, and providing feedback.

Overall, novice teachers’ lived experiences formed the basis for the perceptions developed throughout their first year of teaching. Lived experiences reflected both instructional coach and grade-level peer support to help novice teachers utilize the instructional practices in the classroom to support students’ academic success. In terms of practical application, this study suggested that novice teachers should transition into the role of a teacher by experiencing an instructional framework within the first semester of teaching that exposes them to a systematic approach to instructional practices to meet the needs of their students. The instructional framework recommended in this study is an instructional coaching cycle of goal setting, planning, implementing, assessing, and reflecting on instruction. Implementing support structures for novice teachers during the first semester of teaching will aid in reducing first-year teacher anxiety.

Strategically developing a collaborative work environment for novice teachers can serve as another support structure. Professional learning communities should be prioritized to provide novice teachers opportunities to collaborate with instructional coaches and grade-level peers, as they develop effective teaching skills during the first year. The collaborative experiences provided novice teachers with a different form of instructional support involving collaboration with peers within the same grade level or content area. Novice teachers' lived experiences and perceptions about instructional coaching support received during their first year of teaching are vital to the teacher's longevity in the field of education.
REFERENCES


https://doi.org.seu.idm.oclc.org/10.1080/00405841.2016.1241947


APPENDICES
Appendix A

Interview Guide*

**Interview Protocol:** Responses of novice teachers’ experiences related to working with instructional coaches in the reading content area within Title I elementary schools.

**Interviewer:**

**Interviewee:**

**Date:**

**Time:**

**Location:** Phone

**Interview Questions:**

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Describe your experience as a first-year teacher.</td>
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<tr>
<td>a.</td>
<td>What grade and subject area did you teach?</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Describe your experience participating in an instructional coaching cycle.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>What are your thoughts about the instructional coaching cycle experience this school year?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>What are your thoughts regarding the instructional support and feedback you received this year?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>How does your success correlate to the support you received this year?</td>
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<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Overall, how do you feel after completing your first year? To what do you attribute these feelings?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>What else would you like to contribute to this important study regarding instructional coaching?</td>
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*The inquires in this guide are descriptive of the information being sought by the researcher and may be modified based upon results.*
Appendix B

Adult Consent to be Interviewed

PROJECT TITLE:
A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY ON NOVICE TEACHERS’ PERCEPTIONS OF INSTRUCTIONAL COACHING SUPPORT

INVESTIGATORS
Principal Investigator: Dr. Nikeshia Leatherwood

PURPOSE
The purpose of this phenomenological study will explore the perceptions novice teachers develop while experiencing instructional coaching support. The project will examine the common themes derived from novice teachers’ interactions and experiences with an instructional coach during the first semester of teaching reading standards.

PROCEDURES
The researcher will contact you to schedule an interview by phone, virtual meeting, or in person. The interview will be audio-recorded, transcribed, and returned to you for validation. The interview will consist of approximately seven questions, with possible follow-up questions, and will not take more than 30 minutes of your time.

RISKS OF PARTICIPATION
There are no known risks to participation in this study. You will not be personally identified in any reports or publications of the results. In addition, any references to you or your school will be recorded so that individuals and schools cannot be identified.

BENEFITS TO PARTICIPATION
Your participation will add to an understanding about novice teachers’ experiences when working with instructional coaches at Title I elementary schools. Data gathered will be informative for other novice teachers working with instructional coaches.

CONFIDENTIALITY
The audio-recordings, transcripts, and notes of this interview will be made available only to the student researcher, primary investigator, and the dissertation committee’s methodologist. Written results will not include information that could identify you. Raw recordings and transcriptions will be stored on a password-protected computer and backed up on a USB drive stored in a locked filing cabinet. Only researchers and individuals responsible for research oversight will have access to the records. Recordings and transcriptions will be destroyed five years after the study has been completed.
CONTACTS
You may contact the researchers should you desire to discuss your participation in the study:
Shameka Brown: 904-588-8010, sjbrown@seu.edu, or Dr. Nikeshia
Leatherwood: nleatherwood@seu.edu.

PARTICIPANT RIGHTS
I understand that my participation is voluntary, that there is no penalty for refusal to participate, and that I am free to withdraw my consent and participation in this project at any time without penalty.

CONSENT DOCUMENTATION
I have read and fully understand this consent form. I sign it freely and voluntarily. A copy of this form will be given to me. I affirm that I am 18 years old or older. I hereby give permission for my participation in this study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Signature of Participant</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<th>Printed Name of Participant</th>
<th>Date</th>
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I certify that I have personally explained this document before requesting that the participant sign it.
Appendix C

Email Request to Participate in a Research Study

Dear Colleague,

I am conducting a research project exploring the lived experiences of novice teachers who have worked with instructional coaches in a Title I elementary school. The purpose of this email is to ask for your participation in this research project. This study has been approved by both Southeastern University and the selected school district’s Accountability and Assessment Department for research requests. If you agree to participate, and are selected, we will arrange a convenient location to conduct the interview. The length of the interview is approximately 30 minutes and can be conducted in a most convenient place for you.

I am interested in your professional experiences and interactions working with an instructional coach in the reading content area as a novice teacher. The interview will be digitally recorded, and the recordings will be transcribed. The recorded interview and the transcription of the interview will be kept in a locked file cabinet for a five-year period. At the end of the period, the material will be erased and shredded and permanently disposed of. No identifying information will be used in any materials created from these interviews.

The information obtained in this study will be published in my dissertation and may appear in journal articles. You are free to decide not to participate or to withdraw at any time without adversely affecting our relationship. Your participation in this research will contribute to the conversation on ways to support novice teachers in order to reduce novice teacher attrition across school districts. Please indicate whether you are interested in participating in this research by contacting me at the contact information below. I look forward to hearing from you and the opportunity to hear about your experience receiving support from an instructional coach as a novice teacher.

Respectfully,
Shameka Brown, Ed.D Candidate
sjbrown@seu.edu
Principal Investigator and Dissertation Chairperson: Dr. Nikeshia Leatherwood
Southeastern University nleatherwood@seu.edu
Appendix D

Southeastern University IRB Approval

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principal Investigator’s Name: Dr. Nikeshia Leatherwood</th>
<th>Today’s Date: 07/11/2020</th>
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<tr>
<td>Co-Investigators: Dr. Janet Deck, Shameka Jean Brown</td>
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</table>

**Project Title:** A Phenomenological Study of Novice Teachers: Perceptions of Instructional Coaching

1. Does the research place subjects at more than minimal risk?  
   - Yes [ ]  
   - No [ ]  
   Minimal risk is defined as the probability and magnitude of harm or discomfort is no greater than that ordinarily encountered in daily life or during routine physical or psychological examination or tests.
   
   Notes:

2. If more than minimal risk, does the merit of the project outweigh the risks and are the benefits maximized and risks minimized?  
   - N/A [ ]  
   - Yes [ ]  
   - No [ ]

   Notes:

3. Are there any ethical issues regarding the study’s design and conduct?  
   - Yes [ ]  
   - No [ ]

   Ethical issues may include but are not limited to the Belmont Report principles: respect for persons (voluntary, fully informed consent); beneficence (obligation to protect subjects from harm and secure their well-being); and, justice (benefits and burdens of research are fairly distributed).
   
   Notes:

4. Is subject selection equitable?  
   - Yes [ ]  
   - No [ ]

   If special populations are included the IRB should ensure that subjects can understand the research, give full consent, and voluntarily agree to participate, and they should consider any other possible special problems.
   
   Are vulnerable or special populations included in the research?
   - [ ] Pregnant women  
   - [ ] Fetus/fetal tissue  
   - [ ] Prisoners  
   - [ ] Minors Under Age 18  
   - [ ] Elderly subjects  
   - [ ] Minority groups and non-English speakers  
   - [ ] Patients  
   - [ ] Mentally/Emotionally/Developmentally Disabled persons  
   - [ ] Behavioral Abnormalities, psychological or disease condition  
   - [ ] None of the above, Normal Healthy Volunteers
   
   Notes:

5. Is the recruitment and consent process (including telephone scripts, ads, brochures, letters, compensation) fully described, appropriate, and non-coercive?  
   - Yes [ ]  
   - No [ ]

   Notes:
6. Are risks (physical, emotional, financial, legal) to subjects minimized?  
   Yes ☐  No ☐
   Notes: ________________

7. Confidentiality of Data:
   Are there procedures for protecting privacy and confidentiality?  Yes ☐  No ☐
   Notes: ________________

8. Is Informed Consent Included in the Application?  Yes ☐  No ☐
Stipulate Missing Elements:
   Is affiliation with SEU clearly noted?  Yes ☐  No ☐
   Is the Faculty PI identified?  N/A ☐  Yes ☐  No ☐
   Is the study faculty sponsor identified (if appropriate)?  Yes ☐  No ☐
   Does the consent state the study purpose accurately?  Yes ☐  No ☐
   Is it clear what the subject(s) will be asked to do?  Yes ☐  No ☐
   Are risks or discomforts clearly and fully stated?  Yes ☐  No ☐
   Are benefits clearly and fully stated?  Yes ☐  No ☐
   Are alternatives listed (if appropriate)?  N/A ☐  Yes ☐  No ☐
   Are confidentiality or anonymity issues addressed?  Yes ☐  No ☐
   Is the PI’s contact information included?  Yes ☐  No ☐
   Is the IRB’s contact information included?  Yes ☐  No ☐
   Is it stated that the subject can withdraw at anytime?  Yes ☐  No ☐
   Is the consent understandable at an 8th grade reading level?  Yes ☐  No ☐

Assent Form  
   Not Required ☐
   Is one needed (can the child really refuse to participate)?  Yes ☐  No ☐
   Is it one page or less?  Yes ☐  No ☐
   Is the language simple and sentences short?  Yes ☐  No ☐
   Notes: ________________

Additional Comments/Requirements by IRB:

RECOMMENDATION:
   ☑ Approved as submitted
   ☐ Approval Deferred; add'l information required
   ☐ Approved with stipulations as noted  (additional IRB review required)
   ☐ Not Approved

Signature: ________________  Date: 07/11/2020