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The Position of an Instructional Literacy Coach: A Case Study of the Perceptions of High School Administrators, Classroom Teachers, and Coaches in One Florida School District

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THE POSITION OF AN INSTRUCTIONAL LITERACY COACH: A CASE STUDY OF THE PERCEPTIONS OF HIGH SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS, CLASSROOM TEACHERS, AND COACHES IN ONE FLORIDA SCHOOL DISTRICT

by

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this quantitative case study was to examine the position of an instructional literacy coach as perceived by high school administrators, teachers, and coaches in one central Florida school district and to determine if any perceptual variance existed among those groups. A problem existed with understanding how the instructional literacy coach position manifested in different school contexts and how that manifestation impacted workplace dynamics. Given the dynamic nature of instructional coaching, this study further explored the level of congruence or incongruence between key faculty groups in order to better understand perceptions of coaching as a professional learning tool. The population of interest consisted of faculty members (N = 108) from eight public high schools. Data from the researcher-developed survey titled Perceptions of Instructional Literacy Coaches Instrument (PILCI©) were collected and analyzed. An evaluation of the data found statistically significant differences among faculty groups with respect to high school instructional coach perceptions. Overall, a moderate level of perceptual congruence existed between faculty groups (teacher-coach and coach-administrator) who were co-located in the school district hierarchy, while the differences that existed for teachers-administrators could not be explained by their position. Secondary faculty members will be informed through these findings about the perceived expectation of the instructional coach position within a school district that has a partnership with the University of Florida Lastinger Institute, and how that may impact workplace dynamics. The results also sought to improve organizational school leadership behavior, and to understand school-faculty relationships as it related to perceived successful professional learning outcomes.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Improving instruction, improving the quality of schools, and improving student achievement: these are goals that characterized the focus of many scholars in regard to educational reform and organizational change (Adams, Ross, Burns, & Gibbs, 2017; Gallagher, Goodyear, Brewer, & Rueda, 2012). One aspect of educational progress manifested in a singular, but multifaceted position, the instructional leader who had potential to impact organizational leadership in a significant way. The importance of understanding the positions and responsibilities of instructional leaders assumed increased significance, especially in the context of societal pressures to improve student achievement through accountability measures within the educational community (Croft, Coggshall, Dolan, Powers, & Killion, 2010; Gallucci, Van Lare, Yoon, & Boatright, 2010; Timperley, Wilson, Barrar, & Fung, 2007). The instructional leader impacted the success of not only teachers, but also students. Transforming a school culture by fostering the importance of high learning standards illustrated the significance of supporting teachers' professional growth.

In response, educational researchers studied the effect of traditional forms of professional development on instructional leadership (Garet, Porter, Desimone, Birman, & Yoon, 2001; Hawley & Valli, 2000; Hieneke, 2013). Scholars offered suggestions on improved models of professional learning (Bickel, Bernstein-Danis, & Matsumura, 2015; Darling-Hammond & Richardson, 2009; Desimone, 2009; Goldsmith, Lyons, & Freas, 2000; Knight, 2007), and concluded that student achievement enhanced as a result of sustained teacher professional learning (Blarney, Meyer, & Walpole, 2008; Darling-Hammond, Wei, Andree, Richardson, & Orphanos, 2009; Putnam & Borko, 2000). A shift in mindset from professional development to professional learning enhanced the potential for a greater impact on schools. Cultivating

instructional leadership through professional learning standards while on the job incorporated multiple modalities of support, reflection, and knowledge acquisition. By offering school support, experts advised that instruction would improve and contribute to learning outcomes for students and school wide improvement (Darling-Hammond, 2000; Guskey & Yoon, 2009). A fundamental shift in thinking about leadership and classroom practice manifested through job-embedded professional development and, ultimately, the inclusion of instructional literacy coaches in American public schools.

In the literature, instructional coaching was valued as an effective form of job-embedded professional learning that promised to improve classroom teacher instructional capacity (Allan, 2007; Croft et al., 2010; Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995; Gallucci et al., 2010; Hirsh, 2009; Neufeld & Roper, 2003). Coaching was shown to generate positive outcomes in combination with other professional learning strategies (Bean, Draper, Hall, Vandermolen, & Zigmond, 2010; Deussen, Coskie, Robinson, & Autio, 2007; Knight, 2005, 2006, 2007; Morrow, 2003; Walpole, McKenna, Uribe-Zarain, & Lamitina, 2010). However, the growing body of work had not addressed the degree to which instructional coaches were supported in their position. Studies on instructional coaching typically focused on the coaches' impact on others, while missing an opportunity to account for how the coach was trained and developed personally (Poglinco & Bach, 2004; Toll, 2014; Walpole et al., 2010). Providing opportunities for teachers to interact with coaches while on the job showcased a growing desire to cultivate leadership within the school walls. In doing so, instructional leadership became more timely, focused, and aligned with school improvement goals.

Coaching models were designed to fit well within the framework of best practices in professional learning, but empirical research described the coaching model as inconclusively

vague or non-existent, and in need of further exploration (Blarney et al., 2008; Borman & Feger, 2006; Cornett & Knight, 2009; Knight, 2007; Lyons et al., 2016; Taylor, Zugelder, & Bowman, 2013). Researchers had not adequately defined the parameters of the instructional coach position, described and contextualized the work of an instructional coach, or explained how individuals learned to be coaches and how they were supported to refine their practice over time (Gallucci et al., 2010; Ferguson, 2014; Ippolito et al., 2019; Marsh, McCombs, & Martorell, 2012). While some studies addressed how instructional coaches were utilized in varying contexts, the incongruity of position expectations by coaches, teachers, and school administrators indicated a diverse and ambiguous job (Marsh et al., 2012; Norton, 2001; Swinnerton, 2007). Descriptive studies examined the various positions coaches played in schools and the factors that mediated those positions (Blarney et al., 2008; Deussen et al., 2007; Mraz, Algozzine, Watson, 2008). Yet, perceptions of what coaches did were of "intense debate and very little scholarship" (Walpole & Blarney, 2008, p. 223). Secondary instructional coaches found difficulty in articulating their position and responsibilities. Because of the ambiguous nature of the instructional coach within schools, implications of the instructional leader in this capacity for teacher education and professional learning needed to be examined (Al Otaiba, Hosp, Smartt, & Dole, 2008; Blarney et al., 2008; Gross, 2012; Walpole & Blarney, 2008; Walpole & McKenna, 2004). Studying the perceptions of the coaching position could account for the success or challenge of a job-embedded instructional learning model.

The comprehensiveness of and approaches to understanding the positions and responsibilities of instructional literacy coaches varied widely, and no single taxonomy existed to compare results or frameworks. While a wide variety of scholarship was present on coaching in grades K-12, less research was available on understanding variation in the perception of

instructional coaching positions and variance in the congruency of perceptions among multiple stakeholders in order to maximize the potential of coaching strategies. The existing positions of an instructional coach needed to be studied in order to pinpoint how blurred perceptions of a coach's position within the school contributed to their ability to lead. Understanding the possible variation in the perception of coaching positions as well as the congruency of perceptions among school administrators, teachers, and coaches is essential for the field and for the school district. Attentive to this need, the proposed study sought to contribute to that insight.

Problem Statement

A problem existed with understanding how the instructional literacy coach position manifested in different school contexts and how that manifestation impacted workplace dynamics. While the position mandated federal and state legislation expectations, schools were given autonomy in how to utilize the instructional literacy coach (Darling-Hammond, 2000; Toll, 2014). In doing so, perceptions of the coaching position and coaching impact on others showcased substantial variability depending on the context in which coaches were studied. Variety in coaching positions problematized researchers seeking a standard model or uniform way of evaluating coaching success, responsibilities, and impact.

As determined from the literature on instructional coaching, a gap existed in regard to how high school administrators, teachers, and coaches perceived coaching behaviors and goals, how these coaching relationships contributed to teacher learning, how these coaching relationships impacted student growth, and what elements of these coaching perceptions contributed to changes in practice (Cornett & Knight, 2009; Desimone, 2009; Heineke, 2013; Snow, Ippolito, & Schwartz, 2006). Teachers struggled to understand the coaching position just as much as the coach struggled to articulate the coaching position to others (Mraz et al., 2008).

Facilitating growth within the confines of perceived administrative pressures and prescribed coaching goals made it difficult for teachers to be open to ongoing support (Vanderburg & Stephens, 2010). Taylor et al. (2013) argued that research on coaching was perceptual and predicting changes in student growth as a direct result of coaching strategies was challenging. Lastly, how a school district positioned the coach impacted how the coach was used within their reform efforts (Gallucci et al., 2010; Norton, 2001). The research indicated that ambiguity in the position expectations and faculty perceptions of the instructional coaching position within schools made it difficult for instructional coaches to be successful. Instructional coaching, a form of job-embedded professional leadership, had not fully been examined in the literature to adapt to school reform efforts. Therefore, perceptions of coaches, contributions to teacher learning, impact on students, and changes in practice, all illustrated the variability in the coaching position.

A growing tension in current coaching contexts developed from the emphasis on teacher evaluation using specific instructional frameworks (e.g. Marzano, 2007; Danielson, 2007) and the incorporation of these evaluative frameworks into teacher professional learning (Knight, 2005, 2006, 2007; Tschannen-Moran & Tschannen-Moran, 2011). The focus on instructional frameworks used for teacher evaluation challenged instructional coaches to articulate and transform perceptions of their position as a school resource instead of an evaluative associate. The immediate focus on desired teaching behaviors generated expectations or experiences that influenced the coach's position and generated substantial variability in the perceptions among key school staff (Ferguson, 2014; Snow et al., 2006). Without the deep knowledge and insights of school administrators, teachers, and coaches' experiences, research on coaching could not adapt to changes in policy and practice.

Unfortunately, multiple studies only examined the position of instructional coaches from singular perspectives and used those to describe the overall perceptions among school staff (Allan, 2007; Blarney et al., 2008; Ferguson, 2014; Mraz et al., 2008). While some scholars researched the perceptual congruence between one stakeholder and another (Shope, 2013), no study had directly looked at the variance in perceptions among key staff and measured the congruence or incongruence between school administrators, teachers, and coaches within high schools. An attempt needed to be made to better understand how instructional coaches operated within the school system. These relationships between faculty members were grounded in different experiences and were driven by different goals, which had implications for school leaders and ultimately students. The position of an instructional coach was infused with paradox. Typically, coaches did not have supervisory responsibilities, but were committed to supporting teacher learning using a range of approaches. However, instructional coaches had been perceived as evaluative in their attempts to "transform formal evaluation processes into opportunities for engaged professional reflection and learning" (Johnson, Leibowitz, & Perret, 2017, p.9). If one were to understand the position that instructional coaches played at the secondary level, then the working dynamic between school administrators, teachers, and instructional coaches needed to be studied.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this quantitative case study was to examine the position of an instructional coach as perceived by high school administrators, teachers, and coaches and to determine if any perceptual variance existed among those groups. This research study merged two ideas of interest in the following: (1) a more straightforward look at perceptions of instructional coaches by others (Borman & Feger, 2006; Deussen et al., 2007; Hathaway, Martin,

& Mraz, 2016; Ippolito, 2010; Marsh et al., 2012; Ferguson, 2014; Veenman & Denessen, 2001), and (2) Role Congruence Theory (Katz & Kahn, 1978; Shope, 2013). The perceptions of instructional coaches by school administrators, classroom teachers, and instructional coaches provided an account of the high school coaching context. The concept of Role Theory, operationalized as Perceptual Congruence Theory throughout the rest of the study, framed the sophisticated analysis regarding the purpose of an instructional literacy coach and how that impacted position-holders (i.e., school administrators, teachers, and coaches) and the rest of the organization (Katz & Kahn, 1978; Shope, 2013). As a result, studying the perceptions of instructional literacy coaches could uncover how collaboration, reflection, and decision making manifested in secondary school environments.

Research Questions

Four research questions were identified to understand the perceptions of high school instructional literacy coaches and the congruency, if any, among school administrators, teachers, and coaches in order to best support the organization. The research questions were as follows:

1. What is the position of an instructional coach, as perceived by school administrators, classroom teachers, and instructional coaches?
2. In what ways and to what extent, if any, do perceptions of the position of instructional coaches vary among school administrators, classroom teachers, and instructional coaches?
3. In what ways and to what extent, if any, do teacher perceptions of the position of instructional coaches vary by individual characteristics?
4. In what ways and to what extent, if any, does the level of perceptual congruence regarding the position of instructional coaches vary by the participant's position within

the dyads of classroom teacher-instructional coach, instructional coach-school administrator, and classroom teacher-school administrator?

Knight's (2007) Partnership Approach to Professional Learning in combination with Perceptual Congruence Theory (Katz & Kahn, 1978; Shope, 2013) guided the researcher's understanding and interpretation of this research process and the research questions. The approach also provided the common language with which to analyze the perceptions of school administrators, teachers, and instructional literacy coaches.

Operational Definitions

In this section, the researcher defined secondary instructional literacy coach, professional learning, Perceptual Congruence Theory, the University of Florida Lastinger Certified Instructional Coaching Institute, school administrators, and classroom teachers for the purposes of the current study.

1. *Secondary Instructional Literacy Coach:* Based on Knight's (2007) theoretical framework for instructional coaching, an instructional coach was someone who learned alongside collaborating teachers and administrators in which all position-holders benefited from the success, learning, or experience and were rewarded by each individual's contributions. In this case study, the district formally labeled all school-based high school coaches as "secondary instructional literacy coaches" and district-based coaches as "teacher on assignment/curriculum support." The model blended both instructional coaching and literacy coaching together. The instructional literacy coach provided individualized professional learning to a teacher based on the teachers' instructional and content area literacy need according to the Marzano (2007) instructional framework, which was used by the district. Instructional literacy coaches in this school

district worked with teachers, and also engaged with district-based instructional literacy coaches up the hierarchy. Together, school-based and district-based instructional literacy coaches focused on how to more effectively coach teachers. These coaches worked onsite in schools with teachers to help them incorporate research-based instructional practices and content area literacy in support of student learning (Knight, 2007). The position was both non-supervisory and non-evaluative (Joyce & Showers, 1996; Knight, 2007; Marsh et al., 2012).

2. *Professional Learning*: Functionally a continuation of professional development, professional learning required teachers to be intentional, ongoing, systematic, and seriously engaged in their internal learning process (Knight, 2007). Guskey and Yoon (2009) explained that traditional professional development leading to positive student outcomes "included significant amounts of structured and sustained follow-up after the main professional development activities" (p. 497). Researchers, in response, encouraged models of professional learning (i.e., job-embedded professional learning) that promoted reflection on practice, collaboration, and active learning (Blarney et al., 2008; Darling-Hammond et al., 2009; Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995). Kruse and Johnson (2017) highlighted the benefits of establishing professional learning communities and professional learning opportunities for these communities, as platforms for "rich thinking and intentional practice," and as an act of planned "mindfulness" in educational leadership (p. 588). Professional learning implied a development through which professional knowledge was created, delivered, and sought after through interaction with key staff members (i.e., instructional literacy coaches) and professional learning networks and communities.

3. *Perceptual Congruence Theory:* Based on Position Theory, Perceptual Congruence Theory suggested that a person was connected to an organization through the functional requirements of the system they inhabited (Katz & Kahn, 1978). The organizationally bound positions manifested as the implemented expectations that supervisors had of their subordinates (Katz & Kahn, 1978). Perceptual Congruence in this case study was determined by the extent to which school administrators, teachers, and instructional literacy coaches potentially agreed or disagreed about the position of an instructional literacy coach within the organization (Shope, 2013).
4. *University of Florida (UF) Lastinger Certified Instructional Coaching Institute*: An institute designed to provide participants with an understanding of the instructional coaching process, coaching tools and techniques, and a guided field experience. The institute offered certification as an instructional coach based upon successful coaching performance as demonstrated in a submission video evaluated by an independent, certified evaluator (UF Coaching Academy, 2018).
5. *School administrator:* A school administrator was defined as a principal or assistant principal working at one of the eight high schools in the district of study. These individuals were charged with direct supervision of a school-based instructional literacy coach and were qualified to evaluate the performance of instructional literacy coaches. School administration managers, deans, and other administrative supporting faculty members were not included in this study.
6. *Classroom Teacher:* Teachers were defined as individuals who directly worked with a UF Lastinger certified instructional coach and were qualified to provide professional feedback on the experience of working with instructional literacy coaches.

Theoretical Frameworks

Two theoretical frameworks were applied to the research study in tandem in order to better understand the organizational perceptions of instructional literacy coaches within one school district. The Partnership Approach to Professional Learning provided a framework for understanding how variability in the perceptions of instructional literacy coaches manifested among key school staff who had been trained that coaching was a collaboration among equals (Knight, 2007). In order to analyze the perceptions of school administrators, teachers, and instructional literacy coaches, Perceptual Congruence Theory guided the understanding of organizational leadership patterns and insight (Katz & Kahn, 1978). Both theoretical approaches offered a structural guide for this research analysis.

Knight's Partnership Approach to Professional Learning

James Knight (2007) developed the instructional coaching approach at the University of Kansas Center for Research on Learning by incorporating processes of learning with specific components of coaching. The theoretical framework for instructional coaching was referred to as the Partnership Approach to Professional Learning and was comprised of seven principles that created a foundation of collaborative learning between the coach and the teacher: equality, choice, voice, dialogue, reflection, praxis, and reciprocity (Knight, 2007). Moreover, the principles were derived from disciplines such as adult education, psychology, and business, and synthesized from concepts of knowledge transfer, knowledge development, and human interaction from theorists such as Paulo Freire and Michael Fullan (Cornett & Knight, 2009). Collaborative learning between the coach and teacher were grounded in the aforementioned seven principles, which emphasized that relationships drove the learning process. The partnership approach reminded one that "all three aspects of teachers' work: students, content,

and processes" were considered when reflecting about "students, curriculum, and pedagogy" (Toll, 2014, p. 10). Thus, collaboration between equals as partners provided the subtlest, yet significant, approach to organizational leadership in schools.

Conceptual Language for Instructional Interactions

According to Knight (2007) improving instruction was important, but also was improving school culture. School culture presented itself as a complex amalgam of influences and factors that could not be controlled by building leaders. Although, instructional coaches did have considerable influence on developing positive, productive relationships that enviably impacted school climate (Johnson et al., 2017). Traditional forms of professional development tended to "erode teachers' willingness to embrace any new ideas" (Cornett & Knight, 2009, p. 2). Direct instruction sit-and-get, and other formal models of traditional professional development were unsuccessful in challenging teachers or coaches to reflect, follow-up, or try new strategies in the classroom. Knight suggested that the seven theoretical principles he identified provided a "conceptual language for how instructional coaches interacted with other professionals in the school" (Cornett & Knight, 2009, p. 4). By honoring adult learning, the seven principles supported teachers' growth, risk-taking, and style of learning. For example, literacy coaching had been shown to increase student learning in Florida middle schools, which indicated that coaches could successfully influence teacher development (Marsh et al., 2008). Educators could view each other as *equals* and participate in a *reciprocal* process. Educators could engage in a *dialogue* that embraced teacher *choice* and honored teacher *voice*. And, finally, educators could *reflect* in a manner that impacted on-going *praxis*.

Therefore, activating learning by offering feedback through the reciprocal process of using a conceptual, but pragmatic structure helped teachers "access thinking, support students in

setting and reaching challenging goals, and monitor learning" (Johnson et al., 2017, p. 25), which ultimately had an effect size of 0.84 on student learning (Hattie, 2009). Cornett and Knight's (2009) research showed that when teachers received an appropriate amount of support from professional learning then more than 90% of them embraced and implemented strategies to improve students learning experiences in the classroom. Conversations, he explained, were at the foreground for reflectivity, willingness to change, and improvement.

Promoting Organizational Relationships Through Collaborative Learning

The partnership philosophy incorporated seven principles that promoted a successful organizational relationship. Teachers could use their voice and decide what area of their teaching practice to examine or improve (Knight, 2007). Voice emphasized the power of feeling valued and respected by others. Choice and reciprocity: these two principles were integral to the coaching relationship because the construction of new knowledge fostered an exchange of information that improved relationships within the organization. Providing choice to educators honored principles of adult learning (Johnson et al., 2017). Continuing, coaching relationships needed to be established, in order for teaching practices to improve. The partnership philosophy provided a means for coaches to guide and form such relationships within the school. Coaches were trained to use these principles throughout their coaching experiences, and, as such, were encouraged to enact their work within this theoretical framework.

Equality, a central concept to the philosophy, also encouraged coaching conversations to be collaborative and less likely to be dominated by the instructional coach. In a study conducted by Heineke (2013), coaching conversations were analyzed using discourse analysis, which found that a greater change in practice was more likely due to coaches who were least dominant in their conversations with teachers. Thus, choice, reciprocity, voice, and equality: these four principles

marked a foundation for fostering reflection and dialogue between others. The opportunity to reflect and speak about one's instruction showed promising results (Knight, 2007). Teachers and coaches became intentional about their work and aligned those intentions with school improvement policies and initiatives.

Certification and Training of Coaches

In order to foster an expansion of the Partnership Approach to Professional Learning, the University of Florida (UF) Lastinger Center Certified Coaching Program was created for instructional coaches and teacher leaders to become trained and certified on effective methods of assisting teachers to impact instructional practices (UF Coaching Academy, 2018). The institute was designed to provide participants with an understanding of the instructional coaching process, coaching tools and techniques, and a guided field experience. The institute offered certification as an instructional coach based upon successful coaching performance as demonstrated in a submission video evaluated by an independent, certified evaluator (UF Coaching Academy, 2018). The model created a connection between teachers' practices and student achievement. The instructional framework synthesized the elements of effective instruction across various instructional protocols: *The Art and Science of Teaching* (Marzano, 2007), *Enhancing Professional Practice* (Danielson, 2007), *Literacy for All Students* (Powell & Rightmyer, 2011) and *The Classroom Assessment Scoring System* (Pianta, La Paro, & Hamre, 2008). The blending of instructional protocol models for training coaches standardized the most widely accepted forms of best practices in education. In doing so, a coach could potentially be successful at adapting to any organizational setting based on this training.

Ultimately, Knight's (2007) Partnership Approach and the Lastinger Instructional Framework became the most used and comprehensive observation framework in the state of

Florida. The collaborative approach was heralded as an exemplar for best practices in teaching (Ross, 2011). The Partnership Approach to Professional Learning became a lens through which the researcher could evaluate the perceptions of instructional coaches who had participated in the UF institute and evaluate the perceived positions and responsibilities of instructional coaches within one central Florida school district.

Perceptual Congruence Theory

Perceptual Congruence Theory, in combination with the Partnership Approach, enabled the researcher to investigate the perception of coaching positions, and variance in the congruency of perceptions among school administrators, teachers, and instructional literacy coaches. According to Heald, Contractor, Koehly, and Wasserman (1998), "individuals developed their understanding of the world based on how they perceived the orientations of others around them and how they are oriented to those others" (p. 537). The shared perceptions of the organizations' overall social structure from members lead to a better understanding of organizational members' ongoing interactions (Heald et al., 1998). Originating from Position Theory in professional organizations, Perceptual Congruence Theory suggested that a person was connected to an organization through the functional requirements of the system they inhabited (Katz & Kahn, 1978). Research on Perceptual Congruence Theory among secondary instructional coaches was situated within the broader literature of Role Theory. Miner, Crane, and Vandenburg (1994) defined Role Motivation Theory as professional knowledge and relationship building, which measured work relationships. Their efforts suggested that the perceptual congruence concept supported the need for further exploration into how motivation affected the productivity of an organization. Newcomb (1953) stated "it is an almost constant human necessity to orient himself toward objects in the environment and also toward other persons oriented toward those same

objects" (p. 395). Therefore, Perceptual Congruence Theory, the theoretical framework of this research, was the extent to which two individuals or more agreed on their perceptions of each other's position within the organization (Shope, 2013). The organizationally bound positions manifested as the implemented expectations that supervisors had of their subordinates (Katz & Kahn, 1978). Using Perceptual Congruence Theory in tandem with the Partnership Approach allowed for a more direct analysis of organizational position perceptions and alignment within a district that held a partnership with the UF Lastinger Institute.

Organizational Insight

Attention to Perceptual Congruence Theory was necessary to create an ideal environment for school and instructional understanding. Examination of Perceptual Congruence Theory in the school setting had been lacking in the literature, specifically among school leaders at the secondary level (Shope, 2013; Snow et al., 2006; Walpole & Blarney, 2008). Rather, the extant literature described the positions of secondary educators separately or the perceptions of instructional coaches at the elementary school level with little discussion of how principals, teachers, and coaches interacted (Shope, 2013; Snow et al., 2006; Walpole & Blarney, 2008). The characteristics needed to be effective required "a selfless approach that relied on a higher level of organizational insight" (Shope, 2013, p. 25). Shope (2013) argued that possessing this insight would enable both alignment and achievement of district visions and goals.

The levels of congruence among individuals (i.e. teachers, superintendents, principals, or instructional coaches) in an organization, as Shope (2013) explained, greatly impacted or influenced student outcomes, especially since research suggested that overall effectiveness was closely linked with the success of those individuals (Hattie, 2009). For example, McLeod and Chaffee (1973) stated that "a person's behavior is not based simply upon his private cognitive

structure of his world; it is also a function of his perception of the orientations held by others around him and of his orientation to them" (p. 470). Thus, the extent to which two or more individuals shared their perceptions about instructional coaches could enlighten teacher and administrator behaviors and attitudes in schools. Bolman and Deal's (2008) framework for understanding organizations suggested that structural, political, symbolic, and human factors existed within any organization. These requirements were the implemented expectations that supervisors had of their subordinates. Knowing this allowed researchers to develop new measures, such as perceptual congruence, to determine the extent to which school administrators and coaches agreed on each other's position (Shope, 2013). Understanding shared ideas was essential for direct communication, and formal and informal socialization as they influenced the relationships between school administrators, teachers, and coaches (Shope, 2013). Possessing a higher level of organizational insight became a key component of Perceptual Congruence, especially, when applied to educational institutions.

Organizational Relationships

Therefore, Perceptual Congruence Theory was a theoretical construct that could be used to analyze the extent to which key stakeholders perceived their position in secondary schools and how those perceptions varied. Perceptual Congruence consisted of adult learning theory principles like relationships, professional knowledge, and effective communication. Heald et al. (1998) articulated:

> Those organizational members who engaged in certain activities (i.e., communicating directly with one another, collaborating with each other, citing one another in their work, and reading the same journals) were more likely to have higher levels of perceptual

> congruence about the vision and mission than organizational members who did not engage in those activities. (p. 538)

The theory offered a way to see how each position interplayed with the other in the context of the school environment. In other words, faculty members who were closely linked to one another in the secondary school environment may have had greater levels of Perceptual Congruence regarding the perceptual understandings of instructional literacy coaches than faculty members who were not co-located in the organizational hierarchy.

This study argued that attention to Perceptual Congruence Theory was necessary to create an ideal environment for school and student success. This study sought to extend previous research on Perceptual Congruence Theory by examining an additional key concept, the individual's (administrator, teacher, or coach) perception of his or her school district's use of instructional literacy coaches. As scholars argued, individuals may use "higher order linages, such as hierarchies, departmental relationships, and workflow interactions, to represent their worlds" (Heald et al., 1998, p. 557). This awareness represented a proactive approach of leadership analysis and provided the opportunity to offset potential problems within the organization (Shope, 2013). Congruency between three entities (i.e., school administrator, teacher, and coach) about the position perception of an instructional coach within the secondary organization enabled a system (i.e. school district) to move forward productively. Other studies were limited by methodological choices that tested Perceptual Congruence separately instead of assessing the simultaneous effects of predictors on the congruence levels among key staff (Heald et al., 1998). Thus, discovering the degree of Perceptual Congruence among school administrators, teachers, and coaches simultaneously was a worthwhile endeavor to understand, and preliminary searches of the extant literature indicated that no one had adequately explored it.

Obtaining information regarding instructional coaches' perceptions and preferences of coaching helped to inform coach training and coaching practice that directly affected teacher and student performance. Researching the relatively unexplored area of instructional coaching was of heuristic value for research on teacher, coach, and administrative workplace dynamics.

Contextual Perspectives

The University of Florida Lastinger Instructional Coaching Model was utilized in a Central Florida public school district. A total of eight public secondary high schools employed an on-site instructional literacy coach who was trained and certified through the University of Florida Certified Instructional Coaching Model, and who worked with teachers and administrators in order to improve instruction. Thus, eight high schools and their respective educational professionals from the school district were invited to participate.

The position of the on-site instructional coach within this district manifested as a hybrid model: a part-time teacher and a part-time coach. The district also employed district-based coaches who supported each of the eight high schools on a rotational basis. The district coaches were full time coaches splitting their time between two secondary schools. Even though the Lastinger Model was utilized for coach training and certification, the district never evaluated high school coaches on the UF Lastinger Center for Learning Certified Instructional Coaching Rubric (CICE)© following the certification process. The expectation was that each certified coach emulated the model within his or her respective school. The district formally assigned the title "secondary instructional literacy coach" to both the school-based and district-based coaches.

The University of Florida developed a systematic program model for training instructional coaches. The UF Certified Coaching Program provided training and experiential learning in instructional coaching for school-based and district-based personnel. The University

of Florida Certified Instructional Coaching Model from the Lastinger Institute was spread across multiple Florida counties (UF Coaching Academy, 2018). The Lastinger Instructional Coaching Model was implemented throughout districts in Florida in an intensive, yearlong professional development initiative. The certification process produced instructional coaches who had a deep understanding of collaborative peer coaching, knowledge of coaching tools and techniques, and knowledge of how to increase teacher efficacy (UF Coaching Academy, 2018). The professional development initiative was comprised of a three-day coaching institute for participants to learn about the foundations and theories of coaching and the elements of the UF model, followed by six half-day professional learning sessions to implement, reflect, and refine coaching practice.

The theoretical underpinnings for the coaching model were grounded in Knight's (2007) Partnership Coaching Approach, and the Lastinger Instructional Framework (Ross, 2011). The Lastinger Instructional Framework was designed to synthesize the most used and comprehensive observation frameworks in the state of Florida as a lens for best practices in teaching (Ross, 2011). The framework provided a common language of instruction to enable teachers and coaches to talk about teaching more in-depth and develop common perspectives and strategies for improved instruction (Ross, 2011). The instructional framework synthesized the elements of effective instruction across various instructional protocols: *The Art and Science of Teaching* (Marzano, 2007), *Enhancing Professional Practice* (Danielson, 2007), *Literacy for All Students* (Powell & Rightmyer, 2011) and *The Classroom Assessment Scoring System* (Pianta et al., 2008). In doing so, teachers and coaches were presented a comprehensive framework with foundational emphasis on effective instructional strategies, students' cultural backgrounds, and how to meet diverse learners needs.

The way in which each high school instructional coach was utilized varied from one school to the next. These school-based coaches were appointed by the administration to enact evidence-based practices into classrooms by encouraging teachers and other school leaders to improve (Knight, 2007). The current study represented an initial effort to understand the impact of this one model of instructional coaching on the perceptions of school administrators, teachers, and coaches within one district.

Significance of the Research Study

The current study contained the framework for aligning district leadership teams in their efforts to positively influence student achievement and teacher learning. Understanding perceptions of key staff suggested opportunities to further enhance coaching as a valuable professional learning tool. Researching the perspectives of instructional literacy coaches may have illustrated the way school faculty members understood the higher order linages of the organization. Individual perceptions of the organizational hierarchy of the public school system may have influenced the way in which principals interacted and viewed instructional literacy coaches, and the way in which instructional literacy coaches interacted and viewed teachers. The result of the congruence, or incongruence between these organizational relationships could have influenced school-based decision-making, departmental relationships, and workflow dynamics. Furthermore, the organizational perceptions of instructional literacy coaches may have shaped the extent to which data was used to inform instruction, and the extent to which the level of engagement between faculty members was used to promote positive working relationships. A perception study, such as this, developed an awareness of aligning the insights of individuals concerning instructional literacy coaches. School administrators may benefit from prioritizing

efforts to realign factors that were perceived to be underdeveloped and, thus, have a relatively higher potential for school improvement.

Conclusively, this study added to the literature on coaching in secondary learning environments and provided formative data on how coaches might be improved in secondary learning contexts. The results of this study shaped future research in the development of instructional coach preparation programs. The results also sought to improve organizational school leadership behavior, and to understand school-faculty relationship stability as it related to successful professional learning outcomes. Understanding possible variation in the perception of coaching positions and variance in the congruency of perceptions among school administrators, teachers, and coaches was essential for maximizing the potential of coaching strategies and workplace dynamics.

Delimitations in the Research Study

The research focused on a collective quantitative case study of high school administrators, classroom teachers, and instructional literacy coaches in one public school district in central Florida. Assumptions to this study included the following: (a) all participants responded to the research survey questions honestly, and (b) all participants had perceptions regarding the positions and responsibilities of high school instructional coaches. The delimitations to this research study were acknowledged and understood in accordance to the generalizations made after final analysis.

Limitations in the Research Study

Assessing the perceptions of high school administrators, classroom teachers, and instructional literacy coaches in one public school district proved to be a limitation to the

research study. Discrepancies in the positions, responsibilities, and job qualifications and requirements for instructional literacy coaches may have existed. Though the study was focused on a broader definition of instructional coaching, the design of this study sought to expand the knowledge base on the position and expectations of a high school instructional coach and, thus, limited the study to one school district. Therefore, generalizability of the findings was limited to similar contexts such as other public-school districts that had partnered with the UF Lastinger Center for Learning. The selected sample for this study was not expected to be representative of the entire population of interest. Thus, the findings were not immediately generalizable, though some cautious generalizations were inferred and presented. All survey items were subject to interpretation of the reader. The survey was specifically created for this study and was the only method for gathering data.

Summary of Chapter One

The goal of this quantitative case study was to analyze the position of an instructional literacy coach as perceived by high school administrators, classroom teachers, and instructional literacy coaches, and to determine if any perceptual variance existed among these groups (Deussen et al., 2007; Hathaway et al., 2016; Shope, 2013). Literature on instructional coaching in secondary learning environments provided formative data on how coaching strategies improved in secondary learning contexts. Four research questions guided the researcher as she attempted to identify the perceptions of high school instructional literacy coaches and the perceptual variance among faculty members in order to best support the organization. Knight's (2007) Partnership Approach to Professional Learning in combination with Perceptual Congruence Theory (Katz & Kahn, 1978; Shope, 2013) guided the researchers understanding and interpretation of this research process and the research questions, and provided the common

language with which to analyze the perceptions of high school administrators, teachers, and instructional literacy coaches.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

A literature review for this study was conducted to provide context and a broadened perspective of high school instructional coaches; coaching positions and responsibilities; and perceptions of instructional coaches. The goal of this research study was to perform a case study within one public school district in order to analyze the position of an instructional literacy coach as perceived by high school administrators, teachers, and coaches and to determine if any perceptual variance existed among those groups. Perceptual Congruence Theory (Shope, 2013) and the Partnership Approach to Professional Learning (Knight, 2005, 2006, 2007) framed a sophisticated analysis regarding the purpose of an instructional literacy coach and how that impacted position-holders (i.e., school administrators, teachers, and coaches) and the rest of the organization.

Job-embedded professional learning, various educational coaching models, and the impact of instructional coaching on instructional practices were studied for this research (Blarney et al., 2008; Darling-Hammond et al., 2009; Ferguson, 2014; Guskey & Yoon, 2009). The constructs of Role Theory (Katz & Kahn, 1978), Perceptual Congruence Theory (Shope, 2013), and the Partnership Approach to Professional Learning (Knight, 2005, 2006, 2007) were also studied and examined. Both Perceptual Congruence Theory and the Partnership Approach had been reviewed within the framework of school improvement, business leadership, and instructional leadership in those studies. The researcher sought to build upon this body of research through the combined lens of Perceptual Congruence and the Partnership Approach in an educational context. The researcher studied the perspectives of these key contributors in order to gain a better understanding and interpretation of the position and responsibilities of instructional literacy coaches at the high school level.

The position of an instructional literacy coach as a critical component in the school environment became a more recent focus of educational researchers. In the context of societal pressures to improve student achievement through accountability measures within the educational community, the importance of understanding the positions and responsibilities of instructional leaders assumed increased significance (Adams et al., 2017; Bean et al., 2010; Croft et al., 2010; Gallucci et al., 2010; Knight, 2006; Walpole et al., 2010). Thus, this study sought to examine the position of an instructional literacy coach as perceived by high school administrators, teachers, and coaches and to determine if any perceptual variance existed among these groups.

To that end, a comprehensive review of the literature was necessary to provide an overview of instructional literacy coach research relevant to this study. The literature selected for this research study was conducted according to the following procedures. The researcher established search terms and conducted a database search using the university library portal. Key terms were utilized to narrow the search parameters and to maintain credibility and usefulness for understanding the research goals. Key terms included: "perceptions of instructional coaches AND high schools", "instructional coaching AND Role Theory", "instructional coaches OR literacy coaches AND high schools AND perceptions", "instructional coaches AND high schools", "literacy coaches AND perceptions", "instructional coaching AND professional learning, "literacy coach AND positions and responsibilities".

An investigation of the pertinent literature was conducted in academic databases like *Academic Search Premier (EBSCOhost), JSTOR,* and *Education Database (ProQuest)*. Search hits were filtered by the last 15 years (2004-2019) to provide an updated review that included prominent research within the field. Each database was researched for peer reviewed

publications and the hits were examined for relevance in this study. The researcher screened search results by title, abstract, and review of the content. Studies that were unrelated to the topic of research were excluded. Due to the amount of relevant research from the three databases, studies conducted outside of the United States were also excluded.

Of the 113 *Academic Search Premier (EBSCOhost)* hits, 16 were eligible for this study. Of the 204 *JSTOR* hits, eight were eligible for this study. Of the 72 *Education Database (ProQuest)* hits, 10 were eligible for this study. Additionally, the researcher located reference lists from relevant, well-cited sources that was significant to include in this study. The researcher also included professional development documents and foundational texts from the University of Florida Lastinger Institute's training materials that were necessary for the theoretical context.

The evaluation of literature resulted in a wide variety of descriptive accounts: research-based quantitative and qualitative studies; and research methodologies from academic journals, professional organizations, and professional publications. The search strategies yielded approximately 34 studies dealing with some aspect of instructional literacy coaching. Research pertaining to elementary schools was included in the search criteria, as there existed a greater body of research in this area that was necessary to define the gap for this study.

The following review of the literature represented the body of knowledge pertinent to this research study, namely, perceptions of instructional literacy coaches, and the significance of instructional leadership. Scholars conducted research within the fields of instructional literacy coaching, professional learning, and adult learning; however little research had been conducted pertaining to (a) coaching positions and responsibilities and (b) perceptions of instructional literacy coaches at the high school level. To provide background and the framework for the

study, this chapter was organized into four major sections: (a) coaching models in education, (b) instructional literacy coaching positions and responsibilities, (c) perceptions of coaches by professional bodies, and (d) perceptions of instructional coaches.

Coaching Models in Education

In the respective literature on coaching models, a variety of coaching techniques existed along with diverse discussions of how coaching had been enacted in various settings within school systems, but a general consensus of what coaching entailed was evident. Within coaching literature, studies focused on specific models of coaching (Cornett & Knight, 2009; Costa & Garmston, 2002; Deussen et al., 2007; Kowal & Steiner, 2007) as well as different theoretical frames for coaching (Borman & Feger, 2006; Deussen et al., 2007; Knight, 2006, 2007). Today, several educational coaching models included, but were not limited to *peer-coaching* (Smit, Rietz, & Kreis, 2019; Warner, Neater, Clark, & Lee, 2018), *culturally responsive coaching* (Garcia & Garcia, 2016), *content-focused coaching* (Bickel et al., 2015; Gibbons & Cobb, 2016), *literacy coaching* (Deussen et al., 2007; Marsh et al., 2012), *executive coaching* (Goldsmith et al., 2000), *cognitive coaching* (Costa & Garmston, 2002), and *instructional coaching* (Knight, 2006, 2007). A brief discussion of each coaching model was pertinent to understanding how the Partnership Approach to Professional Learning provided a comprehensive framework that synthesized significant elements of effective coaching (Knight, 2007). The framework for instructional literacy coaching became an important component of Florida's public schools.

Non-Literacy Specific Coaching Models

Scholars had researched coaching models (i.e., peer coaching, culturally responsive coaching, executive coaching, and cognitive coaching) that focused less on literacy and more on

theory, which provided a toolbox for encouraging teacher professional knowledge, positive school change, and successful relationships within schools (Costa & Garmston, 2002; Garcia & Garcia, 2016; Goldsmith et al., 2000; Smit et al., 2019). The non-literacy models embraced a theoretical method that focused more on the transformational process of learning instead of on the content-specific or literacy-specific school-wide initiatives. Each of the non-literacy focused models highlighted the significance of collaboration, cultural responsibility, healthy working relationships, and the transformation of belief systems. In doing so, schools could use coaching as a means to shape educator philosophies of teaching and learning in a manner that was grounded in transformative ideology.

Peer-Coaching

Peer-coaching had been utilized as a means to collaboratively plan and execute lessons or activities in the classroom (Joyce & Showers, 1996). Collaborative lesson planning between a coach and a teacher was considered a significant part of classroom practice, and had been shown to influence teacher professional knowledge in the process (Smit et al., 2019). In one study, peer-coaching had resulted in significant outcomes for undergraduate completion rates in an attempt to positively impact university retention (Warner et al., 2018). Peer coaches, according to Warner et al. (2018), viewed themselves as "facilitators of change" and relied on their ability to form "meaningful relationships" (p. 159). Moreover, this coaching technique demonstrated how reciprocity strengthened educator competence and expertise (Smit et al., 2019). Relationship building through the peer-coaching process enabled teachers and coaches to transform their instructional ideologies and reflect on classroom practice. The peer-coaching model emphasized a reciprocal undertaking that transformed an educator's capacity to collaborate with another for the ultimate improvement of teacher and student growth.

Culturally Responsive Coaching

Originating from concepts such as culturally responsive teaching and culturally relevant pedagogy, culturally responsive coaching highlighted how educators could be empowered "intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using cultural referents to impact knowledge, skills, and attitude" (Garcia & Garcia, 2016, p. 175). Often, cultural responsibility had been focused on the student-teacher relationship in ensuring responsiveness to the whole child's learning process. However, recent research indicated that culturally responsive coaching could positively impact the coaching process (Garcia & Garcia, 2016).

Several studies found positive impacts of culturally responsive coaching not only on teacher practice, but also student learning (Averill, Anderson, & Drake, 2015; Bradshaw et al., 2018; Pas, Larson, Reinke, Herman, & Bradshaw, 2016). According to Pas et al. (2016), improving teacher use of culturally responsive classroom management strategies, by coaching them, could reduce exclusion in the classroom. A significant finding from this study showed that "more than 90% of teachers believed the coaching benefitted their students; close to 80% increased their self-perceived knowledge of cultural proficiency and classroom management" (Pas et al., 2016, p. 483). In another study, culturally responsive teaching practices enhanced equity of access to mathematics learning (Averill et al., 2015). Researchers concluded that modeling and discussion of mathematical pedagogical practice, while implementing culturally responsive practice and policy could improve teaching and learning (Averill et al., 2015). Furthermore, Bradshaw et al. (2018) discovered that "proactive behavior management and anticipation of student problems by teachers, higher student cooperation, less student noncooperation, and fewer disruptive behaviors in classrooms led by coached teachers" compared to non-coached teachers showed significantly better results (p. 118). Culturally responsive classrooms had more positive outcomes than non-culturally responsive classrooms.

As a result, culturally responsive coaching was found to be a significantly positive coaching approach for all types of student learners that promoted inclusivity and equity (Averill et al., 2015; Bradshaw et al., 2018; Garcia & Garcia, 2016; Pas et al., 2016). Coaching in this manner allowed for all types of students regardless of background, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and gender to learn in a productive environment that valued their differences. The coaching method challenged educators to become more intentional about the decisions they made in the classroom and to acknowledge how those daily decisions could potentially impact students.

Executive Coaching

Often referred to as transformational coaching or process coaching, executive coaching was defined as the ability to make individuals more competent in one or more professional areas (Goldsmith et al., 2000). Goldsmith et al. (2000) summarized the coaching concept as a means to "establish and develop healthy working relationships by surfacing issues (raw data gathering), addressing issues (through feedback), solving problems (action planning), and following through (results)--and so offer[ed] a process in which people develop[ed]" (Goldsmith et al., 2000, p. xviii). Others summarized the executive coaching concept as a process where one contracts, goals sets, assesses, implements an action plan, and evaluates (Valerio & Lee, 2005). The organizational principles of executive coaching mirrored that of the typical coaching cycle and feedback loop. According to Hattie (2009), feedback was one of the most influential features on student achievement. The key to providing effective feedback was the ability to reflect on progress toward "transparent, challenging goals connected to clear success criteria" (Johnson et al., 2017, p. 82). Therefore, executive coaching provided a means to measure how members of an organization were doing in their efforts to reach a common goal.

Engaging in the transformational process challenged even the most experienced educator. According to Rathmell, Brown, and Kilburg (2019), the transformation to academic leadership through executive coaching techniques was a multi-layered and on-going process. They argued that individuals "come to their leadership positions not only undereducated and underdeveloped...but also in possession of a set of attitudes, values, beliefs, and biases that explicitly deny or denigrate the importance of them in human affairs" (Rathmell et al., 2019, p. 158). Executive coaching aided one in overcoming preconceived values and beliefs. The development of trust in accepting and committing to a coach enabled one to "achieve agreement on tasks and goals, plus a deep level of shared psychological understanding and new insight" (de Haan, 2019, p. 1). Executive coaching, therefore, offered a means for individuals to learn the organizational aspects of leadership that were necessary for growth and success.

Cognitive Coaching

While other forms of coaching proliferated the literature, only one was the most widely used, cognitive coaching. Various definitions of cognitive coaching were present in the literature. Costa and Garmston (2002) explained that cognitive coaching was an efficient process for enhancing teachers' professional learning by building relationships and utilizing tools and procedures based in a coherent theoretical foundation. Quite simply, cognitive coaching assumed that as one's behaviors changed, one's beliefs changed (Sailors & Price, 2010). "All behavior, " Costa and Garmston (2002) explained, "is determined by a person's perceptions and . . . a change in perception and thought is prerequisite to a change in behavior...human beings construct their own meaning through reflecting on experience and through dialogue with others" (p. 7). Furthering Costa & Garmston's (2002) definition, Rutgers and Reddy (2013) explained that cognitive coaching was a constructivist model of learning that involved "adults in the

processes of inquiry, reconstructing their thinking, creating new knowledge, making meaning of new experiences and reflecting on new learning" (p. 1018). Cognitive coaching was a valuable tool for reflective leadership that schools, institutions, and organizations could use to provide purposeful opportunities for reflection, collaboration, and trust building.

The effect or impact of cognitive coaching proliferated the literature. In a study conducted by Akyildiz and Semerci (2016), cognitive coaching supported reflective teaching approaches to English Language teaching and was an effective method for increasing student academic success and performance. Findings from another study showed that cognitive coaching could help develop a network of reflective, self-reliant school principals (Rogers, Hauserman, & Skytt, 2016). The cognitive coaching model was used to change the behavior of new principals as they became better prepared for their new position. Rogers et al. (2016) explained that "knowledge, practice, level of thinking, self-reflection, self-efficacy, and confidence" improved during the pilot program (p. 24). Coaches, therefore, worked collaboratively and closely with teachers and school administrators to enhance their ability to reflect and improve on their practice when using this model. The cognitive coaching model included functions for professional support that faculty members could apply in their varying positions as coaches, facilitators, and evaluators. Constructing new knowledge, while challenging one's beliefs and behaviors, highlighted a model of considerable importance to the educational realm, because it could be applied not only to adult learners, but young learners as well.

Literacy Specific Coaching Models

Scholars had researched coaching models (i.e., content coaching, literacy coaching, and instructional coaching) that focused less on theory and more on content-mastery learning, which

provided a toolbox for encouraging teacher professional knowledge, improvement of pedagogical strategies, cognitive and reflective processing, and adult learning (Bickel et al., 2015; Deussen et al., 2007; Marsh et al., 2012; Knight, 2005, 2006, 2007). The literacy specific models embraced a practical method that focused more on the day-to-day realities of learning acquisition. Each of the literacy specific models highlighted the significance of pedagogical knowledge, content expertise, and interpersonal skills. In doing so, schools could use coaching as a means to shape educator philosophies of teaching and learning in a manner that was grounded in instructional ideology.

Content Coaching

The Institute for Learning at the University of Pittsburgh Learning Research and Development Center created a practice-based form of professional learning called content-focused coaching (Bickel et al., 2015). Originally adapted for math instruction, content coaching expanded to include other subjects like literacy instruction. Scholars described a content focused coaching experience as allowing teachers to work with colleagues that had already developed high-quality instructional practices and knowledge (Gibbons & Cobb, 2016). Content-oriented coaches scaffold teachers' development in a particular disciplinary area by "engaging them in activities that focus[ed] on key disciplinary ideas, how students learn[ed] those ideas, and pedagogical principles for supporting students' learning" (Gibbons & Cobb, 2016, p. 238). Content-oriented coaches had the capacity to move beyond basic content-area understanding into an area of expertise that capitalized on strategies specific to the discipline and student learning outcomes. In doing so, teachers could increase their capacity for content area strategies as an expert coach in the field.

While content-area expertise provided a necessary background for encouraging teachers to implement content-based strategies in the classroom, researchers found that this model was lacking cognitive tools to guide conversation, which could have impacted the model's success. For example, Edwards, Neill, and Faust (2015) found no statistically significant difference in perceptions of Title I middle school teachers regarding implementation of content area literacy strategy instruction. However, by incorporating cognitive strategies through the collaboration process, content coaches were more effective at driving instructional change (Bickel et al., 2015). A significant finding through research on content coaching showed a need for more than just a deep understanding of subject-area expertise. If one hoped to influence the coaching process more effectively, a coach needed extra strategies and tools to be successful in schools.

Literacy Coaching

Literacy coaching, a similar construct to content coaching, focused on the coaches' ability to impart relevant and important reading and writing strategies that improved learning (Bean et al., 2010; Cornett & Knight, 2009). As defined by the International Reading Association (IRA, now ILA), a literacy coach was anyone who supported teachers in their daily classroom literacy instruction (Cornett & Knight, 2009). Specific to the state of Florida, the state-led literacy policy called *Just Read Florida!* promoted the improvement of reading outcomes for students in low performing schools (Deussen et al., 2007). While Florida did not define the position of a reading or literacy coach in concrete terms, the state provided conceptual guidelines that school districts interpreted for literacy intent (Marsh et al., 2012). The open-ended guidelines allowed for schools to base their literacy needs and goals on their own student populations and communities.

The goal of Florida's coaching program was to "improve students' reading ability by helping teachers implement effective, research-based instruction in reading and in content areas" (Marsh et al., 2012, p. 5). In fact, Florida had devoted nearly "a third of its $90 million literacy initiative to coaching" (Snow et al., 2006, p. 35). The state encouraged literacy coaches to work with all teachers, specifically those that were new and those teaching struggling students; to prioritize their time on in-class coaching (i.e., modeling, observing, providing feedback); and to avoid formally evaluating teachers and participating in activities that detracted from work with teachers (i.e., administrative tasks, substitute teaching; Marsh et al., 2012). In order to enhance literacy coaching success in Florida, school districts were given funds to hire full-time, site-based reading coaches (Marsh et al., 2012; Toll, 2014). Literacy coaching soon became a key component of job-embedded professional learning that enhanced teacher success and improved literacy instruction and achievement.

Instructional Coaching

The concept of instructional coaching (specifically its impact, effectiveness, and position responsibilities) demonstrated a significant gap in the research base (Knight, 2005, 2006; Marsh et al., 2012). Studies supported the effectiveness of instructional coaching in the area of literacy for early childhood and elementary school levels (Al Otaiba et al., 2008; Bean et al., 2010; Bean, Swan, & Knaub, 2003; Hieneke, 2013; Ippolito, 2010; Jackson Dean, Dval, Wright, Bowden, Carpenter, & Austin, 2016; Kowal & Steiner, 2007; Taylor et al., 2013; Walpole et al., 2010; Walpole & Blarney, 2008), but studies on instructional coaching at the middle and high school levels were significantly fewer (Adams et al., 2017; Allan, 2007; Blarney et al., 2008; Ferguson, 2014; Gross, 2012; Marsh et al., 2012; Snow et al., 2006). The origins of an instructional coach derived from multiple federal policies like *Reading First*, *Striving Readers*, and *No Child Left*

Behind (NCLB), which required literacy coaching at a national level (Marsh et al., 2012; Toll, 2014). As a result of NCLB, educational institutions were required to develop and implement a school improvement plan that included professional development programs for teachers, which increased the prevalence of coaching as a professional development strategy (Kowal & Steiner, 2007). In effect, school-based literacy coaches were mandated to create, develop, and implement professional learning opportunities for teachers throughout the school year in an attempt to positively influence student achievement.

Researchers advocated that the rationale for instructional coaching stemmed from research on professional development and adult learning theory. Scholars suggested that individuals learned best when provided with opportunities to reflect, practice application of new ideas and receive feedback, and observed modeling (Brown, Collins, & Duguid, 1989). Coaches provided supports to teachers, so they were able to implement scientifically proven teaching practices in the classroom (Cornett & Knight, 2009; Knight, 2005, 2006, 2007; Kowal & Steiner, 2007). Because coaching expanded at the federal, state, and local levels, policymakers and practitioners needed to address whether to use coaches in schools even though the decision to do so was made with no concrete understanding of what coaches did or if they had any impact on student learning. Researchers argued that before coaching could be "linked to differences in student achievement, a clear picture of the qualifications and backgrounds of coaches and a description of what coaches actually do are needed" (Deussen et al., 2007, p. 2). Nevertheless, coaching expanded to include not only literacy, but also instructional foci.

Kowal and Steiner (2007) defined instructional coaching based on three criteria: interpersonal skills, content expertise, and pedagogical knowledge. Often identified as a form of inquiry-based learning, instructional coaching had been characterized as providing skilled

teachers with job-embedded professional learning, pedagogical knowledge, content expertise, and interpersonal skills to school staff (Borman & Feger, 2006; Deussen et al., 2007; Knight, 2007; Kowal & Steiner, 2007; Marsh et al., 2012; Mraz et al., 2008). This coaching style illustrated a multi-layered approach to improving instructional capacity in educational organizations. Aspects of peer coaching, executive coaching, and cognitive coaching could all be seen in the research-based practices of instructional coaches within the coaching literature. Knight (2007) explained that instructional coaches promoted teacher growth through data analysis, reflection, modeling, and high-quality professional learning by working alongside collaborating teachers and administrators in which all position-holders benefitted from the success, learning, or experience, and were rewarded by each individual's contributions. The position was non-supervisory and non-evaluative (Knight, 2007; Marsh et al., 2012). The emerging concept of an instructional coach combined the positions and responsibilities of other coach-types and further blurred the boundary of coach expectations given by administrators, districts, and schools.

As the literature showed, diverse coaching models were researched in terms of effectiveness, impact, and growth within educational contexts. General definitions of each coaching model emphasized a basic understanding of what the coach could or should do within schools. However, a greater understanding of the instructional literacy coaching model still needed to be examined. While the instructional literacy coaching model's magnitude and apparent importance within the state of Florida's improvement criteria suggested that coaches were significant for accountability and growth, the theoretical underpinnings of the position and responsibilities of a coach were explored in order to document the success of the reform model and to articulate how coaches were trained, developed, and supported in the process. An

examination of coaching positions and responsibilities within the extant literature further illustrates the need for clarity of this coaching model.

Coaching Positions and Responsibilities

Despite the need and prevalence of instructional literacy coaching in educational organizations, a standard model or uniform definition of the positions and responsibilities of a coach did not exist (Blarney et al., 2008; Borman & Feger, 2006; Ippolito et al., 2019; Kowal & Steiner, 2007; Poglinco & Bach, 2004; Snow et al., 2006; Walpole & McKenna, 2004). Because coaches had been used in a variety of ways, the position had become inherently multifaceted and ambiguous. The State of Florida provides districts with basic job descriptions of the positions and responsibilities that coaches should execute at the school level. Yet, Marsh et al. (2012) argued that, although the state job description in Florida explains that coaches would "train teachers in data analysis and using data to differentiate instruction," it was just one of ten suggested responsibilities (p. 874). Even within a defined reform model, the coach position lacked definition, making it subject to various interpretations and diverse structures in local contexts (Borman & Feger, 2006). While many researchers wrote of instructional coaching with a shared, normative, and fixed definition, this literature review revealed efforts to describe and explain the manifestation of the coaching model in local contexts that resulted in inconsistency (Blarney et al., 2008; Borman & Feger, 2006; Gallucci et al., 2010; Snow et al., 2006). Instructional coaches in one school district were used differently than an instructional coach in a neighboring district. While the title these coaches shared was synonymous, the manifestation of the positions and responsibilities they executed differed.

Instructional coaches were often used in a variety of ways, as states, districts, and schools searched for a means to improve instruction and student learning (Borman & Feger, 2006;

Deussen et al., 2007; Norton, 2001). Deussen et al. (2007) found that on average, coaches spent only 28% of their time working with teachers, although they had been asked to spend 60-80% of their time in classroom-related activities. Heineke (2013) articulated that coaching was a highly complex process, which was influenced by the context in which it transpired. The complexity of the process and diversity in locale of the coaching experience, therefore, warranted a plethora of interpretations, definitions, expectations, and goals of what an instructional coach actually did. Individuals were selected because of an existing position deemed valuable by the district (Kowal & Steiner, 2007). For example, Gallucci et al. (2010) noted that schools or district leadership teams, which resulted in considerable variation in how coaches were utilized, determined coach positions. Some districts adopted a coaching strategy to improve instructional capacity; some districts focused on local goals to drive coaching responsibilities; some districts required coaches to train teachers on particular content area approaches; and some districts worked to improve general instructional practices by promoting reflective, collaborative, and professional cultures among faculty (Kowal & Steiner, 2007). The presence of specialists in schools had also been widely accepted, causing the perception and rationale of a coach to be viewed through the lens of an on-site specialist. However, the expectations of the coaching position differed among professionals providing and receiving expert knowledge (Mraz et al., 2008). Coaches served in positions as learners, grant writers, planners, curriculum experts, researchers, teachers, and administrators (Walpole & Blarney, 2008). Coaches were given titles like "specialist, facilitator, language arts, curriculum, instructional, or academic" coach (Mraz et al., 2008, p. 142). Coaches generated a safe and trusting environment that engaged others in academic criticism and reflection. They acted as school-wide facilitators, promoted collaboration and the development of learning communities, or served as non-evaluative mentors who supported teachers (Bean et

al., 2003; Borman & Feger, 2006; Kowal & Steiner, 2007; Mraz et al., 2008). The tasks coaches performed in schools, as a result, were just as varied as their titles.

The impact of instructional literacy coaches in classrooms as a result of their ambiguous job descriptions manifested in various ways. Poglinco and Bach (2004) articulated that being an effective classroom teacher did not guarantee that one would be an effective coach, as prior experiences and the ability to provide useful feedback were among the most significant criteria for effective coaching. Description of what coaches did were so disparate and varied that many researchers claimed coaching to be a non-uniform intervention of job-embedded professional learning (Bean et al., 2010; Borman & Feger, 2006; Coburn & Woulfin, 2012; Cornett & Knight, 2009; Deussen et al., 2007; Poglinco & Bach 2004; Russo, 2004). In a study conducted by Blarney et al. (2008), 74% of coaches reported that their position remained undefined and 15% indicated that the district defined the coaching position through a top-down construction without any input from the coach. In addition, researchers at the University of Pennsylvania conducted a study of the coaching model implemented in America's Choice Schools. They reported that coaches felt that a lack of description and clear definition of their positions and responsibilities made their jobs more difficult, contributed to misunderstandings with school administrators and teachers, and created tensions within their coaching beliefs (Poglinco et al., 2003). Because of the myriad of tasks that could be associated with coaching, a need persisted to develop and describe coaching positions, responsibilities, activities and purposes. A significant recommendation from the study was to caution researchers "not to assume that ‘coach’ means only one thing- having a coach is not a uniform intervention . . . because there is a difference between being a coach and doing coaching” (Poglinco et al., 2003, p. 5). Despite the rise in awareness to provide professional development to help coaches learn how to support adult

learners, a coordinated professional development system would be necessary to support all instructional leaders (such as coaches, specialists, or principals) who surround the classroom teacher (Gallucci et al., 2010; Marsh et al., 2012). Because of the undefined nature of the job, the implications regarding the impact of instructional literacy coaches in classrooms were great.

While the broader literature on educational organizations found the uncertainty in coaching positions problematic, some researchers decided to embrace the chaos as a means to empower instructional experts (Mraz et al., 2008). According to Deussen et al. (2007), coaches were:

> Skilled teachers or former teachers who step out of their classrooms to help teachers become more thoughtful and more effective in their instruction, and work side-by-side in the classroom, providing job-embedded professional development through observing, modeling, providing feedback, and planning lessons according to the needs and goals of individual teachers. (p. iii)

Borman and Feger (2006) described the ambiguous abundance of coaching responsibilities (i.e., school-wide facilitators, non-evaluative mentors, pedagogical and content experts, and interpersonal skill motivators) as a productive means to promote collaboration and development in learning communities. Because coaches were overly extended in their basic job-tasks, scholars defined coaching based on what they provided to others: a safe and trusting environment that engaged others in academic criticism and reflection (Dole & Donaldson, 2006; Kowal & Steiner, 2007; Shaw, Smith, Chesler, & Romeo, 2005). Rush (2013) explained that the flexibility in coaching positions and responsibilities were integral to the success of coaches in assisting teachers and developing teacher knowledge and practice. Recommendations for coaching success, therefore, included focusing one's interest and attention on a primary goal,

ensuring visibility and frequency in classrooms, and establishing oneself as a resource (Dole & Donaldson, 2006). They found the variability and openness to decide how to utilize coaches allowed for a more expansive approach to teaching and learning that was not confined to a singular perspective.

Despite the pervading theory that instructional coaches supported teachers and students, scholars had yet to explore the training, professional learning, and on-going support of instructional coaches. Research on instructional improvement, where instructional coaching figured prominently, indicated that coaching supported reform efforts, but the qualifications and professional preparation of coaches was limited (Gallucci et al., 2010; Knight, 2007; Marsh et al., 2012; Stock & Duncan, 2010). The literature treated coaches as static entities who entered the position with expertise and skill, often without acknowledging that they, too, were learners in need of further development and structural support (Gallucci et al., 2010; Marsh et al., 2012; Talley & Henry, 2008). A statewide study of Florida middle-school reading coaches showed concerns regarding recruiting, retaining, and supporting high-quality coaches (Marsh et al., 2012). Stock and Duncan (2010) found that 56% of instructional coaches reported that they did not have a mentor, yet 95% of respondents thought being or receiving mentoring was important and 58% thought mentoring was important even for experienced instructional coaches. This study illustrated the necessity for coaches to be cultivated as leaders and learners in the same manner that coaches were asked to develop teachers as classroom leaders and learners.

Similar to students as learners, coaches as learners benefited from multiple opportunities to learn. A descriptive study indicated that elements like the use of data, dealing with difficult staff, creating a collegial faculty, and sustaining personal motivation were needed for effective professional development for instructional coaches (Stock & Duncan, 2010). Professional

development was reported to improve instructional coaches' successes in working with difficult staff members (an effect size of d = 0.62; Hattie, 2009, p.111). Scholars recommended that more research is needed to study an instructional coach's professional learning processes, how and why they entered the position of the coach, and what criteria was used to support coach placement and ongoing development (Gallucci et al., 2010).

Some researchers argued that the way districts positioned the coach, either as district-level or school-based personnel, impacted how districts envisioned using the coach position within their reform efforts (Norton, 2001). When instructional coaches were given professional learning opportunities, the impact on teacher effectiveness and student achievement increased (Marsh et al., 2012). Teachers who received support from a coach were able to improve students' background knowledge about a text from 41% to 63% (Marsh et al., 2012). Teacher candidates who received coaching significantly increased their use of instructional practices, while also improving levels of student engagement during their internship (Smith, Stapleton, Cuthrell, Brinkley, & Covington, 2016). Knowing the results of multiple studies that emphasized the impact of an instructional coach on teacher and student learning indicated a need to nurture the instructional coach as a professional learner, too.

Because of the myriad of tasks that could be associated with instructional coaching, the need persisted to develop and describe coaching positions, responsibilities, activities, and purposes within educational organizations. More importantly, the need to address the positions and responsibilities of coaches in secondary settings was significant, as high school studies were limited in the literature. The local manifestation of an instructional literacy-coaching model needed to be studied in order to gain a better understanding of how the perceived positions and responsibilities of the coach influenced the school context. Therefore, this study sought to

address this gap by providing evidence of the position of an instructional literacy coach within one central Florida school district by analyzing the perceptions of high school administrators, classroom teachers, and instructional literacy coaches.

Perceptions of Coaches by Professional Bodies

Understanding the perceptions of literacy coaches by national professional bodies highlighted a significant area of analysis. The perceived expectation of middle and high school literacy coaching demands was examined for a thorough look at the standards used to inform secondary schools. Historically, the nation focused on early reading instruction that targeted the primary grades with minimal remedial support at the secondary level. According to the *International Literacy Association* (ILA), a gap existed regarding middle and high school teachers understanding "how they can develop content knowledge at the same time that they improve student literacy" (IRA, 2006, p. 2). Overall, the national perspective regarding middle and high school student literacy was an immediate need for structured support. The ILA (2006) explained, "To compete and succeed in modern society, high school graduates need to be expert readers, writers, and communicators. Too many are not" (p. 6). Therefore, "equipping middle and high schools with trained literacy coaches" was emphasized as "one line of attack to combat" America's literacy needs (IRA, 2006, p. 6). As a result, a collaborative governing body represented by the *International Literacy Association* (ILA), *National Council of Teachers of English* (NCTE), *National Council of Teacher of Mathematics* (NCTM), *National Science Teachers Association* (NSTA), and *National Council for the Social Studies* (NCSS) worked together to codify the knowledge and skills they perceived as necessary for secondary school literacy coaches in order to be effective. While common ground was forged, important differences particular to each content area were retained, and the end result was a set of

leadership standards that applied to literacy coaches both with and without regard to the content area they supported (IRA, 2006).

Key perceptions of the national governing bodies were organized into two parts: leadership standards and content area literacy standards (IRA, 2006). Across all subject areas, literacy coaches were expected to be "skillful collaborators," "skillful job-embedded coaches," "skillful evaluators of literacy needs," and "skillful instructional strategists" (IRA, 2006, p. 5). While the leadership standards for literacy coaches could be applied to any subject area, each content area outlined a specific focus where coaches could play an essential role in assisting teachers and students. For English Language Arts, NCTE argued that literacy coaches should support students in "making meaning with text and provide appropriate, strategic assistance to read course content effectively" (IRA, 2006, p. 20). For mathematics, NCTM explained that literacy coaches should support students in reasoning and problem solving in a wide variety of settings. For science, NSTA highlighted the need for literacy coaches to promote science-based reading, writing, and oral communication demands and to offer professional development that addressed that challenges that science educators faced with learning new strategies, reflecting on teaching, exploring solutions, and redirecting actions based on new information. Finally, for social studies, NCSS argued that literacy coaches should support teachers in locating and using primary and secondary source documents, recognize and evaluate bias, enhance visual learning abilities in students, and support content knowledge, intellectual skills, and civic values. Literacy coaching expectations at all levels were more similar than they were different, but the skills needed to address middle and high school content area literacy needs presented a specific ongoing challenge (IRA, 2006). Coaching was perceived as the ultimate approach to literacy reform.

The *International Literacy Association* updated their standards in 2017. According to Ippolito et al. (2019), the new *ILA Standards 2017* were modernized in five major ways. To begin, all aspects of literacy (reading, writing, speaking, listening, viewing, and visually representing) were emphasized in lieu of a reading-only focus. Instructional literacy coaches need to be able to teach colleagues about "a range of systematic and explicit interventions based on student needs" as well as "critically examine and implement literacy curricula and instructional methods" across disciplines (Ippolito et al., 2019, p. 23). Coaches must be able to "select, administer, analyze, and share literacy assessment data to inform instruction," while also advocate for "diverse learners and equitable education policies and practices" (Ippolito et al., 2019, p. 23). Finally, digital literacy requirements for literacy professionals increased to include providing student access to "quality digital and traditional texts, teaching safe and ethical use of online materials, and knowing how to establish a socially, emotionally, and physically safe environment in school" (Ippolito et al., 2019, p. 24). The *Standards 2017* provided the clearest national demarcation of the roles and responsibilities of literacy coaches in modern schools across all curriculum areas.

Perceptions of Instructional Coaches

Scholars only recently focused on perceptions of coaching by school staff members. The coaching scholarship presented information on perceptions of coaching and its relationship to evaluation (Tschannen-Moran & Tschannen-Moran, 2011); coaching as a support system (Knight, 2009); coaching discourse and coaching behaviors (Heineke, 2013; Vanderburg & Stephens, 2010); and coaching relationships among staff members (Borman & Feger, 2006; Deussen et al., 2007; Ippolito, 2010; Ippolito et al., 2019; Marsh et al., 2012; Veenman & Denessen, 2001). However, Taylor et al. (2013) argued that research on the value of

instructional coach positions was perceptual. Moreover, they emphasized the need to develop effectiveness measures that resulted in greater fidelity and clarification of implementation of the coaching position (Taylor et al., 2013). While perception studies indicated the extent to which organizational members understood or agreed with the tasks and responsibilities of others, they did not provide a comprehensive examination of the perceptive impact. Even so, perception studies were still significant in gathering relevant data about organizations regarding a common understanding of the position of the instructional literacy coach.

Thus, an examination of the literature pertaining to the perceptions of instructional coaches by school administrators, classroom teachers, and coaches highlights the need to study three key staff positions within the educational organization. Scholars examined perceptions of coaches through the lens of a single or dual group (i.e., teachers or administrators only; coaches and principals together), but they did not study the instructional coach position through the perspective of multiple faculty members to determine how congruent or incongruent those perceptions may be within the organization. Further, an investigation on the perceptual differences regarding the position of an instructional or literacy coach in the elementary and secondary settings illustrated a need for greater scholarship on secondary instructional coaches.

Elementary Versus Secondary Setting

In the past decade, several researchers have begun to investigate the work of literacy coaches in the middle and high school settings (Blarney et al., 2008; Marsh et al., 2008; Rush, 2013). However, most research into the work of coaches focused on the elementary level (Deussen et al., 2007). Some researchers argued that coaching in the secondary setting was completely different than coaching in the elementary setting (Riddle-Buly, Coskie, Robinson, & Egawa, 2006; Snow et al., 2006). Riddle-Buly et al. (2006) explained that elementary coaching

models could not be implemented in middle or high schools without appropriate consideration or adaptation to the secondary setting. Elementary instructional coaches reported that they viewed themselves as supporting change either at the school level as directors, at the classroom level as mentors, or at both levels (Walpole & Blarney, 2008). Greater clarity in position responsibilities was highlighted by this study of elementary coaches (Walpole & Blarney, 2008). Meanwhile, the secondary coaching scholarship struggled to define coaching positions and responsibilities (Blarney et al., 2009; Marsh et al., 2008; Poglinco et al., 2003; Snow et al., 2006). Rush (2013) stated, "we currently know very little about the impact of literacy coaches on secondary school teacher practice and on student achievement at the secondary level," which made work on secondary school coaches a significant element to investigate (p. 273). Therefore, studies of secondary school coaches are required in order to narrow the research gap.

Two prominent studies illustrated the challenges of understanding the positions and responsibilities of coaches at the elementary and secondary levels. In a study conducted by Mraz and colleagues (2008), they found no differences in perspectives across elementary principals, teachers, and literacy coaches through survey responses, but interviews across the three respondent groups presented a different picture. They argued that responses to interview questions showed that the position of the coach was still up for much interpretation on the part of principals, teachers, and the coaches themselves (Mraz et al., 2008). In fact, given the "recommendation of professional organizations that literacy coaches possessed specialized training in reading, coaches needed consistent opportunities to apply and enhance that training" (Mraz et al., 2008; p. 153). Moreover, Rush (2013) examined the positions and responsibilities of secondary instructional coaches in Wyoming and found that the flexibility in their positions was integral to the statewide funding model. In this model, Rush (2013) explained:

> The aim of the [instructional coaches] may not be solely on assisting teachers to embed literacy in their content instruction, but may be divided among other worthwhile goals, including preparation for state assessments, developing teacher knowledge and practice in instructional technology, or instructional planning. (p. 289)

Because the instructional coaching positions were so widely varied; however, "very little was actually accomplished" (Rush, 2013, p. 289). On the other hand, a separate study by Bean et al. (2018) emphasized the commonalities between elementary and secondary principal perceptions of reading coaches. In this study, the researchers surveyed elementary and secondary principals in Pennsylvania in order to better understand their perceptions of the roles and impact of coaches. The results suggested that the work of coaches was relatively the same across levels. Therefore, further examination of perceptions of instructional coaching positions and responsibilities was necessary.

Coaches' Self Perceptions

In the coaching literature, some studies examined the relationships between coaches and teachers (Bean et al., 2010; Coburn & Woulfin, 2012; Deussen et al., 2007; Ippolito, 2010) and the perceptions of coaches themselves (Mraz et al., 2008). Quite simply, coaches expressed the belief that coaching was making a difference in their school environments (Riddle-Buly et al., 2006). Coaches reported that they viewed themselves as supporting change either at the school level as a director, at the classroom level as a mentor, or at both levels (Walpole & Blarney, 2008). Prominent themes across study participants, conducted by Walpole & Blarney (2008), showed that coaches viewed themselves as "assessors, curriculum managers, formative observers, modelers, teachers, and trainers...they viewed their positions as multidimensional, encompassing many specific activities" (p. 226). The flexibility in job expectations allowed

coaches to articulate the multitude of responsibilities in an effective and constructive manner. On the other hand, Dole and Donaldson (2006) explained that coaches still struggle with their daily tasks. Coaches asked, "I just want someone to tell me, what am I supposed to do all day?" (Dole & Donaldson, 2006, p. 487). The perspectives of coaches still needed to be examined to gain a better understanding of their positions and the impact of those positions within educational organizations.

Teachers' Perceptions of Coaches

Due to the increased importance of teacher knowledge and insight into professional learning, a recent focus on teacher perceptions of coaching in the literature has started to grow. Several studies focused on the actions and relationships of coaches with teachers (Bean et al., 2010; Coburn & Woulfin, 2012; Deussen et al., 2007; Ippolito, 2010), and coaching behaviors that changed teachers' beliefs and practice (Vanderburg & Stephens, 2010). Scholars stressed a need to better understand how complex relationships between coaches and teachers related to change in teacher practice (Deussen et al., 2007; Mraz et al., 2008; Vanderburg & Stephens, 2010). In a study investigating teachers' perceptions of literacy coaching, Vanderburg and Stephens (2010) sought to understand what teachers deemed most helpful from their coaches and identify which teacher beliefs and practices changed because of their coaching experience. Vanderburg and Stephens (2010) described the climate of literacy coaching reported within South Carolina schools as follows:

> There is sometimes the tendency for coaches to try to get teachers to do particular things that the administration has deemed necessary and for teachers to be evaluated by their coach against those goals...it seems reasonable for more schools and states to consider providing teachers with...support that facilitates growth. (p. 157)

Even within the confines of perceived administrative pressures, their findings emphasized how teachers described the benefits of coaching as creating ways for teachers to collaborate, exposing teachers to research-based teaching practices, and providing teachers with ongoing support (Vanderburg & Stephens, 2010). Understanding administrative school improvement goals proved significant regarding the coach-teacher relationship.

Teachers were often perplexed over what coaches did or did not do in their school, especially at the elementary school level (Mraz et al., 2008). For example, "one literacy coach recounted the experience of having had a teacher in her building call a meeting with the principal at the beginning of the year to complain that the coach was not doing anything" (Mraz et al., 2008, p. 152). Hathaway et al. (2016) articulated that changes in teachers' beliefs and perceptions resulted from teacher participation in coaching. They found that the variation in how the position of the coach was defined or carried out was often the result of varying perceptions held by teachers about the position of the coach. Likewise, Mraz et al. (2008) discovered that teachers in six elementary schools within the same district all held vastly different expectations for the position of the coach. Teachers struggled to make sense of the coaching position just as much as the coach struggled to articulate the coaching position.

Principals' Perceptions of Coaches

Principals had been identified as key leaders of instructional change in their schools because of their impact on student learning and development of position expectations. Although there was research about how specialized literacy professionals like instructional coaches functioned in schools (Blarney et al., 2008), researchers knew much less about how those professionals interacted and collaborated with principals in schools (Bean, Dagen, Ippolito, & Kern, 2018). Across multiple studies, evidence showed the significance of principal support for

coaching success and the need for coaches at the secondary level to develop a strong relationship with principals (Bean et al., 2018; Blarney et al., 2008; Marsh et al., 2008; Rush, 2013). For example, principals identified the most important responsibilities for instructional coaches in their schools as: coaching teachers (77%), helping teachers understand data (57%), and providing professional learning opportunities for groups of teachers (60%; Bean et al., 2018). Similarly, Ippolito et al. (2019) found that among K-12 principals, coaching teachers (77%) and providing professional learning opportunities for groups of teachers (60%) were most important for literacy coaches (p. 25). Principals' expectations of coaches in the organization emphasized the importance of staff relationships in order to align school improvement goals with daily practice.

Principals' influenced coach effectiveness since they developed position expectations and they created the conditions for teachers to improve effectiveness and student learning. Elementary and secondary principals were surveyed to better understand their perceptions of the positions and impact of instructional coaches in their schools (Bean et al., 2018). The results showed that elementary principals (54%) and secondary principals (51%) indicated that "the staff and I work together as a team to make decisions about the literacy program" in their schools (Bean et al., 2018). Thus, the understandings of the position of instructional coaches and their potential impact on student achievement by principals were essential for coach effectiveness (Leithwood, Louis, Smith, & Wahlstrom, 2004).

Yet, principals expressed concerns about the coach's' position, activities performed by the coach, and the ways in which coaches engaged in school initiatives (Mraz et al., 2008). As one principal stated, "we all use them differently" (Mraz et al., 2008, p. 152). The principal of a school may be uncertain of the position of the coach, often because the coaching position was not clearly defined. Principals, according to Walpole and Blarney (2008), viewed elementary

coaches as school-level or classroom-level actors in the school staff development model. In a separate study, the perceptions of elementary principals in one urban school district concerning the effectiveness and necessity of reading coaches found that regardless of their demographic characteristics, principals believed that reading coaches were a necessary part of their school's faculty (Jackson Dean et al., 2016). The results of the study highlighted the need for a nationwide standardization of the responsibilities, job requirements, and job qualifications of coaches (Jackson Dean et al., 2016).

Summary of Chapter Two

The position of an instructional literacy coach resulted in wide variances in perceptions and understandings regarding its definition, approach, and impact. Instructional literacy coaches currently existed within the state of Florida at every level of the public school system, but no two schools utilized the position in exactly the same way. The researcher reviewed literature pertaining to: (a) coaching models in education, (b) instructional literacy coaching positions and responsibilities, (c) perceptions of coaches by professional bodies, and (d) perceptions of instructional coaches by key staff members (i.e., school administrators, classroom teachers, and coaches). As the literature showed, general definitions of each coaching model emphasized a basic understanding of what the coach could or should do within schools. However, a greater understanding of the instructional literacy-coaching model still needed to be examined, especially at the high school level (Blarney et al., 2008; Borman & Feger, 2006; Kowal & Steiner, 2007; Poglinco & Bach, 2004; Snow et al., 2006; Walpole & McKenna, 2004). Because of the myriad of tasks that could be associated with instructional coaching, a need persisted to develop and describe coaching positions, responsibilities, activities, and purposes within educational organizations. Furthermore, coaches, teachers, and principals all struggled with

defining an instructional coach's daily task, and their perceptions of the coaching position were overwhelmingly varied (Bean et al., 2010; Bean et al., 2018; Blarney et al., 2008; Coburn & Woulfin, 2012; Deussen et al., 2017; Dole & Donaldson, 2006; Hathaway et al., 2016; Ippolito, 2010; Jackson Dean et al., 2016; Leithwood et al., 2004; Mraz et al., 2008; Rush, 2013; Vanderburg & Stephens, 2010; Walpole & Blarney, 2008).

The comprehensiveness of and approaches to understanding the positions and responsibilities of instructional literacy coaches vary widely, and no single taxonomy existed to compare results or frameworks. The lack of a clear single definition and the resulting wide variances made evaluation of high school instructional literacy coaches difficult. Though an increasing number of studies showed variance in perceptions of instructional coaches, research was still limited. Therefore, this study sought to address this gap by providing evidence of the position of an instructional literacy coach within one central Florida school district by analyzing the perceptions of high school administrators, classroom teachers, and coaches and to determine if any perceptual variance existed among those groups.

CHAPTER 3: METHODS

The purpose of this quantitative case study was to examine the position of an instructional literacy coach as perceived by high school administrators, teachers, and coaches and to determine if any perceptual variance existed among those groups. In an effort to understand the perspectives of each group, this project used quantitative methods to provide insight into the meanings conveyed by high school administrators, teachers, and instructional literacy coaches. Several studies examined teacher perceptions of coaching using quantitative surveys, questionnaires, or mixed-method approaches, yet these studies did not explore the perspectives of school administrators in conjunction with teachers for understanding an instructional literacy coaches' positions, nor did these studies compare for group variances (Bean et al., 2010; Cantrell & Hughes, 2008; Marsh et al., 2012; Sailors & Price, 2010; Tschannen-Moran & McMaster, 2009). The survey instrument items were created exclusively for this study by the researcher based on the UF Lastinger Center for Learning Certified Instructional Coaching Rubric (CICE)©. An online survey tool named Qualtrics© was used to distribute the survey instrument and obtain the data for the study.

The methodology employed to test the research questions is presented in this chapter and organized into five sections: (1) research design, (2) selection of participants, (3) instrumentation, (4) data collection, and (5) data analysis. The researcher analyzed each participant group's perceptions and compared any commonalities and/or differences between group variances to understand the level of congruence or incongruence toward their understanding of the position of an instructional literacy coach.

Research Design

The study was designed as a quantitative case study of one public school district in central Florida. According to Yin (2014), a case study is "an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident" (p. 18). The investigated phenomenon was the level of agreement between key school staff members regarding the position of an instructional literacy coach. Because the context of the phenomenon was not clearly evident, as instructional literacy coaches were used differently depending on the organization, this case study sought to discover this phenomenon within a public secondary school learning environment. The researcher attempted to study groups of individuals (school administrators, classroom teachers, and instructional literacy coaches) extensively where data was collected from various sources (all high schools) to formulate an interpretation of the school districts contemporary coaching model (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2015; Yin, 2014). By circumscribing the area of study to one public school district, the researcher was able to deeply analyze the instructional literacy-coaching model.

Case study research was ideal for examining the four research questions, which were closely connected to the contextual phenomenon of the study. In doing so, the school district coaching model could be studied in its natural setting, which allowed for meaningful and relevant theory to be generated. A quantitative case study design was selected to best address the four research questions.

1. What is the position of an instructional coach, as perceived by school administrators, classroom teachers, and instructional coaches?

2. In what ways and to what extent, if any, do perceptions of the position of instructional coaches vary among school administrators, classroom teachers, and instructional coaches?
3. In what ways and to what extent, if any, do teacher perceptions of the position of instructional coaches vary by individual characteristics?
4. In what ways and to what extent, if any, does the level of perceptual congruence regarding the position of instructional coaches vary by the participant's position within the dyads of classroom teacher-instructional coach, instructional coach-school administrator, and classroom teacher-school administrator?

To that end, the dependent variable in this study was the perceptions of the position of a high school instructional literacy coach, as measured using the previously described survey instrument (PILCI)©. The independent variable in this study was the position of each participant (i.e. instructional coach, classroom teacher, and school administrator) within the organizational structure of the school, as self-reported through the survey instrument. The dependent variable operationalized what individual participants perceived to be the position of an instructional coach, and the independent variable allowed for investigating differences among positions and congruence within dyads of positions.

The researcher's background and data availability lent itself to focus on quantitative methods in this case study of a singular school district. The survey instrument used for data collection was self-created using knowledge and experience the researcher had gained as a Lastinger certified instructional coach, and adapted from the University of Florida Lastinger Center for Learning's rubric for instructional coach certification (CICE)©, as shown in Appendix A (Ross, 2011). The study was situated in a public school district in central Florida that had a

partnership with the Lastinger Center for Learning to provide multi-year coach training and support. This district was chosen because it provided a rich context to study the perceptions of high school administrator, teacher, and instructional literacy coach experiences on the positions and responsibilities of the coach.

Selection of Participants

The participants for this research study were located in one Central Florida public school district comprised of eight public high schools. The targeted population of interest for this study consisted of three major faculty groups: all high school principals and school administrators, school-based and district-based instructional literacy coaches, and classroom teachers. Thus, eight public high schools and their respective educational professionals from the school district were invited to participate. Table 1 indicated a breakdown of the targeted population for each faculty group within the one school district. The total targeted population was $N = 108$ members. According to Krejcie and Morgan (1970), an appropriate sample size for a population between $n = 100$ and $n = 110$ was between $n = 80$ - 86 participants. The research study received $n = 89$ total responses from the survey. However, out of the total sample size ($n = 89$), the researcher removed two responses because no data was selected (blank surveys), and one participant did not consent to the study. Thus, the total sample was $n = 86$ participants.

Table 1

Total Participant Data

Participant Position	*N*	*n*	*Percent*
Principal	8	6	75.00
Assistant Principal	38	26	68.42
Instructional Literacy Coach	17	15	88.24
Classroom Teacher	45	39	86.67
Total	108	86	79.63

Note. N = Number of Participants; n = Sample Size

All high school administrators and instructional literacy coaches in the district of study were invited to participate. However, purposive sampling techniques were utilized for identifying classroom teachers. Purposive sampling involved selecting a sample based on the researcher's experience or knowledge of the group to be sampled (Lunenburg & Irby, 2008). In special situations, the use of a purposive sample was chosen as the form of data collection because it allowed for a small number of expert cases to be representative of the average target population (Neuman, 1997). In the current study, the purposive sample provided the means to investigate a specialized population of individuals (i.e., classroom teachers that worked directly with an instructional literacy coach either previously or currently) in a school district that had a partnership with the University of Florida Lastinger Institute.

The population of this study was selected for the following reasons:

1. The school administrators (principals and assistant principals only) involved in this study were charged with direct supervision of a school-based instructional coach and were qualified to evaluate the performance of instructional coaches (Jackson Dean et al., 2016; Mraz et al., 2008).

2. There was a limited amount of research on school administrators' perceptions of instructional coaches (Bean et al., 2018; Blarney et al., 2008; Marsh et al., 2008; Rush, 2013).
3. The teachers involved in this study had been asked to work with UF Lastinger certified instructional coaches and were qualified to provide professional feedback on the experience of working with instructional coaches (Coburn & Woulfin, 2012; Ippolito, 2010).
4. The majority of instructional coaches involved in this study had completed the University of Florida Lastinger certified instructional coach program and were familiar with the criteria for a successful coaching cycle.

The selection of participants aligned with Yin's (2014) argument for a case study in situations where the phenomenon or context was not clearly evident. Thus, the study criteria enabled the researcher to closely examine the instructional coaching framework within one school district by targeting the three faculty groups.

Instrumentation

As previously mentioned, the high school instructional literacy coach's job responsibilities within the district were aligned with those established by the University of Florida Lastinger Center for Learning's instructional coach certification criteria (CICE)©. Because the review of literature did not reveal any published instruments that examined the perceptions of school administrators, classroom teachers, and instructional literacy coaches on the variation in the perception of coaching positions, and variance in the congruency of those perceptions, the researcher developed a survey exclusively for this study titled Perceptions of Instructional Literacy Coaches Instrument (PILCI©) (See Appendix B). The PILCI© was a

researcher-created survey made for the purposes of discerning perception of coaching positions as well as the congruency of perceptions among high school administrators, teachers, and coaches. The instrument was modified from the UF Lastinger Center for Learning Certified Instructional Coaching Rubric (CICE©).

Certified Instructional Coach Evaluation Rubric (CICE)©

The UF Lastinger Center (2018) developed the Certified Instructional Coach Evaluation Rubric (CICE©) as an evaluation tool used to provide feedback for instructional coaches to determine if coaches would be ultimately certified. The rubric used three domains to evaluate the instructional coach: focus of conversation, data display, and the coaching conversation. Each domain had areas that were evaluated and determined to be "mastery level," "emerging," "or needs improvement" (See Appendix A). To be certified, a coach must demonstrate competence at the emerging level or better in all areas and score at the mastery level in the majority of areas. The CICE© was used as a guideline for the creation of the survey used in this study.

Perceptions of Instructional Literacy Coaches Instrument (PILCI©)

The survey used in this study was the Perceptions of Instructional Literacy Coaches Instrument (PILCI ©) (See Appendix B). The PILCI© was a researcher-created survey made for the purposes of discerning perception of coaching positions as well as the congruency of perceptions among high school administrators, teachers, and coaches. Creation of this survey was necessary because there were no other scales or instruments that measured position perceptions that had been created exclusively for the high school environment and had accounted for the CICE© criteria.

Based on the modified content from UF's CICE© rubric, the survey displayed a 27-item, five point Likert scale (See Appendix B). Following each stimulus statement on the survey, the participants were asked to mark 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, or 5 = Strongly Agree. Likert scales were reliable and valid instruments for the measurement of attitude and perceptions (Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2012). The purpose of the survey for each participant group was to quantify the findings to further explain and explore the results of each research question. The proposed analyses utilized results obtained for the individual survey items (i.e., no scale or sub-scales were computed).

For validity purposes, the survey was examined by a small panel of experts to determine its representativeness of the identified concepts (Aiken & Groth-Marnat, 2005). Face validation contributed to the testing instrument's validity because it determined if the instrument, on its face, measured what it purported to measure (Creswell, 2003). Two separate reviews of the survey were completed by a panel of doctoral candidates and knowledgeable district specialists from the district of study who validated the content of the survey to ensure the relevance of the individual items within the instrument. Researchers stated, "the extent to which our data collection instruments, or processes, measure what they are supposed to measure is an indication of validity" (Ross & Shannon, 2008). During this review, the construction, coherence regarding question clarity, and progression of the items and instructions were examined.

Furthermore, a cognitive lab was conducted with professional colleagues who were experienced with and knowledgeable about instructional coaching. These individuals performed a think-aloud during the process of reading, understanding, and responding to each item, which enabled the researcher to identify any problematic or nuanced wording, ordering of items, and anything else that needed to be changed like content ambiguity. Revisions were made to the

final version of the survey. In consultation with the dissertation chair, this step was imperative for feedback concerning the respondents understanding of each item as well as understanding the proper response to the items on the survey.

The survey items were listed by specific categories based on the CICE© and ordered in relationship to be salient with corresponding questions. Items 1, 4, 7, 10, 13, 16, 19, 21, 23, 25, 26, and 27 pertained to the theme of focus. The theme of focus included mastering the ability to provide evidence of conversations, guiding the teacher and coach instructional goals, aligning core standards with the district's instructional framework, and consistently using the language of instruction for school and classroom improvement. Items 2, 5, 8, 11, 14, and 17 pertained to data display. The theme of data display included knowing whether the coach collected relevant and useful data that was easily interpreted by the teacher, and presenting descriptive, non-evaluative data to initiate a coaching conversation. And, items 3, 6, 9, 12, 15, 18, 20, 22, and 24 pertained to the coaching conversation. The theme of a coaching conversation included being intentional about body language, tone, voice, and the setting of conversations so as to build mutual trust, instilling a sense of equity in thinking, referring back to observational, objective data during conversations, and asking clarifying questions about assumptions and perspectives so as to avoid evaluation.

Data Collection

Prior to beginning this study, the researcher requested permission to conduct this investigation through the university's IRB process. Approval was obtained from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at the University of Central Florida. The approval can be seen in Appendix D. The researcher requested written permission by the participating school district to survey all

participants. The approval can be seen in Appendix E. The researcher also requested access to use the CICE© for the study. The approval can be seen in Appendix F.

Once all approval was gained, the researcher disseminated the survey in two stages. During stage one, the researcher personally presented to all eight high school principals during a principal meeting on Thursday, August 29, 2019. During this meeting, the researcher presented principals with a letter to participate in the study that surveyed their perception of the positions and responsibilities of instructional literacy coaches in the district. The letter included: (a) permission for data to be collected at their school for this study, (b) instructions for completing the online Qualtrics survey (including both a Qualtrics link and a QR code for scanning), and (c) directions for principals to distribute the survey to assistant principals working within their school. During stage two, the researcher personally presented to all school-based and district-based instructional literacy coaches during an instructional coach professional learning community meeting on Tuesday, September 10, 2019. During this meeting, the researcher presented all 17 instructional literacy coaches a letter to participate in the study that surveyed their perception of the positions and responsibilities of instructional literacy coaches in the district. The letter included: (a) permission for data to be collected at their school for this study, (b) instructions for completing the online Qualtrics survey (including both a Qualtrics link and a QR code for scanning), and (c) directions for instructional coaches to distribute the survey to teachers they had worked with at the school (see Appendix B).

The 27-question PILCI© was designed to take approximately 5-10 minutes to complete. Given the nature of the questions and to protect the confidentiality of the respondents, the survey was designed to be anonymous. The researcher provided all respondents involved in the study with an informed consent option in Qualtrics© (Appendix B), which included a clause stating that

the participant could withdraw from the study at any time, as it was voluntary. The respondents were asked to confirm their consent to take part in this study. They had to agree to participate before being able to begin.

Then, all participants took the survey and submitted their responses. The survey letter was given to each high school principal on August 29, 2019. The researcher assessed the response rate, and after the first batch of survey responses had arrived from stage one, the researcher mailed another individual letter to the school principals to further encourage participation. The researcher followed-up via phone with each school principal and encouraged them to remind the participants at their school to complete the survey if they had not already done so. After an additional two weeks, the researcher sent an additional reminder letter to school instructional literacy coaches to further encourage participation. Responses were gathered during a one-month period from August 29, 2019 through September 30, 2019. After all responses had been collected, the researcher sent each school a letter thanking respondents for their time. Of the $N = 108$ respondents who were contacted, $n = 89$ responded. Thus, the survey had an overall response rate of 80%.

A convenient and popular method of data collection had been web-based surveys. While some researchers argued that survey-overload resulted in a decline in response rates over time (Dilman, Smyth, & Christian, 2014; Morton, Bandara, Robinson, Carr, 2012; Nulty, 2008), other evidence suggested that online surveys with lower response rates did not produce a biased evaluation (Layne, DeCristoforo, & McGinty, 1999; Porter, 2004). Valid and reliable results have been generated from online surveys with low response rates of 20% to 47% with the average response rate around 42% (Bennett & Nair, 2010; Dilman et al., 2014). The selected sample for this study was not expected to be representative of the entire population of interest.

Thus, the findings were not immediately generalizable, though some cautious generalizations were inferred and presented.

Data Analysis

With the intent of focusing on the experiences of each participant group, data was analyzed using procedures of quantitative analysis. These procedures were chosen to enable the researcher to analyze each participant's perceptions and patterns of understanding. Quantitative analysis of the data included numerical ratings obtained from the survey items. Responses ranging from 1 to 5 were input into SPSS© for each of the respondents. Data were analyzed by using the SPSS© program to run statistical tests. The analysis performed allowed the researcher to measure group variances. The total size of the sample and total percentage of returns were reported along with the percentage of the total sample responding to each survey item. All results from the survey were utilized for data analysis. The survey included demographic items regarding position (school administrator, teacher, instructional literacy coach) within the high school and demographic information (gender, age, highest degree obtained, current position, number of years in current position, previous position, and level of interaction with a coach) to further analyze the characteristics of the participant groups. With this approach, four ideas were explored: (a) perceptions of an instructional coach position, (b) the variance among teacher, coaches, and administrators regarding the position of an instructional coach, (c) the variance among teachers based on their individual characteristics, and (d) the variance of perceptual congruency among the dyads of teacher-instructional coach, instructional coach-school administrator, and teacher-school administrator. Table 2 was as follows:

Table 2

Data Analysis by Research Question

Research Questions	*Idea Explored*	*n*	*Data Source*	*Statistical Analysis*
1. What is the position of an instructional coach, as perceived by school administrators, classroom teachers, and instructional coaches?	Perceptions of an instructional coach position	86	PILCI©	Descriptive Statistics
2. In what ways, and to what extent, if any do perceptions of the position of instructional coaches vary among school administrators, classroom teachers, and instructional coaches?	Variance among teachers, coaches, and administrators regarding the position of an instructional coach	86	PILCI©	Welch's *F*-test, and Games-Howell post-hoc procedure
3. In what ways, and to what extent, if any do teacher perceptions of the position of instructional coaches vary by individual characteristics?	Variance among teachers based on their individual characteristics	39	PILCI©	Multiple ANOVA's and Tukey's post-hoc procedure
4. In what ways, and to what extent, if any does the level of perceptual congruence regarding the position of instructional coaches vary among the dyads of classroom teacher-instructional coach, instructional coach-school administrator, and classroom teacher-school administrator?	Extent of perceptual congruency between positions within each of the three dyads	86	PILCI©	Point-Biserial Correlation

Note. n = Sample Size

Table 2 illustrated how the researcher configured the data analysis as organized by the research questions. Each idea explored was aligned to the PILCI© and sample size. The data set

and statistical analysis used to answer each of those questions was also indicated. In doing so, the table showcased a visual representation of the research design.

Research Question One

To answer the first research question (*What is the position of an instructional coach, as perceived by teachers, instructional coaches, and school administrators*?), descriptive statistics and frequencies were used to display the perceptions of high school educators in tabular formats. The descriptive statistics indicated a group mean measure of perceptions for all three participant groups in aggregate, and the frequencies provided context in the form of demographic characteristics of the participants. Overall descriptive statistics of perceptions of coaches was shown in a tabular format with sample size, mean, standard deviation, and 95% confidence intervals. Group mean and standard deviation were reported for each of the 27 individual survey items from the PILCI©. Frequency counts were reported for gender, age, highest degree obtained, current position, number of years in current position, previous position, and level of interaction with a coach. Overall descriptive statistics of the CICE© themes were also reported in tabular format in order to ascertain which theme(s) accounted for the greatest perceptual variance among faculty groups. In doing so, the researcher sought to display the perceptions of instructional coaches across all high school participants within the one district.

Research Question Two

To answer the second research question (*In what ways, and to what extent, if any do perceptions of the position of instructional coaches vary among teachers, instructional coaches, and school administrators?),* a Welch's *F*-test and Games-Howell post-hoc procedure was conducted to compare position perceptions by the position the participant held within the

organization in order to explore how perceptions differed among the three participant groups (Steinberg, 2010). The non-parametric Welch's *F*-test was used for a between-groups measure because the generalizability of any tests that relied on normality (i.e., one-way ANOVA and correlations) was limited and the homogeneity of variances was violated. Welch's *F*-test adjusted for this violation in order to describe the mean difference between high school teachers, instructional literacy coaches, and school administrators. *Welch's F*-test was used to account for the unequal variances among the standard deviations of each group and to determine if there was an overall difference in the means compared. A Games-Howell post hoc procedure was performed to determine which specific pairs of groups showed statistically significant differences in their perceptions of high school instructional coaches. A Games-Howell post-hoc test was performed since the homogeneity of variance assumption was not met during the one-way ANOVA. In doing so, this test was more flexible than other non-parametric approaches such as Tukey's test because it did not assume normality or equal variances. The results of the post-hoc test were displayed in a table showing the mean difference, standard error, significance value, and confidence interval for each group. The researcher sought to identify how different positions within the organization perceived the position of an instructional coach.

Research Question Three

To answer the third research question (*In what ways, and to what extent, if any do teacher perceptions of the position of instructional coaches vary by individual characteristics*?), multiple ANOVAs were conducted to explore how perceptions differed among teachers based on their individual demographic characteristics (Steinberg, 2010). While the dependent variable for this study remained the same (perceptions of the position of a high school instructional coach), the analysis here was delimited to teachers within the organization. Teachers were selected for

further analysis instead of coaches or school administrators because they worked closely with instructional literacy coaches daily. Analysis of teachers had the potential to illustrate any varying perceptions about the position of the coach in a more specific way. The following individual characteristics were used to compare differences in teacher score perceptions: gender, age, highest degree obtained, current position, number of years in current position, previous position, and level of interaction with a coach. Tukey's HSD post-hoc test was performed. Results were displayed in a table showing any statistically significant differences in the perceptions of instructional coaches by teachers based on individual demographic characteristics. By calculating multiple ANOVAs based on the characteristics of the teachers, the researcher hoped to understand how teacher perceptions of instructional coaches varied according to individual demographic characteristics. Since coaches most directly impacted teachers, this research question and data analysis were significant for this study.

Research Question Four

To answer the fourth research question (*In what ways, and to what extent, if any does the level of perceptual congruence regarding the position of instructional coaches vary by the participant's position within the dyads of classroom teacher-instructional coach, instructional coach-school administrator, and classroom teacher-school administrator?*), possible relationships, if any, between each of the three dyad groups were examined. A Point-Biserial Correlation was run for each dyad to investigate the relationship between results from the PILCI© perception survey and the position of the participant. By measuring the relationship between the survey results and the participant's position, the study was able to assess the degree to which perceptions were associated with differences in position (e.g., the degree to which variance in perceptions was associated with whether the participant was a teacher or an

administrator). A weaker correlation between perceptions and positions within a dyad was interpreted as an indication of greater congruence (i.e., variance in perceptions were less likely to be the result of one's position within the dyad); a stronger correlation between perceptions and positions within a dyad was interpreted as an indication of lesser congruence (i.e., variance in perceptions were more likely to be the result of one's position within the dyad). The Point-Biserial Correlation coefficient squared (r_{pb}^2) measured the shared proportion of variation in perceptions associated with the positions between a continuous variable (overall perceptions from the PILCI©) and a binary variable (the participants' position within faculty dyads of teacher-instructional coach, instructional coach-school administrator, and teacher-school administrator). The Point-Biserial Correlation coefficient squared (r_{pb}^2) was reported for each of the dyads.

Analysis involved comparing the resulting three (r_{pb}^2) values for each of the three dyads in order to identify differences in the level of congruence (i.e., the extent to which coaching perceptions were not associated with the participants' positions). Using this analysis, the researcher sought to understand which dyads showed greater congruence in their perceptions (i.e., which dyads showed a weaker relationship between perceptions and positions).

Summary of Chapter Three

The methods used to conduct this study have been presented in this chapter. The goal of this research was to analyze the position of an instructional coach as perceived by high school administrators, classroom teachers, and instructional literacy coaches, and to determine if any perceptual variance existed among these groups (Deussen et al., 2007; Hathaway et al., 2016; Shope, 2013). This study added to the literature on instructional coaching in secondary learning environments and provided formative data on how coaching strategies might be improved in

secondary learning contexts. The purpose of the study and the research questions were restated. The selection of participants, instrumentation, data collection, variables, data analysis, and delimitations and limitations were also presented.

Four research questions guided the researcher identifying the perceptions of high school instructional coaches and the perceptual variance among teachers, administrators, and coaches in order to best support the organization. Knight's (2007) Partnership Approach to Professional Learning in combination with Perceptual Congruence Theory (Katz & Kahn, 1978; Shope, 2013) guided the researchers understanding and interpretation of this research process and the research questions, and provided the common language with which to analyze the perceptions of school administrators, classroom teachers, and instructional literacy coaches. In an effort to understand the perspectives of each participant, this project used quantitative methods to provide insight into the meanings conveyed by high school administrators, classroom teachers, and instructional coaches.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

Introduction

This quantitative case study intended to investigate the perceptions of high school instructional literacy coaches and the congruency, if any, among school administrators, teachers, and coaches. A problem existed with understanding how the instructional literacy coach position manifested in different high schools in one district and how that manifestation impacted workplace dynamics. The purpose of this case study was framed by both Perceptual Congruence Theory (Katz & Kahn, 1978; Shope, 2013) and the Partnership Approach to Learning (Knight, 2007). Perceptual Congruence Theory guided an understanding of organizational leadership patterns, while the Partnership Approach to Professional Learning provided a framework for understanding how variability in perceptions manifested among school faculty. The researcher examined perceptions of an instructional coach, variance among teachers, coaches, and administrators regarding the position of an instructional coach, variance among teachers based on their individual characteristics, and variance of perceptual congruency among the three dyads (teacher-coach, administrator-coach, teacher-administrator). In doing so, the purpose was achieved by utilizing quantitative methods.

Descriptive statistics were first reported followed by non-parametric statistical procedures like Welch's *F*, Games-Howell post-hoc analysis, and parametric statistical procedures like one-way ANOVA's and Tukey post-hoc analysis, as well as, point-biserial correlations. The presentation of the findings was arranged by the four research questions and their corresponding data analyses. All results from the Perceptions of Instructional Literacy Coaches Instrument (PILCI©) were used to answer all four research questions. This chapter presented the data for the four research questions and was divided into three sections: (a) data

collection response details, (b) results, and (c) summary. Thus, data were analyzed for significance in accordance with the research questions.

Data Collection Response Details

A researcher-created survey named Perceptions of Instructional Literacy Coaches Instrument (PILCI©) was used in this study. The total targeted population for this study was N = 108 members who were either a high school principal, assistant principal, instructional literacy coach, or classroom teacher in one central Florida school district. The researcher personally presented a letter containing information related to the PILCI© to all eight high school principals during a principal meeting on Thursday, August 29, 2019. The letter included: (a) permission for data to be collected at their school for this study, (b) instructions for completing the online Qualtrics© survey (including both a Qualtrics© link and a QR code for scanning), and (c) directions for principals to distribute the survey to assistant principals working within their school. Furthermore, the researcher personally presented a letter containing information related to the PILCI© to all school-based and district-based instructional literacy coaches during an instructional coach professional learning community meeting on Tuesday, September 10, 2019. The letter included: (a) permission for data to be collected at their school for this study, (b) instructions for completing the online Qualtrics© survey (including both a Qualtrics© link and a QR code for scanning), and (c) directions for instructional coaches to distribute the survey to teachers they have worked with at the school (see Appendix B). The PILCI© remained open through September 30, 2019.

After all responses were collected, a total of n = 89 responses was received from the PILCI©, but only n = 86 were determined to be usable for data analysis because they were fully completed. Two responses were removed because no data were selected (blank surveys) and one

participant did not consent to the study. Out of the n = 86 responses received, six were from principals, 26 were from assistant principals, 15 were from instructional literacy coaches, and 39 were from classroom teachers. The response rate was the highest for instructional literacy coaches at 88.23% and was the lowest for assistant principals at 68.42%. The overall response rate was 79.57%. All responses were compiled into a spreadsheet from Qualtrics© and transferred into SPSS© in order to identify any patterns. The overall demographic descriptive statistics for the PILCI© results can be seen in Table 3.

Various demographic items were reported by participants on the PILCI© including gender, age, highest degree obtained, current position, prior position, level of coach interaction, and years in current position. Based on the results, more females (64%) participated than males (36%). The largest age groups were 25-35 (36%) and 36-45 (34.9%), while the lowest age group was 18-24 (1%). A majority of the participants held a graduate degree at 79.1%, while 8.1% of participants held a doctorate degree. Participants indicated that the number of years in their current position was the highest for 0-5 years (53.5%) and the lowest for 25 or more (2.3%). Participants with 1-10 years of experience represented 82.6% of the sample size. Table 3 is as follows:

Table 3

Overall PILCI© Demographic Descriptive Statistics

Demographic Item		*Frequency*	*Percent*	*Cumulative Percent*
Gender	Female	55	64.0	64.0
	Male	31	36.0	100.0
	Total	86	100.0	
Age	18-24	1	1.2	1.2
	25-35	31	36.0	37.2
	36-45	30	34.9	72.1
	46-55	22	25.6	97.7
	56+	2	2.3	100.0
	Total	86	100.0	
Highest Degree	Bachelor	18	20.9	20.9
	Masters	55	64.0	84.9
	Specialist	6	7.0	91.9
	Doctorate	7	8.1	100.0
	Total	86	100.0	
Current Position	Teacher	40	46.5	46.5
	Coach	15	17.4	64.0
	Admin	31	36.0	100.0
	Total	86	100.0	
Prior Position	Teacher	44	51.2	51.2
	Coach	12	14.0	65.1
	Admin	30	34.9	100.0
	Total	86	100.0	
Level of Coach Interaction	No	18	20.9	20.9
	Yes	68	79.1	100.0
	Total	86	100.0	
Years in Current Position	0-5 Years	46	53.5	53.5
	6-10 Years	25	29.1	82.6
	11-15 Years	8	9.3	91.9
	16-24 Years	5	5.8	97.7
	25+ Years	2	2.3	100.0
	Total	86	100.0	

Based on the total participant data received from the PILCI©, a majority of the respondents had worked with an instructional literacy coach within the past year (79.1%) and only 20.9% of participants indicated that they had no interaction with an instructional coach within the past year. About 79.1% of those surveyed reported holding a graduate degree. Over half of those who responded answered that they had been in their current position for less than 5 years (53.5%) and 29.1% reported serving in their current position for 6-10 years. The data suggested that most of the participants at the time of this study had served in their current position for less than 10 years (82.6%). The number of years served as a teacher, coach, or administrator highlighted a significant finding about future turnover rates in this one central Florida school district, specifically in the next five to ten years. The data showed that the core faculty groups who interacted with coaches did not wait a considerable amount of time before entering a new position. The implications for short-term administrators, coaches, or teachers could impact student achievement, organizational interaction among groups, and school improvement.

Results

The data received from the PILCI© were analyzed in order to study the perceptions of high school instructional literacy coaches. An examination of the data was employed in order to meet the criteria necessary for statistical procedures. Checking the assumptions for each statistical test was essential to explain any violation of these assumptions. Assumptions for each statistical procedure were expanded upon in each section corresponding to the research question. In doing so, the presentation of the findings was arranged by the four research questions.

Research Question One

The first research question was: What is the position of an instructional coach, as perceived by school administrators, classroom teachers, and instructional coaches? To answer the question, descriptive statistics were employed to ascertain the overall response perceptions of high school staff toward instructional coaches. For each of the 27 questions on the PILCI©, participants were asked to respond to a forced choice item to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the statement provided. The PILCI© questions represented a cross-section of the three CICE© domains (focus of conversation, data display, and the coaching conversation) and were assigned nominal values of 1 to 5 on a Likert scale (Appendices A & B). All 27 questions were analyzed to answer research question one. The dependent variable was the perceptions of the position of a high school instructional literacy coach, as measured by the PILCI©. The independent variable was the position of each participant (i.e., instructional coach, classroom teacher, and school administrator) within the organizational structure of the school, as self-reported through the survey instrument. The respondents rated their perceptions of high school instructional literacy coaches on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being strongly disagree and 5 being strongly agree. Table 4 is as follows:

Table 4

Overall Descriptive Statistics of Perceptions of Coaches

Position	*n*	*Mean*	*SD*	*95% CI*	*Min*	*Max*
Teacher	40	4.25	0.60	[4.05, 4.44]	3.00	5.00
Coach	15	4.74	0.29	[4.57, 4.89]	3.81	5.00
Admin	31	4.26	0.61	[4.04, 4.48]	2.67	5.00
Total	86	4.42	0.50	[4.22, 4.60]	3.16	5.00

Note. n = Number of Participants; *SD* = Standard Deviation; *CI* = Confidence Interval

The mean perception score for all three staff groups (school administrators, classroom teachers, and instructional coaches) was $M = 4.42$. Instructional literacy coaches had the highest mean perception score of $M = 4.74$ and classroom teachers had the lowest mean perception score of $M = 4.25$. The mean perception score varied the most among school administrators with a standard deviation of $SD = 0.61$ and classroom teachers with a $SD = 0.60$, and varied the least among instructional literacy coaches with a standard deviation of $SD = 0.29$.

Descriptive statistics were gathered for each research question on the PILCI© in order to ascertain the overall perceptions of high school faculty toward instructional literacy coaches based on the three CICE© domains. The theme of focus included mastering the ability to provide evidence of conversations, guiding the teacher and coach instructional goals, aligning core standards with the district's instructional framework, and consistently using the language of instruction for school and classroom improvement. The theme of data display included knowing whether the coach collected relevant and useful data that was easily interpreted by the teacher, and presenting descriptive, non-evaluative data to initiate a coaching conversation. Lastly, the theme of a coaching conversation included being intentional about body language, tone, voice, and the setting of conversations so as to build mutual trust, instilling a sense of equity in thinking, referring back to observational, objective data during conversations, and asking clarifying questions about assumptions and perspectives so as to avoid evaluation. PILCI© descriptive statistics of the perceptions of instructional literacy coaches can be seen in table 5.

Table 5

PILCI© Descriptive Statistics of Perceptions of High School Coaches

PILCI© Question	*Mean*	*SD*	*95% CI*	*Min*	*Max*
The instructional coach is knowledgeable about the instructional framework used by the district.	4.48	0.93	[4.28, 4.68]	1.00	5.00
The instructional coach engages teachers in dialogue or professional learning to help guide instructional focuses.	4.47	0.84	[4.29, 4.64]	1.00	5.00
The instructional coach helps teachers promote a positive classroom environment to support thinking and risk-taking among students.	4.40	0.96	[4.19, 4.60]	1.00	5.00
The instructional coach promotes strategies that enable all children to master instructional standards.	4.41	0.89	[4.21, 4.60]	1.00	5.00
The instructional coach understands the connection between classroom climate, instruction, and standards-based learning.	4.60	0.72	[4.45, 4.76]	1.00	5.00
The focus of coaching is explicitly consistent with the instructional framework used by the district.	4.24	0.88	[4.06, 4.43]	1.00	5.00
The instructional coach and teachers communicate using shared, knowledgeable language about instruction.	4.58	0.60	[4.45, 4.71]	3.00	5.00
The instructional coach collaborates and plans with teachers on a weekly basis to help improve student achievement.	3.87	1.16	[3.62, 4.12]	1.00	5.00
The instructional coach provides positive constructive feedback to teachers regarding their instructional practices.	4.52	0.63	[4.39, 4.66]	3.00	5.00

Note. SD = Standard Deviation; *CI* = Confidence Interval

PILCI© Question	*Mean*	*SD*	*95% CI*	*Min*	*Max*
The instructional coach helps to prepare for and facilitate grade level data meetings.	4.00	1.06	[3.77, 4.23]	1.00	5.00
The instructional coach is invested in the achievement of all students.	4.63	0.65	[4.49, 4.77]	2.00	5.00
Instructional coaches are instrumental in helping increase student achievement and assuring success for all students.	4.29	0.94	[4.09, 4.49]	1.00	5.00
The instructional coach provides data that is directly connected to the teacher's instructional practice.	4.23	1.08	[4.00, 4.46]	1.00	5.00
The instructional coach provides teachers with relevant data that is displayed clearly and is easy to interpret.	4.24	1.02	[4.03, 4.46]	1.00	5.00
The instructional coach presents information in a non-judgmental, non-evaluative manner.	4.48	0.94	[4.27, 4.68]	1.00	5.00
The instructional coach utilizes classroom observations to collect data that is relevant to understanding instructional practice.	4.17	1.04	[3.95, 4.40]	1.00	5.00
The instructional coach utilizes data to help faculty identify professional learning needs.	4.15	1.09	[3.92, 4.38]	1.00	5.00
The instructional coach provides ongoing professional learning based on scientific research.	4.19	1.02	[3.97, 4.41]	1.00	5.00
The instructional coach maintains a respectful tone that supports teacher risk-taking for communication.	4.57	0.90	[4.38, 4.76]	1.00	5.00

Note. SD = Standard Deviation; *CI* = Confidence Interval

PILCI© Question	*Mean*	*SD*	*95% CI*	*Min*	*Max*
The instructional coach promotes respect for teacher perspectives and works at building mutual trust.	4.53	0.92	[4.34, 4.73]	1.00	5.00
The instructional coach collaborates with teachers as an equal partner during the coaching process.	4.34	1.00	[4.12, 4.55]	1.00	5.00
The instructional coach refers back to the data throughout a coaching conversation.	4.14	1.05	[3.91, 4.37]	1.00	5.00
The instructional coach maintains a non-evaluative stance by asking questions to clarify assumptions and to understand teacher perspectives and decisions.	4.41	0.85	[4.23, 4.59]	1.00	5.00
The instructional coach avoids making recommendations based on preconceived assumptions.	4.24	0.88	[4.06, 4.43]	2.00	5.00
The instructional coach recognizes when it is appropriate to share personal experiences and practices.	4.44	0.85	[4.26, 4.62]	1.00	5.00
The instructional coach capitalizes on teachable moments using questioning strategies that enable the teacher to evaluate their teaching and student learning.	4.36	0.68	[4.21, 4.51]	3.00	5.00
The instructional coach shares tentative interpretations of data that push teacher thinking and practice without dominating the conversation.	4.17	1.03	[3.95, 4.40]	1.00	5.00
Total	4.34	0.91	[4.14, 4.53]	1.29	5.00

Note. SD = Standard Deviation; *CI* = Confidence Interval

According to the responses gathered on the PILCI©, "the instructional coach is invested in the achievement of all students" had the highest mean perception score of 4.63, followed by

"the instructional coach understands the connection between classroom climate, instruction, and standards-based learning" (*M* = 4.60) and "the instructional coach and teachers communicate using shared, knowledgeable language about instruction" (*M* = 4.58). All three of the highest mean perception scores were associated with the CICE© theme of focus. The lowest mean perception scores were for "the instructional coach collaborates and plans with teachers on a weekly basis to help improve student achievement" (*M* = 3.87), "the instructional coach helps to prepare for and facilitate grade level data meetings. (*M* = 4.00), "the instructional coach refers back to the data throughout a coaching conversation (*M* = 4.14). Two of the lowest mean perception scores were associated with the CICE© theme of focus, while the other question item was associated with the CICE© theme of the coaching conversation. Even so, the overall highest and lowest mean perception scores were both associated with the theme of focus on the CICE©. The mean perception score varied the most for "the instructional coach collaborates and plans with teachers on a weekly basis to help improve student achievement" with a standard deviation of 1.16 and varied the least for "the instructional coach and teachers communicate using shared, knowledgeable language about instruction" with a standard deviation of 0.60. Both areas of variance according to the standard deviation scores were associated with the CICE© theme of focus.

A further examination of the CICE© themes based on the data gathered from the PILCI© was conducted in order to better understand the overall perceptions of high school instructional literacy coaches. Table 6 was as follows:

Table 6

Overall Descriptive Statistics of CICE© Themes

Theme	*Mean*	*SD*	*95% CI*	*Min*	*Max*
Focus	4.37	0.95	[4.19, 4.56]	1.42	5.00
Data Display	4.24	1.03	[4.02, 4.47]	1.00	5.00
Coaching Conversation	4.36	0.91	[4.16, 4.55]	1.33	5.00
Total	4.32	0.96	[4.12, 4.53]	1.25	5.00

Note. SD = Standard Deviation; *CI* = Confidence Interval

The position of an instructional literacy coach as perceived by teachers, instructional coaches, and school administrators varied depending on the faculty position. Focus (*M* = 4.37) and the coaching conversation (*M* = 4.36) had the highest mean perception scores, while data display had the lowest mean perception score of 4.24. The mean perception score varied the most for data display with a standard deviation of 1.03 and varied the least for coaching conversations with a standard deviation of 0.91. Instructional literacy coaches perceived their own position with the least amount of variance (*SD* = 0.29). Instructional literacy coaches within this one district were more likely to agree about their daily job responsibilities and tasks than school administrators or classroom teachers. On the other hand, school administrators (*SD* = 0.61) and classroom teachers (*SD* = 0.60) perceived the position of instructional literacy coaches with the highest amount of variance. The data suggest that school administrators and classroom teachers were less likely to align in their perceptions of the instructional coach position within schools. Thus, the differences in perception scores by each faculty group illustrated the potential for ambiguity and incongruence regarding the coach position across different high schools.

Furthermore, the data showed that among all three CICE© themes, focus (*SD* = 0.95) and the coaching conversation (*SD* = 0.91) had the least amount of perceptual variance. Instructional

literacy coaches, school administrators, and classroom teachers were more likely to align with each other regarding coaching positions, responsibilities, activities, and purposes within the organization as it related to focus and the coaching conversation. On the other hand, data display (*SD* = 1.03) had the greatest variance, which emphasized that faculty members were less likely to be aware of or understand how instructional coaches utilized data in schools.

Research Question Two

The second research question was: In what ways, and to what extent, if any do perceptions of the position of instructional coaches vary among school administrators, classroom teachers, and instructional coaches*?* To answer the question, analysis of the data collected employed descriptive statistics to ascertain the overall response perceptions of high school staff toward instructional coaches. Table 7 is as follows:

Table 7

Descriptive Statistics of Perceptions of High School Coaches

Position	*n*	*Mean*	*SD*	*95% CI*	*Min*	*Max*
Teacher	40	4.25	0.60	[4.06, 4.44]	3.00	5.00
Coach	15	4.80	0.14	[4.72, 4.89]	4.52	5.00
Admin	31	4.26	0.61	[4.04, 4.48]	2.67	5.00
Total	86	4.35	0.59	[4.27, 4.60]	2.67	5.00

Note. n = Number of Participants; *SD* = Standard Deviation; *CI* = Confidence Interval

The respondents rated their perceptions of high school instructional literacy coaches on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being strongly disagree and 5 being strongly agree. The mean perception

score for all three staff groups (school administrators, classroom teachers, and instructional coaches) was 4.44. Instructional literacy coaches had the highest mean perception score of 4.80 and classroom teachers had the lowest mean perception score of 4.25. The mean perception score varied the most among school administrators with a standard deviation of 0.61 and varied the least among instructional literacy coaches with a standard deviation of 0.14.

Assumptions were checked to verify that statistical procedures could be performed for this research question. Figure 1 is as follows:

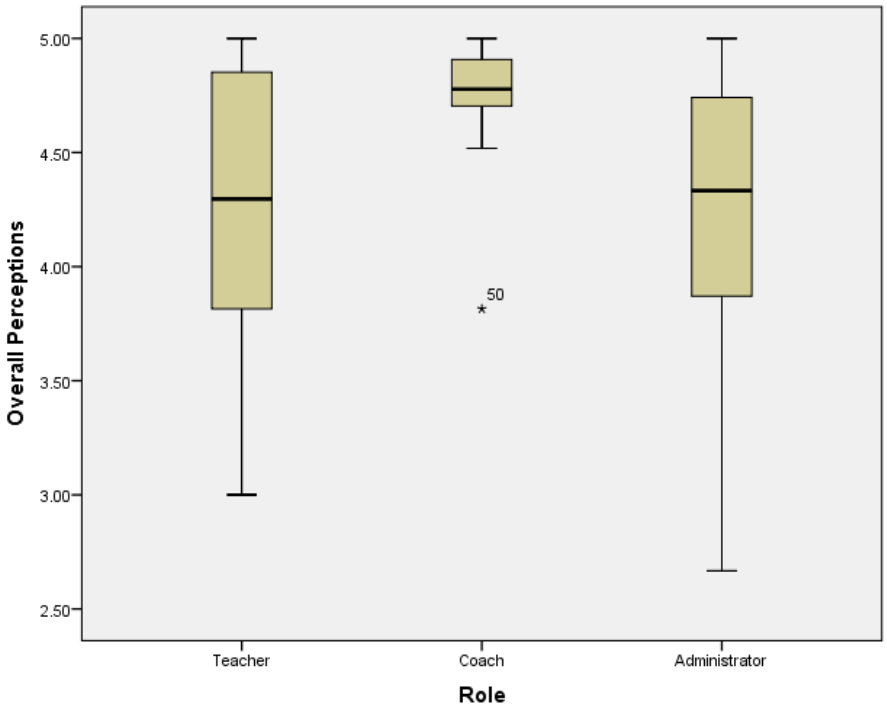

Figure 1. Overall Perceptions and Position

Continuous variables were present by design as the perception aggregate variable was continuous. Categorical independent variables with three groups (school administrators, classroom teachers, and instructional coaches) were also present by design and no one participant's responses were influenced by another participant response. When the data were assessed by overall position perceptions, the 27 responses on the PILCI© violated multiple assumptions, including having outliers, having a non-normal distribution, and having unequal variance. Case 50 was identified as the major outlier and was removed from the data set.

The data were assessed using a Shapiro-Wilk Test and were determined to be significantly non-normal. Table 8 is as follows:

Table 8

Overall Perceptions Based on Shapiro-Wilk Test

Position	*Statistic*	*df*	*Sig.*
Teacher	0.93	40	0.012
Coach	0.74	15	0.001
Administrator	0.93	31	0.045

Note. df = Degrees of Freedom

The results showed significance values for classroom teachers ($p = 0.012$), instructional literacy coaches ($p = 0.001$), and school administrators ($p = 0.045$) respectively. As a result, the generalizability of any tests that relied on normality (i.e., ANOVA and correlations) was limited. Instead, non-parametric tests like Welch's *F* and Games-Howell were calculated instead of ANOVA and Tukey's post-hoc procedure in order to answer this research question. Table 9 is as follows:

Table 9

Overall Perceptions Test of Homogeneity of Variance

	Levene Statistic	*df1*	*df2*	*Sig.*
Based on Mean	6.93	2	83	0.002
Based on Median	6.53	2	83	0.002
Based on Median and with adjusted *df*	6.53	2	75.58	0.002
Based on trimmed Mean	6.77	2	83	0.002

Note. df = Degrees of Freedom

Levene's test found that the variance had statistically significant heterogeneity $\sigma_1^2 \neq \sigma_2^2$. On measures of association, the non-parametric alternative used was Kendall's tau-*b* to indicate level of significance. Because homogeneity of variances was violated when running a one-way ANOVA at the $p < 0.05$ level, [F (2,82) = 5.65, p = 0.005], the assumption was not met. Table 10 is as follows:

Table 10

ANOVA: Perceptions of Instructional Literacy Coaches

Positions	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*Sig.*
Between Groups	3.52	2	1.76	5.65	0.005
Within Groups	25.57	82	0.31		
Total	29.10	84			

Note. SS = Sum of Squares; *df* = Degrees of Freedom; *MS* = Mean Square

As a result, an alternative *F*-test calculation (*Welch's* unequal variances *t*-test) that adjusted for this violation of assumptions was employed. *Welch's F*-test was used to account for the unequal variances among the standard deviations of each group. The dependent variable was

the perceptions of the position of a high school instructional literacy coach, as measured by the PILCI©. The independent variable was the position of each participant (i.e. instructional coach, classroom teacher, and school administrator) within the organizational structure of the school, as self-reported through the survey instrument. Table 11 is as follows:

Table 11

Welch's F-Test: Robust Tests of Equality of Means

Statistic	*df1*	*df2*	*Sig.*
22.41	2	52.69	0.000

Note. df = Degrees of Freedom

The results from the Welch's *F*-test analysis revealed that there were statistically significant differences among the faculty groups with respect to instructional coach perceptions at the $p < 0.01$ level, [$F(2,52.69) = 22.41$, $p = 0.000$].

Post-hoc comparisons, using the Games-Howell post-hoc procedure, were conducted to determine which pairs of the three faculty groups differed significantly. A Games-Howell post-hoc test was performed since the homogeneity of variance assumption was not met during the one-way ANOVA. In doing so, this test was more flexible than other non-parametric approaches such as Tukey's test because it did not assume normality or equal variances. The Games-Howell post-hoc test was used to determine which specific pairs of groups showed statistically significant differences in their perceptions of instructional literacy coaches. Table 12 is as follows:

Table 12

Games-Howell Post-hoc Test Scores of Perceptions of Coaches

Type of Position		*MD*	*SE*	*Sig.*	*95% CI*
Teacher	Coach	-0.55	0.10	0.00	[-0.80, -0.31]
	Admin	-0.01	0.15	0.99	[-0.36, 0.34]
Coach	Teacher	0.55	0.10	0.00	[0.31, 0.80]
	Admin	0.54	0.11	0.00	[0.26, 0.83]
Admin	Teacher	0.01	0.15	0.99	[-0.34, 0.36]
	Coach	-0.54	0.12	0.00	[-0.83, -0.26]

Note. MD = Mean Difference; *SE* = Standard Error; *CI* = Confidence Interval

Based on the results, the post-hoc comparisons using the Games-Howell test indicated that the mean difference score for classroom teachers-instructional literacy coaches (*MD* = -0.55) was significantly different than the classroom teacher-school administrator (*MD* = -0.01). However, instructional literacy coach-school administrator (*MD* = 0.54) did not significantly differ from the classroom teacher-instructional literacy coaches (*MD* = -0.55). Taken together, these results suggested that the perception of instructional literacy coaches really does differ according to one's position in the school. Specifically, the results suggested that the way high school teachers and administrators perceived instructional literacy coaches in schools did vary significantly.

Research Question Three

The third research question was: In what ways, and to what extent, if any do teacher perceptions of the position of instructional coaches vary by individual characteristics? To answer the question, analysis of the data collected employed descriptive statistics to ascertain the

overall response perceptions of high school staff toward instructional coaches. The respondents rated their perceptions of high school instructional literacy coaches on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being strongly disagree and 5 being strongly agree. Table 13 is as follows:

Table 13

Teacher Individual Characteristic Descriptive Statistics

Characteristic		*n*	*Mean*	*SD*	*95% CI*	*Min*	*Max*
Gender	Female	27	4.26	0.64	[4.00, 4.51]	3.00	5.00
	Male	13	4.24	0.53	[3.91, 4.56]	3.41	5.00
	Total	40	4.25	0.59	[3.96, 4.54]	3.21	5.00
Age	18-35	21	4.24	0.54	[3.99, 4.49]	3.26	5.00
	36-45	10	4.24	0.74	[3.71, 4.77]	3.00	5.00
	46+	9	4.28	0.64	[3.78, 4.77]	3.15	5.00
	Total	40	4.25	0.64	[3.83, 4.68]	3.14	5.00
Highest Degree	Bachelor	15	4.43	0.59	[4.09, 4.75]	3.15	5.00
	Graduate	25	4.15	0.59	[3.90, 4.39]	3.00	5.00
	Total	40	4.29	0.59	[3.99, 4.57]	3.08	5.00
Level of Coach Interaction	No	11	4.29	0.53	[3.94, 4.65]	3.41	4.96
	Yes	29	4.23	0.63	[3.99, 4.48]	3.00	5.00
	Total	40	4.26	0.58	[3.97, 4.57]	3.21	4.98
Years in Current Position	0-5	15	4.43	0.58	[4.11, 4.76]	3.41	5.00
	6-10	14	3.87	0.53	[3.57, 4.18]	3.00	4.85
	11+	11	4.48	0.51	[4.14, 4.82]	3.70	5.00
	Total	40	4.18	0.52	[3.86, 4.50]	3.35	4.93

Note. *n* = Number of Participants; *SD* = Standard Deviation; *CI* = Confidence Interval

Data were analyzed according to individual characteristics based on the following: gender, age, highest degree obtained, level of coach interaction, years in current position, and years of experience. More female teachers (*n* = 27) than male teachers (*n* = 13) participated in

the study. Teachers were more likely to be between the ages of 18-35 (n = 21) than 36+ (n = 19). Bachelor's degrees had the highest mean score of 4.43 and graduate degrees had the lowest mean score of 4.15. Participants with 11 or more years of experience had the highest mean score of 4.48, while participants with 6-10 years of experience had the lowest mean score of 3.87.

A one-way ANOVA was performed to investigate differences in the perception of high school instructional literacy coaches based on teacher individual characteristics, as measured by the PILCI©. Table 14 is as follows:

Table 14

Teacher Perceptions Test of Homogeneity of Variance

	Levene Statistic	*df1*	*df2*	*Sig.*
Gender	1.37	1	38	0.249
Age	1.65	2	37	0.205
Highest Degree Obtained	0.12	1	38	0.736
Level of Coach Interaction	1.48	1	38	0.231
Years in Current Position	0.56	2	37	0.575

Note. df = Degrees of Freedom

While the dependent variable for this study remained the same (perceptions of the position of a high school instructional coach), the analysis here was delimited to high school teachers within the school district. Teachers were selected for further analysis instead of coaches or school administrators because they worked closely with instructional literacy coaches daily. Analysis of teachers had the potential to illustrate any varying perceptions about the position of the coach in a more specific way. The following individual characteristics were used to compare

differences in teacher score perceptions: gender, age, highest degree obtained, current position, number of years in current position, previous position, and level of interaction with a coach. By calculating multiple ANOVAs based on the characteristics of the teachers, variance of teacher perceptions of instructional coaches was shown.

Assumptions were checked to verify that statistical procedures could be performed for this research question. The same assumptions for this research question were checked for each ANOVA as was done for research question 2. No violations occurred. All tests for homogeneity were above $p = 0.05$, so no assumptions were violated. Therefore, regular one-way ANOVA's were performed for this research question.

Previous position was omitted in this analysis because every teacher's previous position was teacher causing no comparison to be made. Table 15 is as follows:

Table 15

ANOVA's: Teacher Perceptions of Coaches Based on Individual Characteristics

Characteristics		*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*Sig.*
Gender	Between Groups	0.00	1	0.00	0.01	0.92
	Within Groups	14.07	38	0.37		
	Total	14.08	39			
Age	Between Groups	0.01	2	0.01	0.01	0.99
	Within Groups	14.07	37	0.38		
	Total	14.08	39			
Highest Degree	Between Groups	0.75	1	0.75	2.13	0.15
	Within Groups	13.33	38	0.35		
	Total	14.08	39			
Level of Interaction	Between Groups	0.03	1	0.03	0.07	0.79
	Within Groups	14.05	38	0.37		
	Total	14.08	39			
Years of Experience	Between Groups	3.09	2	1.55	5.20	0.01
	Within Groups	10.99	37	0.29		
	Total	14.08	39			

Note. SS = Sum of Squares; *df* = Degrees of Freedom; *MS* = Mean Square

The results from the one-way ANOVA analysis revealed that there were no statistically significant differences among gender at the $p < 0.05$ level, [F (1,38) = 0.01, $p = 0.92$]. The results showed no statistically significant differences among age at the $p < 0.05$ level, [F (2,37) = 0.01, $p = 0.99$]. The results showed no statistically significant differences among degree obtained at the $p < 0.05$ level, [F (1,38) = 2.13, $p = 0.15$]. In addition, the results revealed no statistically significant differences among level of coach interaction at the $p < 0.05$ level, [F (1,28) = 0.07, $p = 0.79$]. However, the results revealed that there was a statistically significant difference among years of experience at the $p < 0.05$ level, [F (2,37) = 5.20, $p = 0.01$].

Post-hoc comparisons, using the Tukey post-hoc procedure, were conducted to determine which pairs among years of experience differed significantly. Table 16 is as follows:

Table 16

Tukey Post-hoc Test Scores of Teacher Perceptions of Coaches

		Characteristic	*MD*	*SE*	*Sig.*	*95% CI*
Years of Experience	0-5	6-10	0.56	0.20	0.02	[0.06, 1.06]
		11+	-0.04	0.22	0.97	[-0.58, 0.48]
	6-10	0-5	-0.56	0.20	0.02	[-1.06, -0.07]
		11+	-0.61	0.22	0.02	[-1.13, -0.07]
	11+	0-5	0.04	0.22	0.97	[-0.48, 0.58]
		6-10	0.61	0.22	0.02	[0.07, 1.14]

Note. MD = Mean Difference; *SE* = Standard Error; *CI* = Confidence Interval

A Tukey post-hoc test was performed since all assumptions were met during the one-way ANOVA. In doing so, this test allowed for normality and equal variances across data. Tukey post-hoc tests were not performed for individual characteristics that had fewer than three groups (i.e., gender, degree, current position, previous position, and level of interaction with a coach). As a result, a Tukey post-hoc test was performed to determine which specific pairs of teacher groups based on age and years of experience showed statistically significant differences in their perceptions of instructional literacy coaches.

According to the results, the post-hoc comparisons using Tukey's test indicated that the mean difference scores for each age group were not statistically different from each other. However, the post-hoc comparisons showed that the mean difference score for 0-5 and 6-10

years of experience (*MD* = 0.56) was statistically different than 0-5 and 11+ years of experience (*MD* = 0.04). The post-hoc comparisons also showed that the mean difference score for 6-10 and 11+ years of experience (*MD* = 0.61) was statistically significant. Furthermore, 0-5 and 6-10 years (*MD* = 0.56) did not significantly differ from 6-10 and 11+ years (*MD* = 0.61). Taken together, these results suggested that teachers with fewer than 5 years of teaching experience were more likely to disagree with teachers that had 6-10 years of experience as it related to their perception of high school instructional literacy coaches. Teachers with 6-10 years of experience were also more likely to disagree with teachers that had accrued 11 or more years of experience as it related to their perception of high school instructional literacy coaches within the same school district. Specifically, teachers with 0-5 and 11 or more years of experience were more likely to be congruent in their perception of coaches within the organization. Thus, teacher perceptions varied according to years of experience.

Research Question Four

The fourth research question was: In what ways, and to what extent, if any does the level of perceptual congruence regarding the position of instructional coaches vary by the participant's position within the dyads of classroom teacher-instructional coach, instructional coach-school administrator, and classroom teacher-school administrator? To answer the question, for each of the 27 questions on the PILCI©, participants were asked to respond to a forced choice item to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the statement provided. The PILCI© questions represented a cross-section of the three CICE© domains (focus of conversation, data display, and the coaching conversation) and were assigned nominal values of 1 to 5 on a Likert scale (Appendix A & B). All 27 questions were analyzed to answer research question four. The dependent variable was the perceptions of the position of a high school instructional literacy

coach, as measured by the PILCI©. The independent variable was the position of each participant (i.e. instructional coach, classroom teacher, and school administrator because each of the analyses were conducted using a subset of the data delimited to a single dyad) within the organizational structure of the school, as self-reported through the survey instrument. The independent variable was dichotomous.

Along with descriptive statistics, a Point-Biserial Correlation was run for each dyad to investigate the relationship between results from the PILCI© perception survey and the position of the participant. By measuring the relationship between the survey results and the participant's position, the study was able to assess the degree to which perceptions were associated with differences in position (e.g., the degree to which variance in perceptions was associated with whether the participant was a teacher or an administrator). A weaker correlation between perceptions and positions within a dyad was interpreted as an indication of greater congruence (i.e., variance in perceptions were less likely to be the result of one's position within the dyad); a stronger correlation between perceptions and positions within a dyad was interpreted as an indication of lesser congruence (i.e., variance in perceptions were more likely to be the result of one's position within the dyad). The Point-Biserial Correlation coefficient squared (r_{pb}^2) was reported for each of the dyads. In other words, the proportion of shared variance in perceptions associated with the positions (r_{pb}^2) were reported.

Analysis involved comparing the resulting three (r_{pb}^2) values for each of the three dyads in order to identify differences in the level of congruence (i.e., the extent to which coaching perceptions were not associated with the participants' positions). Using this analysis, the researcher sought to understand which dyads showed greater congruence in their perceptions (i.e., which dyads showed a weaker relationship between perceptions and positions).

The descriptive statistics for the teacher-coach dyad were calculated and displayed. Table 17 is as follows:

Table 17

Descriptive Statistics of Teacher-Coach Dyad

Position	*n*	*Mean*	*SD*	*95% CI*	*Min*	*Max*
Teacher	40	4.25	0.60	[4.06, 4.44]	3.00	5.00
Coach	15	4.74	0.29	[4.58, 4.89]	3.81	5.00
Total	55	4.49	0.45	[4.32, 4.66]	3.40	5.00

Note. n = Number of Participants; *SD* = Standard Deviation; *CI* = Confidence Interval

The respondents rated their perceptions of high school instructional literacy coaches on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being strongly disagree and 5 being strongly agree. Teachers had a lower perception mean ($M = 4.25$) than instructional literacy coaches ($M = 4.74$). The mean perception score varied the most among classroom teachers with a standard deviation of $SD = 0.60$ and varied the least among instructional literacy coaches with a standard deviation of $SD = 0.29$.

The descriptive statistics for the coach-administrator dyad were calculated and displayed. Table 18 is as follows:

Table 18

Descriptive Statistics of Coach-Administrator Dyad

Position	*n*	*Mean*	*SD*	*95% CI*	*Min*	*Max*
Coach	15	4.74	0.29	[4.58, 4.89]	3.81	5.00
Administrator	31	4.26	0.61	[4.04, 4.48]	2.67	5.00
Total	46	4.50	0.45	[4.31, 4.69]	3.24	5.00

Note. n = Number of Participants; *SD* = Standard Deviation; *CI* = Confidence Interval

The respondents rated their perceptions of high school instructional literacy coaches on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being strongly disagree and 5 being strongly agree. Administrators had a lower perception mean ($M = 4.26$) than instructional literacy coaches ($M = 4.74$). The mean perception score varied the most among school administrators with a standard deviation of $SD = 0.61$ and varied the least among instructional literacy coaches with a standard deviation of $SD = 0.29$.

The descriptive statistics for the administrator-teacher dyad were calculated and displayed. Table 19 is as follows:

Table 19

Descriptive Statistics of Teacher-Administrator Dyad

Position	*N*	*Mean*	*SD*	*95% CI*	*Min*	*Max*
Teacher	40	4.25	0.60	[4.06, 4.44]	3.00	5.00
Administrator	31	4.26	0.61	[4.04, 4.48]	2.67	5.00
Total	71	8.51	0.61	[4.05, 4.46]	2.84	5.00

Note. N = Number of Participants; *SD* = Standard Deviation; *CI* = Confidence Interval

The respondents rated their perceptions of high school instructional literacy coaches on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being strongly disagree and 5 being strongly agree. Teachers and school administrators had a similar perception mean of $M = 4.25$ vs. $M = 4.26$. The mean perception score for school administrators ($SD = 0.61$) and teachers ($SD = 0.60$) also showed the same amount of variance.

A Point-Biserial correlation was run for all three dyads to investigate the relationship between results from the PILCI© perception survey and the position of the participant (administrator, teacher, or coach). Table 20 is as follows:

Table 20

Summary of Results of Point-Biserial Correlation Between PILCI© Results and Position

Dyad	*n*	r_{pb}	r_{pb}^2	*Sig.*
Teacher and Coach	55	0.38	0.14	0.004
Coach and Administrator	46	0.39	0.15	0.006
Administrator and Teacher	71	0.01	0.00	0.948

Note. n=Number of Participants; r_{pb} = Correlation Coefficient; r_{pb}^2 = Correlation Coefficient Squared; *Sig.* = Significance.

Based on the results, the strength of association between the two variables (teacher-coach, coach-administrator, or teacher-administrator and overall perception scores) showed an inverse measure of alignment. According to Cohen (1988), correlation effect sizes fall within three ranges with r = +/- 0.10 and 0.29 as small, r = +/- 0.30 and 0.49 as medium, and r = +/- 0.50 and above as large. A weaker correlation between perceptions and positions within a dyad was interpreted as an indication of greater congruence (i.e., variance in perceptions were less

likely to be the result of one's position within the dyad); a stronger correlation between perceptions and positions within a dyad was interpreted as an indication of lesser congruence (i.e., variance in perceptions were more likely to be the result of one's position within the dyad).

The results from the Point-Biserial Correlation revealed that there was a statistically significant relationship between teacher-coach and perception score at the $p < 0.01$ level, [$r_{pb} = 0.38$, $n = 55$, $p = 0.004$]. There was also a statistically significant relationship between coach-administrator and perception score at the $p < 0.01$ level [$r_{pb} = 0.39$, $n = 46$, $p = 0.006$]. However, there was no statistically significant relationship between teacher-administrator and perception score at the $p < 0.01$ level [$r_{pb} = 0.01$, $n = 71$, $p = 0.978$].

Based on the inverse measure of alignment mentioned previously for interpreting the data (i.e., a weaker correlation indicating greater perceptual congruence versus a stronger correlation indicating lesser perceptual congruence), the resulting three (r_{pb}^2) values for each of the dyads were analyzed to identify differences in the level of congruence (i.e., the extent to which coaching perceptions were associated with the participants' positions). First, the proportion of shared variance in perceptions associated with the teacher-coach dyad was small ($r_{pb}^2 = 0.14$), thus indicating that the perceptual congruence between classroom teachers and instructional coaches was strong. Because the proportion of shared variance in perceptions was small, the position of the educator was only somewhat associated with how one perceived the role of an instructional literacy coach in this school district. Thus, there was likely a strong congruence in the shared perceptions of classroom teachers and instructional literacy coaches toward the instructional literacy coach position. Second, the proportion of shared variance in perceptions associated with the coach-administrator dyad was small ($r_{pb}^2 = 0.15$), thus indicating that the perceptual congruence between instructional literacy coaches and school administrators was

strong. Because the proportion of shared variance in perceptions was small, the position of the educator was only somewhat associated with how one perceived the role of an instructional literacy coach in this school district. Thus, there was likely a strong congruence in the shared perceptions of instructional literacy coaches and school administrators toward the instructional literacy coach position. The orientation, or proximity, to an instructional coach mattered. Coaches-administrators and teacher-coaches were more likely to be congruent in their perception of the coaching position within this school district.

Meanwhile, the proportion of shared variance in perceptions associated with the teacher-administrator dyad was very small ($r_{pb}^2 = 0.00$), thus indicating that the perceptual congruence between classroom teachers and school administrators was strong. Yet, the relationship between perceptions and position was statistically non-significant. Because the proportion of shared variance in perception was small and non-significant, the overall perceptions of instructional literacy coaches by these individuals was not likely related to whether the individual was a teacher or an administrator. Thus, there was likely a strong congruence in the shared perceptions of instructional literacy coaches by classroom teachers and school administrators, but their perceptions were not indicative of the position they held. Moreover, such perceptions may or may not have been aligned with the PILCI© for instructional literacy coaches, so generalizations were cautiously concluded. Mainly, the differences that did exist for this dyad could not be explained by the differences in the position of the educator.

Summary of Chapter Four

The purpose of this quantitative case study was to examine the position of an instructional literacy coach as perceived by high school administrators, classroom teachers, and

instructional coaches and to determine if any perceptual variance existed among these groups. The perceptions of instructional coaches by school administrators, classroom teachers, and coaches provided an account of the high school coaching context. As a result, studying the perceptions of instructional literacy coaches could uncover how collaboration, reflection, and decision making manifested in secondary school environments.

The results of the data analysis for each research question were presented in this chapter. Descriptive statistics were first reported followed by non-parametric and parametric statistical procedures in order to align with the assumptions for each test. All results from the PILCI© were used to answer all four research questions.

For Research Question One, descriptive statistics were used for analysis of data based on the three CICE© domains (focus, data display, and coaching conversation). An examination of the CICE© themes was conducted in order to better understand the overall perceptions of high school instructional literacy coaches in a district that had a partnership with the UF Lastinger Institute. The position of an instructional literacy coach as perceived by classroom teachers, instructional coaches, and school administrators varied depending on the faculty position. The researcher found that instructional coaches had the highest organizational perceptual congruence, while school administrators and classroom teachers were less likely to align in their perceptions of the coaching position within high schools. Moreover, all three faculty groups were more likely to align with each other regarding coaching positions and responsibilities as it related to themes of focus and the coaching conversation, and least likely to align in their understanding of how instructional coaches utilized data in schools.

For Research Question Two, *Welch's F*-test was used for analysis of data followed by the Games-Howell post-hoc procedure in order to determine which pairs of faculty groups differed

in their perceptions of an instructional literacy coach. The researcher found that the perception of coaches does differ according to one's position in the school. Using post-hoc analyses, the way high school teachers and school administrators perceived instructional literacy coaches showed significant variance.

For Research Question Three, using separate ANOVA analyses, the researcher found that teacher perceptions of coaches based on individual characteristics showed no statistically significant differences among gender, age, highest degree obtained, or the level of coach interaction. However, a statistically significant difference existed among years of teaching experience. Using post-hoc analyses, these differences were examined to determine which specific pairs of teacher groups based on age and years of experience showed statistically significant differences in their perceptions of instructional literacy coaches. Teachers with fewer than 5 years of teaching experience were more likely to disagree with teachers that had 6-10 years of experience. Teachers with 6-10 years of experience were more likely to disagree with teachers who had 11 or more years of experience. And, teachers with 0-5 and 11 or more were more likely to be congruent in their perception of instructional literacy coaches within the organization.

Finally, for Research Question Four, Point-Biserial correlation analysis was conducted to investigate how the overall perception scores on the PILCI© correlated with each faculty dyad (teacher-coach, coach-administrator, teacher-administrator). In doing so, the researcher sought to understand the extent to which the strength of association in the overall perception scores related to differences in the faculty position within the school district. Analysis of dyad one (teacher-coach) and dyad two (coach-administrator) revealed that faculty positions were more likely to be somewhat congruent in their perceptions of the coaching position within this school

district. Analysis of dyad three (administrator-teacher) revealed that position had no bearing on the perceptions of instructional literacy coaches.

To understand the perspectives of each participant, this project used quantitative methods to provide insight into the meanings conveyed by high school administrators, teachers, and instructional coaches. Further analysis and discussion of the results were presented in the next chapter along with implications for practice and suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

Introduction

In the preceding chapter, the results of the Perceptions of Instructional Literacy Coaches Instrument (PILCI©) were reported to examine the position of an instructional literacy coach within one central Florida public school district. Chapter five consisted of a summary of the study with a four-part discussion of the findings: (a) Research Question One which included the overall position perceptions of a high school instructional literacy coach, (b) Research Question Two which included the extent to which perceptions of the position of instructional literacy coaches varied by faculty position, (c) Research Question Three which included teacher perceptions of the position of instructional literacy coaches based on individual characteristics, and (d) Research Question Four which included the level of perceptual congruence regarding the position of the instructional coach by the participant's position within the dyads. Implications for practice and recommendations for further research were also incorporated and divided into three categories: (a) policy, (b) practice, and (c) position perspective. The purpose of the latter sections was to expand upon Perceptual Congruence Theory (Katz & Kahn, 1978; Shope, 2013) and the Partnership Approach to Learning (Knight, 2007) in an effort to provide a further understanding of their possible influence on public high school leadership practice, and to present suggestions for further research targeting the understanding of high school instructional literacy coach positions and coaches perceived impact on teachers, school administrators, and the organization.

To date, perceptual congruence between school administrators, classroom teachers, and instructional literacy coaches was lacking exploration in detail in the field of educational leadership. To address this gap, the intent of this quantitative case study was to investigate the

perceptions of high school instructional literacy coaches and the congruency, if any, among school administrators, teachers, and coaches within one school district; and, thus, offer insights for policy development and future research. The extant literature emphasized each faculty position separately as playing an integral part in student success as an instructional leader, but nothing on how these three positions interacted and influenced school effectiveness in accordance with coaching was present (Borman & Feger, 2006; Marsh et al., 2012). Finally, a synthesizing statement was offered to capture the substance and scope of what had been attempted by this research study.

Summary of the Study

The purpose of this quantitative case study was to examine the position of an instructional literacy coach as perceived by high school administrators, teachers, and coaches in one school district and to determine if any perceptual variance existed among those groups. A problem existed with understanding how the instructional literacy coach position manifested in different school contexts and how that manifestation impacted workplace dynamics. The study examined the perceptions of instructional coaches by school administrators, classroom teachers, and coaches in order to provide an account of the high school coaching context. Knight's (2007) Partnership Approach to Professional Learning in combination with Perceptual Congruence Theory (Katz & Kahn, 1978; Shope, 2013) guided the researchers understanding and interpretation of this research process and the research questions, and provided the common language with which to analyze the perceptions of high school administrators, teachers, and instructional literacy coaches. Given the dynamic nature of instructional coaching, this study

further explored the level of congruence or incongruence between key faculty groups in order to better understand perceptions of coaching as a professional learning tool.

Coaching models were designed to fit well within the framework of best practices in professional learning, but empirical research described the coaching model as inconclusively vague or non-existent, and in need of further exploration (Blarney et al., 2008; Cornett & Knight, 2009; Lyons et al., 2016). While some studies addressed how instructional coaches were utilized in varying contexts, the incongruity of position expectations by coaches, teachers, and school administrators indicated a diverse and ambiguous job (Marsh et al, 2012; Norton, 2001; Swinnerton, 2007). Because of the ambiguous nature of the instructional coach within schools, implications of the instructional leader in this capacity for teacher education and professional learning needed to be examined.

The participants for this research study were located in one central Florida public school district, which comprised of eight public high schools. The targeted population of interest for this study consisted of three major faculty groups: all high school principals and school administrators, school-based and district-based instructional literacy coaches, and classroom teachers. The total targeted population was $N = 108$ members. Out of the total population size, the researcher received $n = 89$ total responses (80% response rate) from the PILCI© survey. The researcher removed two responses because no data was selected (blank surveys) and one participant did not consent to the study. Thus, the total sample was $n = 86$ participants (79.63% usable response rate).

The University of Florida Lastinger Instructional Coaching Model was utilized in the central Florida public school district of study. As a result, the survey instrument items were created exclusively for this study by the researcher based on the UF Lastinger Center for

Learning Certified Instructional Coaching Evaluation Rubric (CICE©). The survey used in this study was called the Perceptions of Instructional Literacy Coaches Instrument (PILCI©) and was made for the purposes of discerning perception of coaching positions as well as the congruency of perceptions among high school administrators, teachers, and coaches. The PILCI© questions represented a cross-section of the three CICE© domains (focus of conversation, data display, and the coaching conversation) and were assigned nominal values of 1 to 5 on a Likert scale (Appendix A & B). Following each stimulus statement on the survey, the participants were asked to mark 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, or 5 = Strongly Agree. The survey also included demographic items regarding position (i.e., school administrator, classroom teacher, instructional literacy coach) within the high school and demographic information (i.e., gender, age, highest degree obtained, current position, number of years in current position, previous position, and level of interaction with a coach) to further analyze the characteristics of the participant groups.

The researcher disseminated the survey in two stages. During stage one, the researcher personally presented to all eight high school principals during a principal meeting on Thursday, August 29, 2019. During this meeting, the researcher presented principals with a letter to participate in the study that surveyed their perception of the positions and responsibilities of instructional literacy coaches in the district. The researcher also asked principals to disseminate the PILCI© survey to their administrative staff. During stage two, the researcher personally presented to all school-based and district-based instructional literacy coaches during an instructional coach professional learning community meeting on Tuesday, September 10, 2019. During this meeting, the researcher presented all 17 instructional literacy coaches a letter to participate in the study that surveyed their perception of the positions and responsibilities of

instructional literacy coaches in the district. The researcher also asked coaches to disseminate the PILCI© survey to teachers at their school. Then, all participants took the survey and submitted their responses. Responses were gathered during a one-month period from August 29, 2019 through September 30, 2019. The current study represented an initial effort to understand the impact of this one model of instructional coaching on the perceptions of school administrators, teachers, and coaches within one district.

The following research questions were used to guide this study:

1. What is the position of an instructional coach, as perceived by school administrators, classroom teachers, and instructional coaches?
2. In what ways and to what extent, if any, do perceptions of the position of instructional coaches vary among school administrators, classroom teachers, and instructional coaches?
3. In what ways and to what extent, if any, do teacher perceptions of the position of instructional coaches vary by individual characteristics?
4. In what ways and to what extent, if any, does the level of perceptual congruence regarding the position of instructional coaches vary by the participant's position within the dyads of classroom teacher-instructional coach, instructional coach-school administrator, and classroom teacher-school administrator?

Data were analyzed using the SPSS© program to run statistical tests. The analysis performed allowed the researcher to measure group variances. The total size of the sample and total percentage of returns were reported along with the percentage of the total sample responding to each survey item. With this approach, four ideas were explored: (a) perceptions of an instructional literacy coach position, (b) the variance among teacher, coaches, and administrators

regarding the position of an instructional coach, (c) the variance among teachers based on their individual characteristics, and (d) the relationship between results from the PILCI© perception survey and the position of the participant (teacher-instructional coach, instructional coach-school administrator, and teacher-school administrator).

Discussion

Descriptive Statistics

The total sample size for this research study was $n = 86$ respondents. Based on the total participant data received from the PILCI©, the highest response rates were from classroom teachers (86.67%) and instructional literacy coaches (88.24%), while the lowest response rates were from assistant principals (68.42%) and principals (75%). Nearly 64% of the respondents were female and 36% were male. Most of the respondents had worked with an instructional literacy coach within the past year (79.1%). About 79.1% of those surveyed reported holding a graduate degree. Over half of those who responded answered that they had been in their current position for less than 5 years (53.5%) and 29.1% reported serving in their current position for 6-10 years. The data suggested that most of the participants at the time of this study had served in their current position for less than 10 years (82.6%). The number of years served as a teacher, coach, or administrator highlighted a significant finding about future turnover rates in this one central Florida school district, specifically in the next five to ten years. The data showed that the core faculty groups that interacted with coaches did not wait a considerable amount of time before entering a new position. The implications for short-term administrators, coaches, or teachers could impact student achievement, organizational interaction among groups, and school improvement.

An interesting corollary from the PILCI© was that the majority of respondents believed that "the instructional coach was invested in the achievement of all students" (*M* = 4.63) and "the instructional coach understood the connection between classroom climate, instruction, and standards-based learning" (*M* = 4.60). Across all three faculty groups, this data provided a basis for understanding that the perception of coaches was grounded in the belief that all students could succeed and that school-based focuses were utilized in order to achieve this goal. Therefore, a greater emphasis on this phenomenon in a continuing study could illustrate what made this such a strong component within this one central Florida public school district. Moreover, "the instructional coach collaborated and planned with teachers on a weekly basis to help improve student achievement" received the lowest mean perception score (*M* = 3.87). While participants viewed instructional literacy coaches as "investing" in student learning and "understanding" school-based goals and focuses, they did not perceive coaches as enacting those positions within schools. The discrepancy between *knowing* instructional literacy coach positions and responsibilities and the reality of *doing* daily tasks illustrated the ambiguity so often cited in the literature (Bean et al., 2010; Blarney et al., 2008; Kowal & Steiner, 2007; Poglinco et al., 2003; Snow et al., 2006). The data provided a basis to argue for greater emphasis on developing universal standards for daily coaching responsibilities across schools.

The data show that between all three CICE© domains, focus (*SD* = 0.95) and the coaching conversation (*SD* = 0.91) had the least amount of perceptual variance. Instructional literacy coaches, school administrators, and classroom teachers were more likely to align with each other regarding coaching positions, responsibilities, activities, and purposes within the organization as it related to focus and the coaching conversation. On the other hand, data display (*SD* = 1.03) had the greatest variance, which emphasized that faculty members were less likely to be aware of

or understand how instructional literacy coaches utilized data in schools. Coaches may have understood how to interpret data but may not have been able to communicate it effectively to others causing this perception score to be the most varied among all three faculty groups. Moreover, teachers may have scored instructional literacy coaches lower on the data items as a result of believing that they know their students beyond measure and were unwilling to engage in data conversations. The implications, nevertheless, of having a lower understanding of how data connected to teachers' instructional practice and the relevancy of professional learning needs highlighted the potential impact on teacher and coach capacity for growth in this area.

Two delimitations were mentioned in the study: (1) all participants responded to the research survey questions honestly, and (b) all participants had perceptions regarding the positions and responsibilities of high school instructional coaches. An area of concern was the degree to which the responding sample reflected the group who received the survey, as the findings were not immediately generalizable. Within reasonable thought, faculty members who felt uncomfortable with the topic may have chosen not to respond. Another limitation could have been the tendency of the respondents to answer the items in a socially desirable manner that would have been seen as favorable as the researcher did not have control over the environment in which the survey was taken.

Research Question One

To answer Research Question One, the respondents were asked to provide on the PILCI© survey their perceptions of an instructional literacy coach position. Analysis of the data collected employed descriptive statistics to ascertain the overall response perceptions of high school staff toward instructional coaches. For each of the 27 questions on the PILCI©,

participants were asked to respond to a forced choice item to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the statement provided. The PILCI© questions represented a cross-section of the three CICE© domains (focus of conversation, data display, and the coaching conversation) and were assigned nominal values of 1 to 5 on a Likert scale (Appendix A & B). The dependent variable was the perceptions of the position of a high school instructional literacy coach, as measured by the PILCI©. The independent variable was the position of each participant (i.e., instructional coach, classroom teacher, and school administrator) within the organizational structure of the school, as self-reported through the survey instrument.

The findings showed that the position of an instructional coach as perceived by teachers, instructional coaches, and school administrators centered on the two CICE© themes of focus and the coaching conversation. The self-perception mean scores of instructional literacy coaches illustrated a clear vision for school-based goals and how to accomplish them. The data show that all staff perceived instructional literacy coaches as the following: (a) understanding the connection between classroom climate, instruction, and standards-based learning, (b) communicating using shared, knowledgeable language about instruction, (c) providing positive constructive feedback to teachers regarding their instructional practices, (d) investing in the achievement of all students, and (e) maintaining a respectful tone that supports teacher risk-taking for communication. Rush (2013) argued that very little was known about literacy coaches in secondary schools, which made the results of this study a significant finding. The five major themes that came out of this study aligned with what other scholars had found regarding instructional coach positions and responsibilities. Coaches facilitated, promoted collaboration and the development of learning communities, and served as non-evaluative mentors who supported teachers (Bean et al., 2003; Borman & Feger, 2006; Kowal & Steiner, 2007; Mraz et

al., 2008). However, because of the myriad of tasks that could be associated with coaching, these findings should be cautiously generalized, and only applied to school districts that have a partnership with the UF Lastinger Institute.

On the other hand, the data showed that all staff perceived instructional literacy coaches as having struggled with the following: (a) collaborating and planning with teachers on a weekly basis to help improve student achievement, (b) helping to prepare for and facilitate grade level data meetings, (c) utilizing classroom observations to collect data that is relevant to understanding instructional practice, (d) utilizing data to help faculty identify professional learning needs, and (e) providing ongoing professional learning based on scientific research. Overwhelmingly, these five items pertained to the theme of data display. Some researchers argued that how the district positioned the coach, either as school-based or district-based personnel, impacted how districts envisioned using the coaching position within their reform efforts (Norton, 2011). Thus, the coaching model used by the school district may have placed less of an emphasis on data and more of an emphasis on coaching dynamics and relationships to inform instruction. Principal expectations of coaches in the organization emphasized the importance of staff relationships in order to align school improvement goals with daily practice (Bean et al., 2018). The lower perception scores for evidence-based learning indicated that the faculty perceived instructional literacy coaches as not using data in schools or that they had very little knowledge of how to incorporate data in conversations, learning communities, or school-based decisions. Thus, the local manifestation of this instructional literacy-coaching model needed to be studied in order to gain a better understanding of how the perceived positions and responsibilities of the coach influenced the school context.

Research Question Two

To answer Research Question Two, the respondents were asked to provide on the PILCI© survey their overall perceptions of high school staff toward instructional coaches. A Welch's *F*-test was conducted to compare position perceptions by the position the participant held within the organization in order to explore how perceptions differed among the three participant groups. Welch's *F*-test was used to account for the unequal variances among the standard deviations of each group and to determine if there was an overall difference in the means compared. The dependent variable was the perceptions of the position of a high school instructional literacy coach, as measured by the PILCI©. The independent variable was the position of each participant (i.e., instructional coach, classroom teacher, and school administrator) within the organizational structure of the school, as self-reported through the survey instrument. A Games-Howell post-hoc procedure was performed because it was more flexible than other non-parametric approaches and was used to determine which specific pairs of the three faculty groups showed statistically significant differences in their perceptions of instructional literacy coaches within the one school district.

According to the results, the perception of instructional literacy coaches varied depending on the faculty position held within the school. Instructional literacy coaches perceived their own position with the least amount of variance. Coaches were more likely to agree about their daily job responsibilities and tasks than school administrators or classroom teachers. The organizationally bound positions of an instructional coach manifested as the implemented expectations that coaches had of themselves. McLeod and Chaffee (1973) stated that "a person's behavior was not based simply upon his private cognitive structure of his world; it is also a function of his perception of the orientations held by others around him and of his orientation to

them" (p. 470). Therefore, the results emphasized a higher level of perceptual congruence among instructional literacy coaches regarding the vision and mission of the school district than school administrators and classroom teachers. Contrary to the findings of Dole and Donaldson (2006), coaches did not struggle with understanding their daily tasks, but rather, aligned with the CICE© criteria from which they had been trained. Coaches understood their positions and the impact of those positions within the school district. As a result, the data illustrated a cohesive understanding of the positions and responsibilities of instructional literacy coaches. Using Perceptual Congruence Theory in tandem with the Partnership Approach allowed for a more direct analysis of organizational position perceptions and alignment within a district that held a partnership with the UF Lastinger Institute.

On the other hand, school administrators and classroom teachers perceived the position of instructional literacy coaches with the highest amount of variance. These two faculty groups were less likely to align in their perceptions of the instructional coach position within schools. The finding was supported in the literature pertaining to the manifestation of coaching models in local contexts. While a study conducted by Mraz et al. (2008) found no differences in perspectives across elementary principals, teachers, and literacy coaches through survey responses, this research study debunked the previous study as adding an important component to the literature for secondary school contexts. The coach position lacked definition even within a defined reform model in Florida, making it subjected to various interpretations and diverse structures (Borman & Feger, 2006). Because school administrators and classroom teachers showed the least amount of perceptual congruence, it could be inferred that instructional coaches in one school district may have been used differently according to the specific school-site they worked. In fact, school or district leadership teams often determined coach positions, which

resulted in considerable variation in how coaches were utilized (Gallucci et al., 2010). Thus, a school administrator's perception of the coaching position would have varied, which could have accounted for the differences in mean scores. Synonymous with other research findings, the data emphasized how teachers were often perplexed over what coaches did in schools (Mraz et al., 2008). Variation in how the position of the coach was defined or carried out was often the result of varying perceptions held by teachers about the position of the coach. While, the results of this study highlighted the need for a statewide standardization of the responsibilities, job requirements, and job qualifications of coaches, it was argued that the apparent ambiguity allowed for coaches to successfully adapt to the school environments in which they worked. Flexibility potentially provided greater successes within schools. In fact, the International Literacy Association's recommendations of literacy standards provided a clear demarcation of the roles and responsibilities for coaches across all curriculum areas in a manner that was open, yet defined (IRA, 2006). Even so, congruency between three entities (i.e., school administrator, teacher, and coach) about the position perception of an instructional coach within the secondary organization would enable a system (i.e., school district) to move forward productively. Therefore, thoughtful and intentional alignment of all three faculty groups regarding the position of an instructional literacy coach would allow for a more fluid, dynamic workplace.

Research Question Three

To answer Research Question Three, multiple one-way ANOVA's were conducted to explore how perceptions differed among teachers based on their individual demographic characteristics. While the dependent variable for this research question remained the same (perceptions of the position of a high school instructional coach), the analysis here was delimited

to teachers within the organization. Teachers were selected for further analysis instead of coaches or administrators because they worked closely with instructional literacy coaches daily. Analysis of teachers had the potential to illustrate any varying perceptions about the position of the coach in a more specific way. The following individual characteristics were used to compare differences in teacher score perceptions: gender, age highest degree obtained, current position, number of years in current position, previous position, and level of interaction with a coach. By calculating multiple ANOVA's based on the characteristics of the teachers, the researcher hoped to illustrate any varying perceptions about the position of the coach. Since coaches most directly impact teacher, this research question and data analysis were significant for this study.

The results from the analysis revealed that there were no statistically significant differences among gender, age, degree obtained, or level of coach interaction. However, the data showed that a statistically significant difference existed among years of experience. Teachers with 0-5 and 6-10 years of experience were statistically different than teachers with 0-5 and 11+ years of experience. The post-hoc comparisons showed that the mean difference score for 6-10 and 11+ years of experience was statistically significant. Teachers with fewer than 5 years of teaching experience were more likely to disagree with teachers that had 6-10 years of experience as it related to their perception of high school instructional literacy coaches within this one school district. Perhaps, newer teachers were more willing to embrace coaching support as they navigated the first few years of their educational careers. In fact, new teachers were more likely to be paired with a coach in order to collaboratively plan and execute lessons or activities in the classroom (Joyce & Showers, 1996). The state of Florida encouraged literacy coaches to work with all teachers, specifically those that were new and those teaching struggling students; to prioritize their time on in-class coaching (i.e., modeling, observing, providing feedback); and to

avoid formally evaluating teachers and participating in activities that detracted from work with teachers (i.e., administrative tasks, substitute teaching; Marsh et al., 2012). Newer teachers, thus, were more likely to be paired with a coach in order to drive the school improvement plan forward.

Moreover, teachers with 0-5 and 11+ years of experience were more likely to be congruent in their perception of instructional literacy coaches within the organization. The data suggested that inexperienced and experienced teachers could potentially work more closely with instructional literacy coaches in schools than teachers with 6-10 years of experience. Within the past five years, the school district incorporated subject area quarterly common assessments that aligned Florida state standards. As a result, the opportunity to work with new and experienced teacher populations may have accounted for the increase in training teachers on how to use data to differentiate instruction and improve literacy strategies for student success (Marsh et al., 2012). An examination of the positions and responsibilities of secondary instructional coaches in Wyoming found that the flexibility in their positions was integral to the statewide funding model (Rush, 2013). Thus, newer teachers needed coaches to help them focus on district goals and improve instructional capacity, and experienced teachers needed coaches to help them prepare for state assessments, and/or instructional planning. Both groups (inexperienced and experienced) had the potential to work more closely with coaches to narrow a district knowledge gap regarding quarterly common assessments.

Research Question Four

To answer Research Question Four, a point-biserial correlation was run for each dyad (teacher-coach, coach-administrator, and teacher-administrator) to investigate the relationship

between results from the PILCI© perception survey and the position of the participant. By measuring the relationship between the survey results and each participant's position, the study was able to assess the degree to which perceptions were associated with differences in position (e.g., the degree to which variance in perceptions was associated with whether the participant was a teacher or an administrator). A weaker correlation between perceptions and positions within a dyad was interpreted as an indication of greater congruence (i.e., variance in perceptions were less likely to be the result of one's position within the dyad); a stronger correlation between perceptions and positions within a dyad was interpreted as an indication of lesser congruence (i.e., variance in perceptions were more likely to be the result of one's position within the dyad). Analysis involved comparing the resulting three (r_{pb}^2) values for each of the three dyads in order to identify differences in the level of congruence (i.e., the extent to which coaching perceptions were not associated with the participants' positions). Using this analysis, the researcher sought to understand which dyads showed greater congruence in their perceptions (i.e., which dyads showed a weaker relationship between perceptions and positions).

Based on the results, the relationship between the teacher-coach ($r_{pb}^2 = 0.14$) and coach-administrator ($r_{pb}^2 = 0.15$) dyads was statistically significant. The proportion of variation in perceptions associated with both dyads was small. Therefore, the perceptual congruence between the faculty positions was interpreted as moderately strong. The position one held within the school district, according to these two dyads, was somewhat associated with how one perceived the role of the instructional literacy coach. On the other hand, the relationship between the teacher-administrator ($r_{pb}^2 = 0.00$) dyad was not statistically significant. The proportion of variation in perceptions associated with this dyad was very small, and the perceptual congruence between classroom teachers and school administrators was interpreted as

very strong. However, non-significant results and a weak proportion of variation suggested that within this dyad, position had little to no bearing on the perceptions of instructional literacy coaches. The overall perceptions of classroom teachers and school administrators could not be interpreted as being similar to each other, so the differences that did exist for this dyad could not be explained by the differences in the position of the educator. The teacher-administrator dyad showed that the perception of those faculty members was not necessarily based on the position of the person, as the faculty position itself did not matter. It was the orientation of the position to the coach that showed significance.

The results suggested that perceptions about coaching were moderately associated with the position of the participant when the coach was oriented as a co-locator in the organizational hierarchy (teacher-coach or coach-admin), but not associated with position at all when the coach was not part of the dyad (teacher-admin). This difference could be interpreted to suggest that perceptual congruence was likely greater among non-coaches, and that faculty positions themselves matter less to perceptions of instructional coaches than the faculty orientation to the coach. Discovering the degree of perceptual congruence among school administrators, classroom teachers, and instructional literacy coaches simultaneously was a worthwhile endeavor to understand, and preliminary searches of the extant literature indicated that no one had adequately explored it. Researching the perspectives of instructional literacy coaches may have illustrated the way school faculty members understood the higher order linages of the organization. Individual perceptions of the organizational hierarchy of the public school system may have influenced the way in which principals interacted and viewed instructional literacy coaches, and the way in which instructional literacy coaches interacted and viewed teachers.

Faculty members who were closely linked to one another in the secondary school environment typically had greater levels of perceptual congruence regarding their perceptual understandings of instructional literacy coaches than faculty members who were not co-located in the organizational hierarchy (Shope, 2013). This research study added to other scholarship findings regarding workplace dynamics, as coaches were situated closely between teachers and administrators and were moderately aligned with both faculty groups. Heald et al. (1998) articulated:

> Those organizational members who engaged in certain activities (i.e., communicating directly with one another, collaborating with each other, citing one another in their work, and reading the same journals) were more likely to have higher levels of perceptual congruence about the vision and mission than organizational members who did not engage in those activities. (p. 538)

These findings further perpetuated the notion that instructional literacy coaches within this one school district understood and agreed with their daily tasks and responsibilities, as they were closely situated between classroom teachers and school administrators. As a result, their perceptual congruence moderately aligned with the other two faculty groups, which could account for their positional influence on others. In the literature, elementary instructional coaches often had greater clarity in position responsibilities (Walpole & Blarney, 2008), while secondary coaching scholarship struggled to define coaching positions and responsibilities (Blarney et al., 2009; Marsh et al., 2008; Poglinco et al., 2003; Snow et al., 2006). This study added to the literature regarding secondary coaching scholarship, because it seemed to align with elementary coaching findings.

Moreover, greater congruency between coaches and administrators was significant considering that school principals personally selected a faculty member every year to participate in the UF Lastinger Instructional Coaching Program. Many assistant principals had also been trained through the UF Lastinger program. Thus, one would assume that principals had a general understanding of the UF Lastinger criteria of successful coaching and would therefore be congruent with current coaching staff. The moderately strong level of perceptual congruency showed that school administrators did have a general understanding of the partnership-coaching model utilized within their schools. The levels of congruency among individuals could greatly impact or influence student outcomes; especially since research suggested that overall effectiveness was closely linked with the success of those individuals (Shope, 2013).

Furthermore, a reasonable conclusion to draw from the teacher-administrator dyad was that teachers and administrators perceived the role of the coach in similar ways, but coaches perceived their own role differently from either of those two groups. The non-significant alignment between teachers-administrators could have been a direct result of the evaluative perception teacher's held regarding instructional literacy coaches. According to Vanderburg and Stephens (2010), "there is sometimes the tendency for coaches to try to get teachers to do particular things that the administration has deemed necessary and for teachers to be evaluated by their coach against those goals..." (p. 157). Teachers may hold the belief that coaches are evaluative assessors of instruction, which could account for the congruency between classroom teachers and school administration. Indeed, the organizationally bound positions of teacher success manifested as the implemented expectations supervisors (school administrators) had of their subordinates (teachers; Katz & Kahn, 1978). Districts should work to align coaches and other faculty members (i.e., teachers and administrators) regarding the role of the instructional

coach. Districts do not necessarily need to work on getting teachers and administrators on the same page, as they likely already are. A gap certainly existed within this school district hierarchy.

Implications

The results from this research study provided important insights into what constituted and contributed to instructional literacy coach perceptions in the public high school environment. This research study uncovered multiple conclusions that had potential implications for the school district of study, Florida educational policymakers, and school faculty. The researcher investigated the perspectives of school administrators, classroom teachers, and instructional literacy coaches. While the researcher found few differences among teacher characteristics, the outcomes of the PILCI© presented numerous avenues of analysis for faculty positions. An evaluation of the data revealed that perceptions of instructional literacy coaches matter for organizational congruency, instructional practice, and improved student learning. One can learn a great deal by examining faculty perceptions of the UF Lastinger Institute's coaching model and the instructional literacy coaches that implemented this model in high schools. Implications for practice were organized into three categories: (a) policy, (b) practice, and (c) position. Each section illustrated the effects of this quantitative research case study.

Policy

To strengthen the field of coaching, researchers and educators should acknowledge the workplace dynamics of public high school instructional literacy coaches. The information gathered through this research study provided valuable insight into the adopted coaching model,

and the way in which faculty members perceived the position of the coach. As schools develop and refine their coaching strategies and models, policymakers should be made aware that a lack of a statewide policy for coaching in Florida high schools mirrored the lack of congruency across each faculty group. School administrators, classroom teachers, and instructional literacy coaches were somewhat aligned in their perceived understanding of the coaching position, even without guidelines or expectations of a widely used coaching model. The moderate alignment was not associated with the position of the educator. The UF Lastinger Institute's model proved unsuccessful in permeating the adult minds of administrators and teachers to allow for full organizational congruency. As a result, school districts across Florida run the risk of compromising teacher effectiveness, district goals, and student achievement when the organizational alignment across faculty becomes mismatched.

Best practices in school leadership must consider the investment in those who have the greatest impact on student performance--teachers. Undergraduate preparation programs should enact policies that best prepare future educators for working with others. Teachers willing and open to feedback and establishing positive working relationships were vital skills for coaching success (Hattie, 2009; Johnson et al., 2017). Thus, post-secondary school preparation programs and future secondary learning environments would serve their students well, if coursework included an emphasis on understanding good relationship development and communication skills. Students would develop the inter-personal skills that were necessary to be an effective leader and effective educator. Once they became teachers, the reality of working closely with instructional coaches would not be perceived as problematic, but rather perceived as a routine part of the educational process. With this foundation, district personnel and school administrators could identify effective modes of instilling the knowledge and skills of working

with an effective coach via high-quality state and district-sponsored preparation and ongoing professional learning utilizing the Partnership Approach to coaching.

Practice

To support the growth and development of high-quality coaches in terms of practice, the school district and school administrative teams must effectively communicate the expectations of an instructional literacy coach to all faculties in schools. The data suggested that even though the school district trained new instructional literacy coaches through the UF Lastinger Center for Learning Certified Instructional Coaching Institute and were aware of the general principles governing coaching routines, the way the district expended their professional training resources may not have resulted in equal educational understandings of the coaching position. The lack of professional training to school administrators and classroom teachers impacted the level of perceptual congruence across faculty groups. The consequence of withholding a professional learning experience about the district-wide adapted coaching model could influence faculty and staff relationships, district goals, school-wide goals, instructional coach leadership capacity, and ultimately student achievement. Therefore, thoughtful alignment of the coaching model to educator practice and professional learning needs should be the foundation of a successful instructional coaching program, as it would result in greater productivity and a greater sense of ownership.

Even more troubling, the data showed that the position of school administrators and coaches was somewhat associated with their beliefs regarding coaching positions and responsibilities. As formal evaluators of the coaches' effort, work, and deliberate practice, school administrators, perhaps, did not have a full understanding of the coaching position. A potential by-product of administrative unawareness could be the production of erroneous

evaluations of coaches. The repercussions of this type of practice could impact organizational trust, shared visions for school improvement, and even merit-based pay. Therefore, thoughtful reflection and motivation for aligning the perspectives of both coaches and administrators toward school-based goals would ameliorate the moderate level of incongruence of practice.

Position

Scholars and practitioners should be made aware that the position of a faculty member within an organization matters regarding workplace dynamics and relationships. The position of the instructional literacy coach was open to much interpretation on the part of school administrators and teachers. Although the position of the instructional literacy coach needed to be flexible enough to allow the coach to meet the unique and changing needs of teachers and students in a particular school, the position needed to have some consistency across schools. Secondary instructional literacy coaches worked in schools that were often organizationally more complex and culturally different than elementary schools (Blarney et al., 2008; Marsh et al., 2012; Snow et al., 2006). Therefore, this could have accounted for the non-significant results between teachers and administrators.

For classroom teachers, this study offered insight into what coaching domains were being utilized the most in schools in this district. Based on the CICE© criteria, coaching focus and conversations were perceived as being utilized by all faculty members, which was likely to have a positive influence on teacher learning. Understanding that data display was not a practicing domain suggested that the district placed more of an emphasis on building relationships among faculty than on the analysis and implementation of evidence-based work. Research question one and two demonstrated these phenomena. The district may need to re-orient a directive toward

understanding data if they expected teachers to utilize data in the classroom to inform instruction. The organizational perceptions of instructional literacy coaches may have shaped the extent to which data was used to inform instruction, and the extent to which the level of engagement between faculty members was used to promote positive working relationships. In doing so, instructional leadership would become more timely, focused, and aligned with school improvement focuses.

Furthermore, the data illustrated that teachers and coaches were more likely to be congruent in their perceptions of the coaching position. Perceptual congruence between coaches and teachers was moderately strong, and somewhat associated with the position of the participants. Providing opportunities for teachers to interact with coaches to further align their perceptions toward common goals could cultivate leadership within school walls. Lastly, a growing tension in current coaching contexts was an emphasis on teacher evaluation. Scholars explained that the immediate focus on desired teaching behaviors generated expectations or experiences that influenced the coach's position and generated substantial variability in the perceptions among key school staff (Ferguson, 2014; Snow et al., 2006). Instructional coaches had been perceived as evaluative in their attempts to "transform formal evaluation processes into opportunities for engaged professional reflection and learning" (Johnson et al, 2017, p.9). The data showed that teachers, perhaps, perceived coaches as evaluators instead of non-evaluative mentors, which could have accounted for their moderate level of perceptual congruence. Teachers needed an opportunity to be made familiar with the coaching model in order to enhance their understanding of the district coaching model.

For educational administrators, this study illustrated the necessity for clearly communicated expectations of the coaching position in schools. In examining the results

obtained from the PILCI©, some noteworthy observations were made regarding the overall leadership perceptions of instructional literacy coaches present within the respondents. Many of the respondents were agreeable regarding an instructional coach's capacity for knowledge, investment in student learning, and collaboration as an equal partner during the coaching process. Mean scores demonstrated a strong sense of commitment to the vision, promoted by the district and schools, which aligned with the CICE© criteria. The data suggested that coaches aligned in their own understanding of their position responsibilities; however, school administrators did not have clear knowledge of those expectations. School administrators may benefit from prioritizing efforts to realign factors that were perceived to be underdeveloped and, thus, have a relatively higher potential for school improvement. Individual perceptions of the organizational hierarchy of the public school system may have influenced the way in which principals interacted and viewed instructional literacy coaches, and the way in which instructional literacy coaches interacted and viewed administrators. The result of the moderate congruence between these organizational relationships could have influenced school-based decision-making, departmental relationships, and workflow dynamics.

As recruiters and hiring managers, the information contained in this study indicated that school administrators had an important position in actualizing the beliefs of coaches in the district. As educational leaders, the foundational understanding of a faculty position had implications for teacher-coach relationships and the inevitable want to improve student learning. As transformative leaders, improving a school culture by fostering the importance of high learning standards and supporting teachers' professional growth could be made possible with a clear alignment of coaching goals and focuses. Therefore, administrators had the potential to play a pivotal role in actualizing the position of the instructional literacy coach in ways that

would support achievement for teachers, and, in turn, the quality of educational opportunities offered for students. School administrators would benefit from prioritizing efforts to realign factors that were perceived to be underdeveloped and, thus, have a relatively higher potential for school improvement.

For instructional literacy coaches, this study emphasized the ambiguity of faculty perceptions toward the coaching position, but also highlighted the coherence of coaches' self-reported position responsibilities. Many researchers had indicated that studies on instructional coaching focused on the coaches' impact on others, while missing an opportunity to account for how the coach was trained or developed personally (Poglinco & Bach, 2004; Toll, 2014; Walpole et al., 2010). Perceptions of what coaches did were of "intense debate and very little scholarship" (Walpole & Blarney, 2008, p. 223). However, the results of this study showed that the training of coaches within this one district was successful in accounting for the alignment of coaches' self-reported perceptions. Other studies explained how secondary instructional coaches found difficulty in articulating their positions and responsibilities. Yet, Research Question Two and Four demonstrated the success of the districts coaching model on coaches' own perceived awareness of the position and expectations, and their orientation to others.

Recommendations for Future Research

As the demand for secondary instructional literacy coaching grows, future research devoted to better understanding the high school coaching context needs to be conducted. The goal of this study was to analyze the position of an instructional literacy coach as perceived by high school administrators, classroom teachers, and instructional literacy coaches, and to determine if any perceptual variance existed among these groups. Considerations for future research should consist of the following:

1. Evaluate faculty perceptions of the instructional literacy coach position within other Florida high schools that also have a partnership with The University of Florida Lastinger Institute. Use this data to evaluate factors that contribute to the success of the coaching model and the level of congruence or incongruence among key staff members.
2. Replicate the current study bi-annually within the same school district to continue to evaluate any changes in organizational perceptions regarding sustained efforts to implement the district coaching model. The survey for this research was distributed during the first month of the academic year. Distributing the PILCI© again, later in the school year, could account for changes in faculty perceptions knowing that they had an opportunity to work closely with each other over time. Specific school-based analyses, too, could provide targeted domains for school administrators, classroom teachers, and instructional coach foci. A coaching study within a greater timeline could allow for a more careful discernment between the perceptions of coaches' characteristics and faculty perceptions of coaching outcomes.
3. In addition to studying perceptions of school administrators, classroom teachers, and instructional literacy coaches, it is recommended that future studies include other faculty members such as district specialists, deans, school administration managers, and secretaries, in order to understand the broader holistic perception of the coaching position. Perceptions of other support staff that worked with instructional literacy coaches could provide a more thorough examination of the coaching model and practice within high schools.
4. Follow the cohort of instructional literacy coaches within this study in subsequent years to analyze whether the effects of perceptual congruency or incongruency change within

the school district. It is recommended that researchers consider the use of qualitative data to capture the attitudes and beliefs of coaches about the position occurring within high schools. Focus group and stakeholder interviews can provide opportunities for understanding and refining the coaching position. Adding a qualitative component would also prove beneficial in gaining a better understanding of what faculty members perceived as their organizational reality. Qualitative analysis would aid in theory and item development for measuring perceptual congruence in organizations.

5. Expand research on high school instructional literacy coaching to the other school districts in the state of Florida to evaluate whether the results seen in the study district are unique or universal to Florida public high schools.
6. Because this was a perception study, future research to expand on these findings would want to consider different and more objective measures of coach quality and impact, particularly knowledge, skills, and quality of coach practice, to add depth to understanding which coach attributes were associated with greater organizational congruency among faculty members.

Ultimately, it is recommended that schools and districts engage in systematic study of how they are using instructional literacy coaches, what degree faculty and staff understand school and district expectations of the coaching position, and what the consequences of coaching are for students, teachers, administrators, and districts.

The literature review presented in Chapter Two supported the perceptual congruency construct, but the work of Shope (2013) and those who studied this topic were missing a conceptual key factor (i.e. how individuals perceive working with others who affect students directly or indirectly on a daily basis) that was of greater importance in regard to instructional

literacy coaching. The data indicated a possible link to well-articulated expectations of the coaching position and higher organizational congruence. The way in which faculty members communicate with each other in order to maintain, cultivate, and encourage the growth of their working relationships matter. The importance of this study lay within wanting to know the inter-relationships of school administrators, classroom teachers, and instructional literacy coaches and how that influenced workplace perceptions, dynamics, and understandings of the coaching position. A possible synergy existed between coaches, teachers and administrators. Such synergy was significant for teacher success as the alignment of school improvement goals and focuses should be consistent across all faculty members. The capacity to assess faculty perceptual congruence could go far toward helping schools, so that students can achieve higher levels of academic success, teachers can achieve higher levels of instructional success, administrators can achieve higher levels of instructional leadership, and coaches can achieve higher levels of transformational leadership.

Conclusions

This quantitative case study was an attempt to find any significant differences in the perceptual variances of secondary instructional literacy coaches by school administrators, classroom teachers, and coaches. The study was conducted to analyze the perceptions of instructional literacy coaches within one school district involved in a partnership with the UF Lastinger Institute, to identify potential congruencies in faculty perceptions toward instructional literacy coaches, and to explore where potential variances existed by which gaps could be bridged. This investigation revealed that *focus* and the *coaching conversation* were perceived as being used more often than *data display*, according to the CICE© domains. A further assessment

of teacher characteristics that could account for this perspective showed that years of teaching experience did influence a teacher's perspective toward instructional coaches. Significant findings were also discovered between coaches' orientation to teachers and administrators who were more likely to align in their beliefs of the instructional literacy coaching position.

Conclusively, this study added to the literature on coaching in secondary learning environments and provided formative data on how the role of instructional literacy coaches might be improved in secondary learning contexts. The findings of this study expanded the work of previous researchers in the area of instructional leadership (Bean et al., 2010; Bickel et al., 2015; Cornett & Knight, 2009; Deussen et al., 2007; Marsh et al., 2012; Knight, 2005, 2006, 2007; Walpole & Blarney, 2008), characteristics of coaching positions and responsibilities (Blarney et al., 2008; Borman & Feger, 2006; Kowal & Steiner, 2007; Poglinco & Bach, 2004; Snow et al., 2006; Walpole & McKenna, 2004), and organizational congruence (Katz & Kahn, 1978; Shope, 2013). The current study along with the literature suggested a need for greater clarity regarding the instructional coaching position so as to be visible to other faculty groups within schools. Studying the perceptions of instructional literacy coaches was a small step toward uncovering how collaboration, reflection, and decision making manifested in secondary school environments. The results of this study can shape future research in the development of instructional coach preparation programs and implementation of practice. The results also sought to improve organizational school leadership behavior, and to understand the balance of school-faculty relationships as it relates to successful student learning outcomes. Understanding possible variation in the perception of coaching positions and variance in the congruency of perceptions among school administrators, teachers, and coaches appears essential for maximizing the potential of coaching strategies and workplace dynamics.

APPENDIX A: UF LASTINGER CENTER FOR LEARNING CERTIFIED INSTRUCTIONAL COACHING EVALUATION RUBRIC (CICE©)

Focus			
	Needs improvement/ No	**Emerging**	**Mastery**
Topic selection (focuses on instructional issues important in developing mastery on CCSS; *this includes development of a strong positive classroom environment to support thinking and risk taking).*	No clear instructional focus is apparent OR coach moves through a checklist of desired behavior and provides positive and negative feedback.	Observation focuses on technical instructional issue (e.g. amount of time spent on various instructional segments) OR shifts through varied instructional issues with no clear shared focus.	Focus of the observation provides evidence of prior conversations or PD that guided the teacher's and coach's selection of topic/ focus toward substantive instructional issues consistent with CCSS *and/or creating a positive climate*.
Focus on *instructional and classroom climate shifts* necessary for deep and focused teaching and learning necessary for mastery of CCSS.	No clear instructional focus is apparent OR coach moves through a checklist of desired behavior and provides positive and negative feedback.	Coaching is focused on instructional shifts but shared knowledge by teacher and coach of the connection to *creating a stronger climate*, students' learning and/or the shifts necessary for mastery of CCSS are not clear.	Coaching is focused on instructional shifts necessary to enable all children to mastery of common core standards. Teacher and coach use shared, knowledgeable language about the connection between *climate*, instruction and the CCSS.

Focus is consistent with district's instructional framework.	No clear instructional focus is apparent OR coach moves through a checklist of desired behavior and provides positive and negative feedback OR Focus is unrelated to or inconsistent with district framework.	Coaching is logically consistent with the district framework.	Focus of coaching is explicitly consistent with the district's instructional framework and teacher and coach use shared, knowledgeable language about instruction.

Data Display			
	Needs improvement/	**Emerging**	**Mastery**
Data are connected to teachers' guiding question.	Data display misrepresents the observational events OR is not focused on the teacher's core questions.	Coach collected relevant data but a different data collection/display strategy would be much stronger.	Coach collected data clearly relevant to the question and data are displayed in a way that is easily interpreted.
Data display presents non-judgmental DATA.	Data display provides a list of interpreted feedback (strengths and skills to work on)	Data display includes a mix of data and interpreted (evaluative) feedback	Data display presents descriptive, non-evaluative data to initiate a coaching conversation.
Data display effectively communicates the observational data.	Coach presents raw data OR too much data that hasn't been reworked into a data display OR presents global statements without support from data.	Data display represents the data but it is not easily understood by the teacher.	Data display clearly represents (in graphic/ summary form) the observational data collected.

Coaching Conversation			
	Needs improvement/ No evidence	**Emerging**	**Mastery**
Creating a respectful TONE that supports teacher risk-taking for the conversation.	Position of coach, tone of voice, responses to teacher convey a tone of evaluation OR disinterest OR distraction OR frustration.	At times the coach conveys interest and respect but during parts of the conversation the coach is distracted OR seems disinterested, frustrated, or judgmental.	Setting of the conversation, body language and tone of voice communicate interest in what the teacher is saying, respect for teacher's perspective and builds mutual trust.
Evidence that the teacher and the coach are thinking about the data together (Parity in conversation).	Coach does almost all the talking. Coach focuses on communicating his/ her interpretations of the data OR the strengths/ weaknesses of the institution.	The conversation demonstrates thinking by both and is close to parity but the coach tends to dominate a little too much OR the coach says almost nothing and provides little input to the teacher.	There is a general sense of equity in thinking/ participation between coach and teacher. Neither teacher nor coach dominates the conversation.
Conversation is data based.	Data display is not used OR seldom used to focus conversation about the teacher's question (e.g. coach's agenda OR prior interpretation rather than classroom data drive the conversation).	Conversation focuses on explaining the data display rather than focused conversation about the teacher's question OR the conversation shifts between data based and the coach's agenda.	Data display leads to shared conversation about the teacher's guiding question. The coach refers back to the data throughout the conversation.

Coach maintains a non- evaluative STANCE.	Coach's STANCE tends to be evaluative. Coach's assumptions OR interpretations drive the conversation OR Coach tends to over-emphasize his/her prior experiences and practice.	Coach generally maintains a non-evaluative STANCE but at times allows his/ her assumptions OR prior experiences to drive the conversation.	Coach asks questions to clarify assumptions and to understand teacher perspectives and decisions. **Coach avoids evaluation** and recommendations based on preconceived assumptions (relies on data as evidence to focus the conversation). Coach recognizes when it is ap-propriate to share personal experiences and practice.
Coach capitalizes on teachable moments.	Coach misses all key opportunities to provide additional insight to the teacher.	On at least one occasion the coach uses questioning strategies that enable the teacher to surface implicit assumptions OR develop new insights or new skills OR recognize the need for skill development.	Coach appropriately uses questioning strategies that enable the teacher to develop questions and/ or insights about her teaching and student learning AND/OR shares tentative interpretations of data that push teacher thinking and practice WITHOUT dominating the conversation.

APPENDIX B: PERCEPTIONS OF INSTRUCTIONAL LITERACY COACHES INSTRUMENT (PILCI©)

Explanation of Research

To Whom it May Concern,

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Whether you take part is up to you.

Thank you for your willingness to consider completing the following survey. The survey is designed for high school principals, instructional coaches, and teachers. It seeks your input about the degree to which your professional views on the positions and responsibilities of an instructional coach align with those of your peers. As a practicing instructional coach and teacher in Florida, I am looking for ways to improve coaching strategies and instructional leadership. The following survey is my attempt to collect data that will help school leadership teams better serve their students and communities. I am asking for your assistance in this process. Your expertise as a practicing school educator could help future research in the development of instructional coach preparation programs. Your influence by participating in this survey will reach far beyond your buildings and the classrooms you serve.

You are being asked to participate in research. You will be asked to scan a QR code to navigate you to an online survey at a time that is convenient for you. You will be asked a series of questions about the position of an instructional coach. Please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the statements provided.

The survey should take you no more than 5-10 minutes to complete. No risks or discomforts are anticipated if you complete the survey. You will not personally benefit by participating in this study. There may, however, be a larger societal benefit from a better understanding of your perceptions of the position of a high school instructional coach.

Your participation is voluntary, anonymous, and responses will be anonymous. Please respond honestly and completely. All data is anonymous. Responses that may in some way reflect on our specific school or community will not be shared in public or in any reports. De-identified data collected from this study will only be retained for a minimum of 5 years, per UCF policy.

You must be 18 years of age or older to take part in this research study. You must be currently employed at a high school in Seminole County Public Schools.

Thank you, in advance, for taking the time to respond.

Sincerely,
Rachel Miracolo

Study contact for questions about the study or to report a problem: If you have any questions, concerns, or complaints*: Rachel Miracolo, Graduate Student, Educational Leadership, Ed. D., Executive, College of Community Innovation and Education, email at Rachel_miracolo@knights.ucf.edu. Faculty Supervisor, Dr. RoSusan Bartee, College of Community and Innovation and Education by email at RoSusan.Bartee@ucf.edu.*

IRB contact about your rights in this study or to report a complaint: If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, or have concerns about the conduct of this study, please contact Institutional Review Board (IRB), University of Central Florida, Office of Research, 12201 Research Parkway, Suite 501, Orlando, FL 32826-3246 or by telephone at (407) 823-2901, or email irb@ucf.edu.

If you agree with the above terms and would like to consent to participate in this study, please continue. If not, please select that you do not consent.

What is your gender?

- Male
- Female

What is your age?

- 18-24
- 25-35
- 36-45
- 46-55
- 56+

What is your highest degree obtained?

- Bachelors
- Masters
- Specialist
- Doctorate

What is your current position?

- High School Principal
- High School Assistant Principal
- High School Instructional Coach
- High School Teacher

What was your position last year?

- High School Principal
- High School Assistant Principal
- High School Instructional Coach
- High School Teacher

Did you interact with an instructional coach as part of his/her coaching responsibilities last year?

- Yes
- No

Number of years in your current position.

- 0-5
- 6-10
- 11-15
- 16-24
- 25+

Please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

The instructional coach is knowledgeable about the instructional framework used by the district.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The instructional coach provides data that is directly connected to the teacher's instructional practice.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The instructional coach maintains a respectful tone that supports teacher risk-taking for communication.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The instructional coach engages teachers in dialogue or professional learning to help guide instructional focuses.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The instructional coach provides teachers with relevant data that is displayed clearly and is easy to interpret.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The instructional coach promotes respect for teacher perspectives and works at building mutual trust.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The instructional coach helps teachers promote a positive classroom environment to support thinking and risk-taking among students.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The instructional coach presents information in a non-judgmental, non-evaluative manner.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The instructional coach collaborates with teachers as an equal partner during the coaching process.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The instructional coach promotes strategies that enable all children to master instructional standards.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The instructional coach utilizes classroom observations to collect data that is relevant to understanding instructional practice.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The instructional coach refers back to the data throughout a coaching conversation.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The instructional coach understands the connection between classroom climate, instruction, and standards-based learning.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The instructional coach utilizes data to help faculty identify professional learning needs.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The instructional coach maintains a non-evaluative stance by asking questions to clarify assumptions and to understand teacher perspectives and decisions.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree

The focus of coaching is explicitly consistent with the instructional framework used by the district.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The instructional coach provides ongoing professional learning based on scientific research.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The instructional coach avoids making recommendations based on preconceived assumptions.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The instructional coach and teachers communicate using shared, knowledgeable language about instruction.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The instructional coach recognizes when it is appropriate to share personal experiences and practices.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The instructional coach collaborates and plans with teachers on a weekly basis to help improve student achievement.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The instructional coach capitalizes on teachable moments by using questioning strategies that enable the teacher to evaluate their teaching and student learning.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The instructional coach provides positive and constructive feedback to teachers regarding their instructional practices.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The instructional coach shares tentative interpretations of data that push teacher thinking and practice without dominating the conversation.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The instructional coach helps to prepare for and facilitate grade level data meetings.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The instructional coach is invested in the achievement of all students.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Instructional coaches are instrumental in helping increase student achievement and assuring success for all students.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree

The following survey items were listed by specific categories based on the UF Lastinger Center for Learning Certified Instructional Coaching Evaluation Rubric (CICE)©, and ordered in relationship to be salient with corresponding questions.

Focus (F), Data Display (D), and Coaching Conversations (C) were the three domains used.

1. The instructional coach is knowledgeable about the instructional framework used by the district. (F)
2. The instructional coach provides data that is directly connected to the teacher's instructional practice. (D)
3. The instructional coach maintains a respectful tone that supports teacher risk-taking for communication. (C)
4. The instructional coach engages teachers in dialogue or professional learning to help guide instructional focuses. (F)
5. The instructional coach provides teachers with relevant data that is displayed clearly and is easy to interpret. (D)
6. The instructional coach promotes respect for teacher perspectives and works at building mutual trust. (C)
7. The instructional coach helps teachers promote a positive classroom environment to support thinking and risk-taking among students. (F)
8. The instructional coach presents information in a non-judgmental, non-evaluative manner. (D)
9. The instructional coach collaborates with teachers as an equal partner during the coaching process. (C)
10. The instructional coach promotes strategies that enable all children to master instructional standards. (F)
11. The instructional coach utilizes classroom observations to collect data that is relevant to understanding instructional practice. (D)
12. The instructional coach refers back to the data throughout a coaching conversation. (C)
13. The instructional coach understands the connection between classroom climate, instruction, and standards-based learning. (F)
14. The instructional coach utilizes data to help faculty identify professional learning needs. (D)
15. The instructional coach maintains a non-evaluative stance by asking questions to clarify assumptions and to understand teacher perspectives and decisions. (C)
16. The focus of coaching is explicitly consistent with the instructional framework used by the district. (F)
17. The instructional coach provides ongoing professional learning based on scientific research. (D)
18. The instructional coach avoids making recommendations based on preconceived assumptions. (C)
19. The instructional coach and teachers communicate using shared, knowledgeable language about instruction. (F)
20. The instructional coach recognizes when it is appropriate to share personal experiences and practices. (C)

21. The instructional coach collaborates and plans with teachers on a weekly basis to help improve student achievement. (F)
22. The instructional coach capitalizes on teachable moments by using questioning strategies that enable the teacher to evaluate their teaching and student learning. (C)
23. The instructional coach provides positive and constructive feedback to teachers regarding their instructional practices (F).
24. The instructional coach shares tentative interpretations of data that push teacher thinking and practice without dominating the conversation (C)
25. The instructional coach helps to prepare for and facilitate grade level data meetings. (F)
26. The instructional coach is invested in the achievement of all students. (F)
27. Instructional coaches are instrumental in helping increase student achievement and assuring success for all students. (F)

APPENDIX C: RECRUITMENT FLYER

PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH:
A study about the perceptions of high school instructional coaches

Are You...

- AT LEAST 18 YEARS OLD?
- CURRENTLY EMPLOYED AT A HIGH SCHOOL IN *SEMINOLE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS (SCPS)*?

Your expertise as a practicing school educator could help future research in the development of instructional coach preparation programs. Your influence by participating in this survey will reach far beyond your buildings and the classrooms you serve.

Take the survey below!

https://tinyurl.com/yycpa2of

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Whether you take part is up to you. The online survey is designed for **high school principals, assistant principals, instructional coaches, and teachers only.** It seeks your input about the degree to which your professional views on the positions and responsibilities of an instructional coach align with those of your peers.

BOTH THE UCF AND SCPS INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARDS HAVE APPROVED THIS STUDY.

PLEASE CONTACT THE PRINCIPLE INVESTIGATOR, RACHEL MIRACOLO, IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS: RACHEL_MIRACOLO@KNIGHTS.UCF.EDU

APPENDIX D: INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD EXEMPTION APPROVAL

UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA

Institutional Review Board
FWA00000351
IRB00001138
Office of Research
12201 Research Parkway
Orlando, FL 32826-3246

EXEMPTION DETERMINATION

May 30, 2019

Dear Rachel Miracolo:

On 5/30/2019, the IRB determined the following submission to be human subjects research that is exempt from regulation:

Type of Review:	Initial Study, Category 2
Title:	What is the role of an instructional literacy coach?: A case study of the perceptions of high school administrators, classroom teachers, and coaches in one Florida school district
Investigator:	Rachel Miracolo
IRB ID:	STUDY00000592
Funding:	None
Grant ID:	None

This determination applies only to the activities described in the IRB submission and does not apply should any changes be made. If changes are made, and there are questions about whether these changes affect the exempt status of the human research, please contact the IRB. When you have completed your research, please submit a Study Closure request so that IRB records will be accurate.

If you have any questions, please contact the UCF IRB at 407-823-2901 or irb@ucf.edu. Please include your project title and IRB number in all correspondence with this office.

Sincerely,

Racine Jacques, Ph.D.
Designated Reviewer

APPENDIX E: SCHOOL DISTRICT APPROVAL

Seminole County Public Schools

WALT GRIFFIN
Superintendent

Educational Support Center
400 E. Lake Mary Boulevard
Sanford, Florida 32773-7127
Phone: (407) 320-0000
Fax: (407) 320-0281

"A" Rated Academically High-Performing School District

Visit Our Web Site
www.scps.us

April 22, 2019

Ms. Rachel Miracolo
470 Killarney Bay Court
Winter Park, FL 32789

Dear Ms. Miracolo,

I am in receipt of the proposal and supplemental information that you submitted for permission to conduct research in the Seminole County Public Schools. Thank you for adjusting your study components to remove use of the SCPS email system. You are granted permission to conduct the study described herein, *What is the role of an instructional coach? Exploring the perceptions of high school administrators, teachers, and coaches*, at Hagerty, Lake Howell, Lake Brantley, Lake Mary, Lyman, Seminole, and Winter Springs high schools and the Seminole 9th Grade Center with the following conditions:

1. Prior to beginning your study, please submit a copy of your approved UCF IRB document to this office, and
2. Adhere to the Data Collection description as defined in your updated proposal, pages 26 – 27, received by this office on April 19, 2019.

Your first order of business is to contact each principal to ensure he/she agrees that your study may be conducted on his/her campus. We would appreciate you sharing with district staff the outcome of your project.

Best of luck!

Respectfully,

Anna-Marie Cote

Anna-Marie Cote, Ed.D.
Deputy Superintendent, Instructional Excellence and Equity

cc. Ms. Mike Gaudreau, Executive Director, High Schools
Ms. Christy Bryce, Assistant Principal, Hagerty High School
Mr. Michael Kotkin, Principal, Lake Howell High School
Dr. Trent Daniel, Principal, Lake Brantley High School
Dr. Mickey Reynolds, Principal, Lake Mary High School
Mr. Mike Rice, Principal, Lyman High School
Dr. Connie Collins, Principal, Seminole High School
Dr. Jordan Rodriguez, Principal, Seminole High School
Ms. Jaime Washington, Director, Seminole High 9th Grade Center
Mr. Shawn Gard-Harrold, Director, Teaching and Learning

APPENDIX F: UF LASTINGER CENTER FOR LEARNING APPROVAL

Rachel:

You can absolutely have permission to create the questionnaire based on our Coaching Rubric. I only ask that you appropriately cite the materials and share the resulting questionnaire so we can see what you've done.

I wish you luck with your dissertation. Smart of you to connect with Dorene in preparation for it. She certainly helped me with mine since she served on my committee. In other words, you're in good hands!

Best,

Phil

--
Phil Poekert, Ph.D.
Director
Lastinger Center for Learning
2-068 Norman Hall
PO Box 117052
Gainesville, FL 32611
(352) 273-4103
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