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Instructional Coaching: Teachers' Perceptions of Practice and Effectiveness

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Instructional Coaching: Teachers' Perceptions of Practice and Effectiveness

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ABSTRACT

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The purpose of this quantitative study was to investigate K-12 teachers' perceptions of instructional coaching. Specifically, this researcher assessed the perception of instructional coaching as a whole, support for hiring practices for instructional coaches, the value of instructional coaching for improving teaching practices, the value of instructional coaching for improving student achievement, and the perception of instructional coaches being in supervisory role. Participants in this study were located in three different school systems in Northeast Tennessee. All data were collected through an online survey distributed to 848 teachers resulting in a 62% return rate with 536 participant responses. Research reinforced the view that more research needs to be conducted to determine the effectiveness of instructional coaching. The data from 5 survey questions measured on a 4-point Likert-type scale were analyzed using one-sample *t* tests. Results indicated that teachers differ on their perception of instructional coaching based on grade level and their years of experience. No group had a statistically significant positive support for instructional coaching.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my parents Joe Horne and Eileen Cullop and my brothers James Horne and Brandon Horne. My family has supported and encouraged me through this process. My mom and dad always told me, "We'll support you in whatever you decide to do." While I don't think they totally understood what, exactly, I was doing at times, they were always supportive. My brothers' successes always inspired me to have my own.

This dissertation is also dedicated to the leaders who have inspired me to pursue leadership. My first inspiration was Mark Weber. He was my 3rd grade teacher and taught me many valuable lessons: how to play chess and Monopoly; who the Marx brothers were; everything one could possibly know about The Three Stooges; my multiplication tables; and the value of the King's English. My other inspiration has been Dr. Linda Stroud who has shown me through her leadership the value of courage and why we should make all decisions by what is best for students. Lastly, I dedicate this dissertation to the memory of Antoine St. Exupery who wrote the words "On ne voit bien qu'avec le cœur; l'essentiel est invisible aux yeux." These words have given me solace and courage while navigating both the frustrations of bureaucracy and the often treacherous waters of educational politics.

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CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In response to increased accountability placed on schools in the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) school systems focused on professional development for teachers as a means to improve teaching practices and increase student achievement (Seed, 2008). As a result, increased accountability for school systems, and subsequently teachers, in regards to student achievement placed a heavy burden on school systems to improve teacher quality. With increased funding for professional development, school systems started to concentrate their efforts on professional development. This focus on professional development generated a national interest in a better understanding of how teachers and students learn. As a result the National Staff Development Council (NSDC) redefined professional development as a model of continuous improvement rather than unconnected bouts of training to reflect "a growing body of research on effective professional development models for teachers" (Darling-Hammond, Wei, Andree, Richardson, & Orphanos, p. 2, 2009).

Learning Forward (2012), formerly NSDC, published standards for professional development that "lead to effective teaching practices, supportive leadership, and improved student results" (para. 1). These standards were developed with the contribution of over 40 different professional associations and education organizations and are distributed into the following categories: "Learning Communities, Leadership, Resources, Data, Learning Designs, Implementation, and Outcomes" (Learning Forward, 2011, para. 1). Within each category Learning Forward defined and specified professional development standards.

The term learning communities has been defined as professional development that increases teacher effectiveness and student achievement through "learning communities

committed to continuous improvement, collective responsibility, and goal alignment" (Learning Forward, 2011, para. 1). Showers and Joyce (1996) promoted the idea of coaching within the context of a school-wide learning community where teachers would emerge as experts to coach teachers in their area of expertise. Darling-Hammond et al. (2009) also suggested, "professional development should build strong relationships among teachers" (p. 11) emphasizing breaking down the cultural norms that create an isolated environment for teachers so that teachers can collaborate with one another, which has shown to improve teacher practice. Morgan (2010) also found it difficult to breakthrough these cultural norms; one coach she interviewed stated that the greatest difficulty she faced was "being able to get initial entry into the classroom, needing more time to work collaboratively with the teachers, and not having the support from the principal" (p. 85).

Learning Forward (2011) defined resources as being both material and human. Human resources "are a significant portion of the resource investment in professional learning" (para. 3); this includes instructional coaches. In addition, the time that coaches, teachers, and administrators commit to professional learning is an additional resource and a cost factor. Similarly, coaches are responsible for choosing how they spend their and teachers' time (Deussen, Coskie, Robinson, & Autio, 2007). Thus, coaches must judiciously consider human, material, and time resources when planning their work.

Data are often overlooked as being part of professional development (Guskey & Yoon, 2009); however, Learning Forward (2011) recommended using data "from multiple sources to enrich decisions about professional learning that leads to increased results for every student" (para. 1). Deussen et al. (2007) found that coaches consistently use data to determine where both teachers and students are achieving and needing improvement. This is consistent with Knight's

(2007) suggestion that coaches should use data to help teachers determine the coaching they need.

Perhaps the category most closely associated with coaching is the implementation category that Learning Forward (2011) defined as "professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students applies research on change and sustains support for implementation of professional learning for long-term change" (para. 1). The essence of coaching is changing teacher practice to increase student learning (Knight, 2007, 2009). Learning Forward (2011) asserted coaches provide additional opportunities for teacher growth through learning opportunities, modeled lessons, providing implementation resources, and personalized guidance. In order to have school-wide change, change must start first with the classroom teacher (Fullan, 2001; Hord, 2009; Supovitz & Turner, 2000).

Studies on professional development and its relation to teacher quality and student achievement were not encouraging to systems that were only providing drive-by or one-shot workshops. Due to the high-stakes that come with measuring school progress by student achievement by standardized testing (Valli & Buese, 2007), school systems examined other approaches to professional development that have proven to be effective in transferring new knowledge to practice (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009; Showers & Joyce, 1996).

While educators have searched for new approaches to professional learning coaching has emerged as an approach that seems to be the "most promising" (Knight, 2009, p. 1). Guskey and Yoon (2009) echoed this finding stating that it a sustained, committed approach to professional learning with job-embedded element appears to be the most effective form of professional development for implementing new innovations. Darling-Hammond et al. (2009) also stated that "professional development should focus on student learning and address the teaching of specific

curriculum content" (p. 10). Coaching allows teachers to define specifically which areas of their practice they want to improve. This cafeteria style professional development is effective because it is differentiated for individual teachers and occurs in their schools, often directly in their classrooms, and sometimes while they are with their students. Traditional professional development has been a one-size-fits all model, whereas professional development with coaching allows teachers to have more control over their professional learning.

While the extant research on professional development did not provide a complete picture of which professional development practices improved teacher quality and student achievement, evidence from research illuminated the positive effects of deeper and sustained professional development (Supovitz & Turner, 2000). As a result, job-embedded professional development, or instructional coaching, emerged as a popular form of professional development because of its focus on instructional change and "building capacity" (Coggins, Stoddard, & Cutler, 2003, p. 6) in teachers. Knight (2009) advocated for a dynamic approach to professional development using several different approaches while contending "one of the most promising approaches appears to be coaching" (p. 1). Other researchers echoed this sentiment stating that traditional professional development followed up by coaching to assist with implementation is also an effective means of professional development (Helmer, Barlett, Wolgemuth, & Lea, 2011; Neuman & Cunningham, 2009). Despite studies that found instructional coaching successful for implementing teaching innovations, the research literature has been lacking in studies that directly link instructional coaching with improved teacher performance or student achievement over the long term. In addition I could not find any study that looked at teachers' perceptions of instructional coaching as a phenomenon; most studies simply looked at the teachers' perceptions of instructional coaching they had received as a part of a study.

Statement of the Problem

Although the literature on instructional coaching contains small-scale studies that directly link instructional coaching to improved teaching practices and student achievement (Bruce & Ross, 2008; Knight, 2009; Taylor, 2008), other studies report that teachers, particularly veterans, resist instructional coaching (Coggins et al., 2003; Darling-Hammond et al., 2009; Knight, 2009). While much research literature has addressed the notion of teacher resistance to change, extant literature on instructional coaching has not addressed specific resistance to instructional coaching. Unlike traditional professional development that has often been conducted by outside trainers or trained trainers within the school system, instructional coaching involves the creation of a new role within a school or school system. This changes the dynamic within a school. Coggins et al. (2003), stated that "in order for coaches to be effective, teachers and administrators must accept the creation of the role, the person who takes it on, and the activities that the person engages in as legitimate" (p. 34). Because of a dearth in the literature on teachers' perceptions of instructional coaching it is difficult to discern whether teachers approve or disapprove of it as a form of professional development (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009; Guskey & Yoon, 2009).

Although studies on teacher attitudes are scant in the research literature (Green, Grant, & Rynsaardt, 2010), other studies mention the importance of teacher attitudes to the success of coaching (Borman, Feger, & Kawakami, 2006; Deussen et al., 2007; Knight, 2007, 2009; Richard, 2003; Symonds, 2002). Borman et al. (2006) found that teachers generally resisted coaching when they felt threatened by a coach's presence in their classroom. This was particularly acute with veteran teachers who viewed coaches as quasi-administrators or agents of actual administrators who were evaluating the teacher's performance for reasons other than

coaching. Both Ertmer et al. (2003) and Knight (2004) found that resistance to coaching faded after a coaching program had taken root in a school culture, but in the beginning, resistance towards coaching can be fierce. The purpose of this quantitative study is to investigate K-12 teachers' perceptions of instructional coaching. Specifically, this researcher assessed the perception of instructional coaching as a whole, support for hiring practices for instructional coaches, the value of instructional coaching for improving teaching practices, the value of instructional coaching for improving student achievement, and the perception of instructional coaches being in supervisory role.

Limitations and Delimitations of the Study

Certain limitations existed regarding this study due to the nature of the population that was chosen. The population was delimited to all of the teachers in three school systems in northeast Tennessee. Therefore, the results of this study may not be generalized to any other education system. All teachers in all schools in these school systems were invited to participate. It is possible that the opinions and the views of those teachers who agreed to participate were different from those who chose not to participate.

The survey instrument used in this study was designed and used for the first time during this research. At the time the study was executed I was employed by one of the participating school systems. In addition, I had been a member of the coaching team in one of the school systems for 2 years. There may be limitations or bias associated with the wording, semantics, the ordering of questions, and other aspects of the instrument. To minimize any such limitations, I piloted the survey with teachers enrolled in administrative endorsement cohort who had taught or were currently teaching in schools with coaching. This field test resulted in improvements in the survey and thus greater validity.

Participation in this study was voluntary. Complete confidentiality was assured to all invited participants.

Definition of Terms

Instructional Coach: "An instructional coach partners with teachers to help them incorporate research-based instructional practices into their teaching… [which] help students learn more effectively" (Knight, 2009, p. 30).

Professional Development – A term used to describe specific teaching and learning activities related to education and planned for teachers to improve competency and technical levels (Knight, 2005).

Hiring Practices: The processes by which coaches are hired in school systems: internal appointments, internal postings with interviews, or external postings with interviews.

Teaching Practices: Include content-specific or general best-practices employed by teachers to improve student achievement or learning.

Student achievement: The measurable or observable performance of students in the classroom or on standardized tests.

Administrative role: A perception that coaches are employed in supervisory roles elevated above classroom teachers.

Research Questions

This study examines teachers' perceptions of instructional coaching guided by the following research questions.

Question 1: To what extent do teachers support an instructional coaching program?

Question 2: To what extent do teachers support hiring practices for instructional coaches?

Question 3: To what extent do teachers perceive instructional coaching improves teaching practices?

Question 4: To what extent do teachers perceive instructional coaching impacted student learning?

Question 5: To what extent do teachers consider instructional coaching an administrative role?

Significance of Study

In order to determine if instructional coaching is having a positive impact on student learning, more research is needed on teachers' perceptions of this professional development practice. Findings from this study could provide data for school systems that are beginning or currently conducting instructional coaching programs. The data generated from this study could provide insight into whether results from coaching stems from teachers' beliefs in the efficacy of the professional development itself or could stimulate investigation by the school system into other factors behind teacher resistance.

In addition, findings from this study could also provide another focal point for researchers who are studying the efficacy of instructional coaching as a professional development practice. While experimental studies on instructional coaching are few (Cornett & Knight, 2008; Darling-Hammond et al., 2009; Guskey & Yoon, 2009), adding teacher perceptions to the extant literature on coaching could allow researchers to triangulate these studies with existing data to determine if there are trends.

Overview of the Study

This study is organized into five chapters. Chapter 1 includes the introduction, the statement of the problem, the significance of the study, the limitations and delimitations of the study, the definition of terms, significance of the study, and the research questions. Chapter 2 contains a review of related literature to the study. Chapter 3 explains the methodology used in the study. Chapter 4 reports the findings of the data analyses. Chapter 5 incorporates the summary, findings, conclusions, and recommendations for this study.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Since the publication of *A Nation at Risk* in 1983 and again with the adoption of *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) in 2001, reform has been the focus of education in the United States (Seed, 2008). The goals these reforms set for students have increased the demands and pressure on teachers (Jamentz, 2001; Knight, 2005; Valli & Buese, 2007). As a result of the increased demands on teachers, systems have invested in more professional development (Borko, 2004; Desimone, Porter, Garet, Yoon, & Birman, 2002;). A significant part of that professional development has been job-embedded professional development, or instructional coaching as it often called (Borman et al., 2006). In response to increased accountability in NCLB, school systems placed an emphasis on improvements in instructional practice. Teachers are the only group who can effectively bring about change in education (Fullan, 1993). Thus, professional development became a major area of focus for school systems, subscribing to Guskey's (2000) assertion that no improvements in teacher performance can take place without significant professional learning. As a result, job-embedded professional development, or instructional coaching, emerged as a common dimension of professional learning and is expanding rapidly (Kowal & Steiner, 2007; Gallucci et al., 2010). Instructional coaching addresses specifically the transfer of professional learning and the implementation of curriculum reform to the classroom (Borman et al., 2006). Although variations of the coaching model date back to the 1930s (Hall, 2004) the practice was reintroduced following frustration with traditional workshops and other forms of professional development that have proved ineffective (Coggins et al., 2001; Darling-Hammond et al., 2009; Deussen et al., 2007; Guskey & Yoon, 2009; Neuman & Cunningham, 2009).

In small-scale studies instructional coaching has shown it can positively effect change in classroom practices (Bruce & Ross, 2008; Campbell & Malkus, 2009; Cornett & Knight, 2008; Morgan, 2009; Reed-Wright, 2009), but instructional coaching remains largely underresearched (Knight, 2005; Taylor, 2008). Chiefly studies on teachers' perceptions of instructional coaching have been lacking. Conclusions drawn by many researchers highlight the important role that the coach plays in supporting the success of both teachers and students (Campbell & Malkus, 2009; Manno & Firestone, 2008; Taylor, 2008). Several studies have mentioned teacher resistance to instructional coaching (Coggins et al., 2003; Darling-Hammond et al., 2009; Helmer, Barlett, Wolgemuth, & Lea, 2011; Knight, 2009), but resistance to coaching has not been the topic of any major study. Similarly, other studies have discussed reticence on the part of coaches to work with teachers (Deussen et al., 2007). This has been inconsistent with the major body of research on professional learning where teachers' reactions to the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of one type of professional learning or another are widely discussed in the literature (Darling-Hammond, 2009).

Change

Due to necessary changes in school systems in response to NCLB, a new chapter of educational reform began in America that focused on professional development (Darling-Hammond et al., 2000). For full-scale educational reform to take place, Hall and Hord (2006) reported that it must take place at the building level level by changing teacher practice with improving student learning as the goal, or simply stated, "there will be no change in outcomes until new practices are implemented" (p. 9). At the crux of any change initiative is loss, anxiety, and struggle (Fullan, 2007). To mitigate these natural reactions to any change, educators and researchers began to examine professional development more closely to find which methods

were more successful (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009). Coaching or job-embedded professional development was determined to be a highly effective method for both delivering and sustaining professional learning initiatives. Thus coaches were placed on the front lines of educational change to serve as change agents for school systems that needed to reform and sustain the reform to meet new demands (Knight, 2007).

According to Schlechty (1997) there are three types of organizational change: "procedural change, technological change, and systemic change" (p. 204). Procedural change is changing the way one does a job. These types of changes deal with the order of events in a job, the rate at which they need to be done, and "forms the shape and directions to action" (p. 204). Often procedural changes are done to maximize efficiency while the result of the work is essentially the same. Technological change deals with the tools one uses for the job. Even though the tools change, the job remains the same. In education the job is student learning and that should not change (Wiggins & McTighe, 2007).

Systemic change, however, consists of changing the work itself "reorienting its purpose and refocusing its intent" (Schlechty, 1997, p. 205). This is the type of change wrought by NCLB. This type of change is the most stressful to those involved in the process because it requires "alterations in rules, roles, and relationships as well as in beliefs, values, and orientations" (p. 205). This type of change is not very well understood by organizations; however, it is the type of change that school systems have had to undergo since NCLB.

While systemic change is changing the work itself, technological change was necessary to give teachers the tools, or knowledge, with which to do the new job they have been asked to do (Schlechty, 1997). Fullan (2007) referred to the three dimensions to implementing any new program or policy: (1) new materials, (2) new teaching strategies or approaches, (3) and the

possible alteration of beliefs. Both dimensions 1 and 2 are technological changes. "Technological change…requires as well the creation of opportunities to practice and observe and opportunities to coach and be coached" (Schlechty, 1997, p. 208). Coaches are often resource providers assisting with new materials in the beginning of the coaching process (Morgan, 2009; Reed-Wright, 2009). Typically, coaches do this to build relationships with teachers and to create opportunities for more comprehensive coaching. Coaches establish and cultivate new relationships with either assigned or volunteer teachers while modeling best practices. (Dole, 2004; Morgan, 2009; Reed-Wright, 2009).

The third dimension, the alteration of beliefs, is a systemic change. While this type of change does not alter the ultimate aim of education, student learning, new standards with different aims and benchmarks change what teachers are teaching. Facilitating this type of change requires a group effort (Hall & Hord, 2006). Coaches are placed in their position to work side-by-side with teachers to carry out professional development from the inception through the implementation (Knight, 2007). In order to alter beliefs, however, coaches must take a cognitive approach that causes the teacher to examine approaches and to reflect on practice (Knight, 2007; Reed-Wright, 2009). This type of cognitive coaching first suggested by Costa and Garmston (1994) is meant to build capacity in teachers so that they become self-directed. In addition, coaches can help inspire change in teachers through a school-wide change through the "effects of structure and culture" (Schlechty, 1997, p. 220). Hall and Hord (2006) also mentioned the importance of culture and structure to the change process stating that "the context of the school influences the process of change" (p. 14). Coaches are aware of the culture of a building and are strategically in place to help lead any change initiative (Knight, 2007).

Professional Development

When examining the importance of evaluating professional development and its impact on pedagogy and student learning, Darling-Hammond et al. (2009) found that while 90% of American teachers had received some form of professional development or another, many were dissatisfied with the professional development they had received. The complaints included: collaboration was rare, and when it occurred, it is weak; much of the professional development available was not useful; opportunities for training about teaching special needs students or limited English proficiency students are virtually nonexistent; teachers' own priorities for further professional knowledge are not being addressed; and, teachers have limited influence in crucial areas of decision-making, particularly in the area of professional development. Guskey and Yoon (2009) echoed these findings stating there is disconnect between the professional development that teachers desired and what they were receiving.

To address the deficits in professional development, Darling-Hammond et al. (2009) made several recommendations. The first recommendation was that professional development "should be intensive, ongoing, and connected to practice" (p. 9). This is essentially the cornerstone of job-embedded professional develop or instructional coaching. Instead of having occasional workshops that address general topics such as classroom management or student motivation, robust and effective professional development should tie directly to classroom practice. Coaches are in a unique position to carry on this work after workshops or training (Knight, 2007). Guskey and Yoon (2009) also contended that follow up is "vital" (p. 497) to the success of any professional development.

The second recommendation from Darling-Hammond et al. (2009) stated "professional development should focus on student learning and address the teaching of specific curriculum

content" (p. 10). One finding was that professional development that deals with concrete, practical application of specific academic content is the most effective. Reed-Wright (2009) also found coaches "cannot be abstract in coaching teachers. There must be something concrete to work from with teachers" (p. 94). Another finding reported teachers are more likely to try classroom practices that have been modeled for them (Knight, 2007). Both of these findings supported coaching in that modeling and coaching specific content are key roles of coaches.

Additionally Darling-Hammond et al. (2009) explained "professional development should align with school improvement priorities and goals" (p. 10). They suggest professional development was more effective when it aligns with a district vision and goals. Teachers must see an alignment between district goals, curriculum, and the professional learning they receive. In Reed-Wright's (2009) case study, she attributed the success of the literacy program to this balance between different levels of educators in the system. "Between the principals the coaches and the teachers I realized this was like a delicately-played symphony. The principal was the conductor and each person did his-her part to keep the music in perfect harmony. Teachers' emotions were like the notes of an instrument and could easily go out of tune." (p. 109). This further supported the concept of coaches serving as change agents (Knight, 2005), and coaches must operate within the overall system vision in order to effect change in instruction at the classroom and building level (Fullan, 1993).

Finally, Darling-Hammond et al. (2009) declared "professional development should build strong working relationships among teachers" (p. 11). Historically, American teachers have exhibited a strong "individualistic ethos" (p. 11) and schools are structured in a way that are conducive to teaching alone with little time or opportunity to collaborate with colleagues. However, when schools are structured in a way that gives teachers opportunities to work with

colleagues on lesson planning, instructional practices, assessment, curriculum design, and shared leadership decisions, both teachers and students can see positive effects. Coaching can assist with fostering relationships between colleagues by organizing and leading grade-level meetings and by providing small-group professional development activities that are focused on an area chosen by colleagues. This has been further supported supported in the International Reading Association (IRA) (2006) standards "coaches are professionals [who] are able to develop trusting relationships with a variety of people" (p. 8).

Professional Development and Teacher Efficacy

"In the history of education, no improvement effort has ever succeeded in the absence of thoughtfully planned and well-implemented professional development" (Guskey & Yoon, 2009, p. 497). The aim of professional development, or learning, is to improve teacher practice in order to improve student learning. In response to higher academic-standards and bureaucratic pressures on school systems, professional development has become a big business in the United States as evidenced by the billions of dollars that have been allocated for it over the years (Hill, 2009). With appropriated local and federal monies spent on professional development, school systems and researchers are looking for evidence to find out if what they are doing is successfully improving teacher practice and effecting student learning (McCrary, 2011). Nevertheless, research that demonstrated a direct causal link between professional development and student achievement has been nearly nonexistent (Darling-Hammond, 2009; Guskey & Yoon, 2009). Instead, school systems must turn to research on professional development that has shown to improve teacher practice in response to research that has suggested the direct influence teacher quality has on student outcomes (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009; Sanders & Rivers, 1996; Wenglinsky, 2000).

Two landmark studies established a link between teacher performance and student achievement. Wenglinsky's (2000) analysis of National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) data indicated the importance of professional development to improving teacher quality and thus student achievement. He studied data gathered from more than 15,000 eighth-grade mathematics and science students to see if teacher inputs (e.g., years of experience, postgraduate education, and number of undergraduate credit hours in the subject taught), professional development, or teaching practices affected student performance. He employed a statistical analysis methodology that allowed him to determine the value of the influence of any given variable on an outcome while taking into account the other potential influences. Wenglinsky's (2000) study revealed that professional development was a key factor in predicting student achievement. For instance, students in classes that were taught by teachers who received professional development in working with different student populations outperformed their peers by 107% on the NAEP. By comparison, students taught by teachers who majored or minored in the subject taught, another important factor, only outperformed their peers by 39%. These findings support Wenglinsky's claim that "changing the nature of teaching and learning in the classroom may be the most direct way to improve student outcomes" (p. 11).

Additional evidence supporting the link between teacher quality and student achievement has been provided by Sanders and Rivers's (1996) landmark study of two Tennessee school districts. Researchers used Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System (TVAAS) to determine to what degree teacher quality impacts student achievement. TVAAS provides individual student data in several content areas over several years, allowing the longitudinal impact of teachers to be measured and evaluated.

In their study Sanders and Rivers (1996) divided teachers from two large Tennessee districts into five quintiles, with the first quintile (Q1) representing the least effective teachers and the fifth quintile (Q5) representing the most effective teachers. The researchers then reviewed data on the Tennessee Comprehensive Achievement Test in third, fourth, and fifth grade mathematics for students who received 3 consecutive years of instruction from three Q1 teachers, which the authors refer to as Low-Low-Low instruction, and 3 consecutive years of instruction from three Q5 teachers, referred to as High-High-High instruction.

Students who received 3 years of instruction from three Q5 teachers (High-High-High) in school district A achieved a mean score of 784.9 (96^{th} percentile), while students who received 3 years of instruction from three Q1 teachers (Low-Low-Low) received a mean score of 720.2 (44^{th} percentile) (Sanders & Rivers, 1996). Similarly, in school district B, the mean score for High-High-High instruction was 758.9 (83rd percentile), whereas the mean score for Low-Low-Low instruction was 704.4 (29th percentile). In both school systems, students starting at the same level of achievement (50th percentile) 3 years later had differences in mean percentile achievement scores of more than 50 percentile points. Teacher quality accounted for a 50% spread on student achievement. Differences reported were "very highly significant" (p. 3). The authors concluded that teacher effect was the largest contributing factor to student achievement.

Taken together, the Wenglinsky (2000) and Sanders and Rivers (1996) studies suggested improving teaching practice was essential to improving student achievement. In a research synthesis of professional development, Guskey and Yoon (2009) found that follow-up to workshops or training was essential to the success of any professional development initiative. In contrast to many earlier studies that denounced the one-shot or drive-by workshop as ineffective (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009), Guskey and Yoon (2009) supported coupling traditional

professional development with job-embedded coaching or other follow-up supports stating, "virtually all of the studies that showed positive improvement in student learning included significant amounts of structured and sustained follow-up after the main professional development activities" (p. 497). In essence, instructional coaches can be the missing piece in successful professional development.

Analysis of qualitative data also suggested that there is a link between teacher performance and student achievement. Both Morgan (2010) and Reed-Wright (2009) mention several instances in interviews where teachers attributed student gains to an improvement in their instruction. Reed-Wright (2009) reported that student writing improved greatly during a 5-year focus on literacy in a school because the teachers' skills were strengthened. One coach claimed, "Suddenly the data was improving. It was prevalent in the running records as well as in the draft books. We could see it happening before our eyes…before we knew it they were writing their own stories. We kept modeling and they kept growing" (p. 96). Morgan (2010) similarly reported that students improved both their reading and writing as a group due to teachers improving their reading and writing instruction.

Current State of Instructional Coaching Research

The research on instructional coaching has been largely descriptive, involving case studies, observations, and interviews (Cornett & Knight, 2008) with a few small-scale studies that cannot be easily generalized (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009; Deussen et al., 2007). However, given the recent rejuvenation of instructional coaching (Hall, 2004), descriptive research is crucial (Knight, 2005). Looking across descriptive research studies, it has been clear what coaching entails varies by setting if not by individual. Thus, the generalizability of any

study on coaching would be limited to the type of coaching to which that district, or even individual coach, subscribes (Deussen et al., 2007).

In addition to descriptive research, efficacy studies on coaching are becoming increasingly available. Los Angeles Unified School District (2002; 2004) and Supovitz et al. (2000) are valid and reliable examples for examining the effect of instructional coaching. The small number of studies may also be owed to the challenges and cost of measuring changes in teacher practice (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009; Desimone et al., 2002; Guskey & Yoon, 2009; Hill, 2005). Linking coaching to improved student outcomes is similarly complex.

Definitions of Instructional Coaching

The term coaching has been used in a variety of ways, but in education most authors described the role as inherently multifaceted and ambiguous (Coggins et al., 2003; Darling-Hammond, 2009; Showers, 1985). Instructional coaching can either be content-based or generalized and intended to support teachers in meeting the aims of school or district-based instructional reform (Mangin & Stoelinga, 2008; Neufeld & Roper, 2003). In several accounts coaching has been structured as a voluntary form of professional development, whereas in other contexts it is mandatory for particular groups of teachers (Knight, 2004). Knight (2005) defined an instructional coach as "an on-site professional developer who teaches educators how to use proven teaching methods…and collaborates with teachers, identifies practices that will effectively address teachers' needs, and help teachers implement those practices" (p. 17).

Knight (2004) asserted coaching should be voluntary, and coaches should develop a collaborative mindset. However, not all coaching has been voluntary; some coaching programs have introduced what is known as "directive coaching" (Bacon, 2003, p. 74). In voluntary, or reflexive coaching, coaches often are expected to market themselves and their work with

teachers or use student data or observation tools to demonstrate a need for change in instructional practices to teachers who will then ask the coach for help (Deussen et al., 2007). In directive coaching, student scores and both administrator and coach evaluations determine which teachers are assigned a coach.

Roles of Instructional Coaches

The promise of coaching has become so great that systems hoping to increase student learning have rushed to implement literacy coaching (Deussen, 2007; Russo, 2004). Coaching has been adopted in large urban districts (Russo, 2004), the entire state of Florida (Florida Department of Education, 2006), and by federally funded programs such as Reading First (Deussen et al., 2007) and GEARUP (Knight, 2005). A major component of Reading First was professional development, workshops, and site-based literacy coaches. In order to receive funding for Reading First, schools had to use a reading coach to provide professional development. Subsequently, over 5,200 schools hired reading coaches.

In the saliency of coaching programs, great professional interest in literacy coaching has resulted in many calls for papers from both professional and trade journals (Deussen et al., 2007). In addition, the National Council of Teachers of English (2006) and the IRA (2006) established a set of standards for coaching as well as the development of a new clearinghouse for information about literacy coaching at the University of Colorado, Denver.

Because coaching has expanded so quickly, research was significantly behind practice (Knight, 2005; Deussen, 2007) and educators were starting coaching programs with "little data about what coaches do and whether coaching has an impact on student learning" (p. 2). Before coaching can be linked to effects in student achievement, a clarification of the qualifications and backgrounds of coaches and a description of what coaches actually do continue to be needed. A

clear picture about the roles of coaches and the skills they possess will help guide research to determine the link between professional development, teacher efficacy, and student achievement (Deussen, 2007). According to Deussen putting coaching in context also "lays the foundation for bridging the gap between existing theory and implementation" (p. 3). Lastly, inconsistent and confused perceptions of coaches' roles often led to confusion among coaches and contributes negatively to the quality of coaching practice (Borman et al., 2006; Morgan, 2009; Rivera, Burley, & Sass, 2004). Morgan (2010) found that confused roles for coaches attributed to teacher resistance in using the coach. In addition coaches also bemoaned being pulled from coaching duties to do other tasks such as fill in as principal while the principal was out and lead tours of the school building.

Costa and Garmston's (1994) model of cognitive coaching uses teachers' thought processes and beliefs to determine their instructional behavior. According to the cognitive coaching model in order to effect changes in practice, instructional coaching should focus on eliciting and examining the thoughts and decisions that a teacher makes in the context of teaching. Coaching, then, has been organized around a theory of cognitive apprenticeship. The focus of the expert and novice interaction in a cognitive apprenticeship is on developing cognitive skills of reflection through discourse and application of knowledge. Thus, the role of the coach is that of an expert and analyst who uses cognitive inquiry-based techniques to draw knowledge from the teacher's own thought processes (Knight, 2007). Reed-Wright (2009) cited learning to question, the centerpiece of cognitive coaching, as one the most important skills a coach can develop. "Questioning is essential to teachers' learning. It is critical in the dialogue time to help them be aware of what they are learning about" (Reed-Wright, 2009, p. 106).

However, a relationship between the coach and teacher must be established before this type of dialogue can take place.

Although extant literature on instructional coaching as a support for professional learning goes back several decades (Costa & Garmston, 1994; Joyce & Showers, 1982; Showers, 1985), the amount of empirical studies in the literature has not matched the increase in instructional coaching programs (Gallucci et al., 2010). Most notably, roles for instructional coaches have not been standardized through research, thus studies have not been consistent in their examination of instructional coaching (Hall, 2004). The literature on coaching indicated that instructional coaches typically assume many roles and engage in a wide variety of activities (Borman et al., 2006).

Knight (2006) defined the roles of a coach as follows:

- to enroll teachers to be coached;
- to identify appropriate interventions for teacher learning;
- to model teaching;
- to gather data in classrooms; and
- to engage teachers in dialogue about classroom and other data.

In addition, coaching roles often involve a delicate balance between peer coaching or mentoring responsibilities and a whole-school improvement or system-wide professional development.

Neufeld and Roper (2003) described a similar set of activities undertaken by content-focused coaches who focused on helping teachers improve instruction in a specific discipline such as literacy or mathematics. Specifically, these coaches conducted the following activities in the classroom: worked with teachers to plan and implement lessons, worked with content

teachers to hone specific strategies, developed and find materials and curriculum resources, worked with new teachers, encouraged teachers to talk about their practice with them and one another, observed classes and provided written and oral feedback, and provided demonstration lessons.

Deussen et al. (2007) listed five different activities for coaches:

- assisting teachers in implementing new curricular programs,
- consulting with and mentoring teachers,
- supporting teachers as they apply knowledge, develop skills, polish technique and deepen their understanding,
- planning and conducting research and writing grants, and
- leading discussion groups or study or book groups (p. 6).

Not only do coaches have many responsibilities, but the term coach is used to describe many different configurations: full-time coaches assigned to a single building, full-time coaches responsible for two or more buildings, part-time coaches, and teachers who provided part-time peer coaching to their colleagues. While these positions have much in common, their differences are often disregarded in the literature, making it more difficult to interpret findings about implementation success and impact on both teachers and students (Cornett & Knight, 2008).

The IRA (2006) in collaboration with other professional organizations (NCTE, 2004) published standards for literacy coaches. These represented the model of practice for instructional coaches. The IRA stated coaches should be "skillful collaborators, skillful job-embedded coaches, skillful evaluators of literacy needs, and skillful instructional strategists" (p. 5). The IRA's standards further mentioned reading-related knowledge and competencies required for the coaching role, such as in-depth knowledge of reading processes, assessment, and

instruction; expertise in working with teachers; presentation and group leadership skills; and the ability to model, observe, and provide feedback about instruction (IRA, 2006). Despite this clear framework, what reading coaches accomplished in their practice depends largely on how they defined their own role (Coggins et al., 2003).

Reed-Wright (2009) found that coaches in her case study had similar roles to others in the literature. She listed 10 different roles that literacy coaches did on a weekly basis ranked in order of number of times mentioned by teachers:

1. Modeling
2. Questioning and probing
3. Dialoguing
4. Reflecting
5. Listening
6. Using concrete evidence
7. Making reading-writing connections
8. Videotaping [teachers] for playback
9. Side-by-side coaching
10. Thinking aloud (p. 104)

Morgan (2010) found that coaches initially spent the majority of their time providing resources. One coach interviewed suggested that providing resources was the means she used to build relationships with teachers. She stated, "You have to start out as a resource provider. However, you have to get out of it, or will not make difference in instruction. Therefore, you have to start there to build the relationships. Relationship building is the most important role" (p. 105). Reed-Wright (2009) also found that coaches spent time cultivating relationships with

teachers. She found that "the relationships were built over a period of time, usually 6 to 9 months" (p. 83). In addition to providing resources, coaches also spent time helping disaggregate data from assessments programs used by the school and modeling lessons (Morgan, 2009; Reed-Wright, 2009). Also, coaches led meetings with teachers once a week. While their schedules were never static, the coaches' aim was to maximize contact with teachers in order to improve instruction through a variety of means (Morgan, 2009).

Time Allocation to Different Roles

While the many roles of coaches mentioned in the literature are extensive, how coaches spend their time versus their assigned roles often differs (Borman et al., 2006; Coggins et al., 2003; Deussen et al., 2007). "Time appears to shape the coaching role in several important ways" (Borman et al., 2006, p. 7). In a survey of Reading First literacy coaches Deussen et al. (2007) found that coaches worked an average of 49 hours a week, although some coaches reported working between 60 and 70 hours a week. On average coaches spent 26% of their workweek actually coaching: observing, providing feedback, demonstrating lessons, or training groups of teachers. Although these coaches were assigned to work with grades K-3, some reported working with teachers in grades 4-6 as well. These figures indicated that the expectation that coaches spend 60%-80% of their time coaching is not realistic. Planning for and attending meetings took up 14% of coaches' time. Paperwork took up 11% of their time and interventions took up 10%. These data demonstrated that coaches had a complex array of responsibilities and choose how they allocated their time in response to areas they considered the most important, not based on the structures and guidelines they were given by Reading First. This reinforced the assertion by Coggins et al., (2003) that the activities "coaches should be doing in the role has a weak correlation to what they actually do in practice" (p. 27). Morgan (2010) may have shed some

light on how this occurs. She found that coaches were pulled from their work to do other tasks that principals would assign them to do. Often coaches were pulled from work they had planned on doing with a teacher or in a classroom to give tours of the building to visitors such as a state senator or fill in as acting principal when the principal was out.

Coaches also spent as much time on data and administrative tasks as they did directly coaching teachers. Deussen et al. (2007) were intrigued by "the very large variation in responses across coaches" (p. 13). While some coaches spent as much as half their time on data and assessment, others spent no time at all in this area. Deussen et al. described four descriptive categories of coaches based on the time they spent on specific tasks. The four categories are as follows: "data oriented coach; student oriented coach; managerial coach, and teacher oriented coach" (p.13). Deussen et al. found that the type of coach had very little to do with the type of teacher the coach had been or what the coach's area of expertise had been before coaching, but rather with what the coach felt the most comfortable doing. This is consistent with other descriptive studies of coaching that find that the lack of clarity in coaching roles leads coaches to choose their work when not being bogged down with tasks that are not related to coaching teachers (Borman et al., 2006; Knight, 2004). Reed-Wright (2009) found that the structure of coaching led to coaches having more of a static schedule. In addition to having very structured roles, teachers were assigned to work with coaches, consequently coaches in this system did not have to market themselves to teachers to find teachers with whom to work.

Data-oriented coaches focused on data and assessment (Deussen et al., 2007). Half their work was spent on such responsibilities, including administration and coordination of assessment, data management, and the interpretation of data. Data-oriented coaches spent only 18% of their workweek directly coaching teachers. Fifteen percent of the coaches in the study

fell into this category. In practice data-oriented coaches emphasized entering, managing, and charting data. Teachers reported their interactions with these coaches were nearly all "focused on assessment" (p. 15). Data-oriented coaches touted data as a catalyst for convincing teachers that change in instructional practice was needed (Borman, 2006; Knight, 2005). Some teachers complained that these coaches were better at pinpointing where a student was in terms of learning than helping the teacher come up with strategies to help the student achieve gains. Coaches complained about the time it took to analyze the amount of data for which they were responsible. Knight (2005) also listed data analysis and data coaching as a major part of the coach's job. Morgan (2010) echoed Knight's (2005) suggestion finding that coaches used data to help pinpoint areas for teachers where they needed coaching or the data drove teachers to seek coaching for areas. Reed-Wright (2009) found that data analysis was the lynchpin for improving teacher performance. In her study the school system did not start data conferences until the third year of the literacy initiative. The teachers would look at the data with both the coach and principal. The coach would then analyze the data for the teacher. To that point, teachers had only seen summative data in the form of state test scores. Coaches helped teachers collect formative data from both testing programs and student writing journals. According to one teacher in the study, analyzing the data allowed teachers to "understand the students' needs which drove the instruction. The data did not actually drive the instruction. The students' needs drove it. We are analyzing data to determine students' needs" (p. 95). Without coaches to assist with this data, it is likely that data analysis would often be too labor-intensive for teachers to do regularly and effectively.

Student oriented coaches spent a disproportionate amount of time providing interventions to students at 12% (Deussen et al., 2007). Although the average proportion of coaching teachers

was 16%, similar to data oriented coaches, they were distinguished by not spending much time on data or assessment tasks. Qualitative data revealed that these coaches focused on students even when in the classroom working with teachers. Twenty-four percent of coaches fell into this category. In practice, student oriented coaches were more likely to assess students directly, to use the results to organize interventions, and to provide interventions themselves. Those three tasks alone took up nearly a third of these coaches' workweek. These coaches also used assessment data to refine the interventions for students, to reconfigure staffing for student interventions, and to develop flexible groupings within classrooms. What differentiated this category of coaches from others is these coaches also delivered specific interventions directly to students spending on average 12% of their time on this task. At times these coaches even substituted for absent teachers. Student-oriented coaches reported spending only 10% of their time working one-on-one with teachers. The reason that coaches gravitated towards this role became apparent in qualitative data: the teachers felt like students were why they were working in schools in the first place and needed to be with students in order to feel like they were doing their job, even though their guidelines stated they were to work exclusively with teachers. The extant literature on coaching does not address this type of coaching.

Managerial coaches are defined as coaches who spent a disproportionate amount of time on paperwork and meetings (Deussen et al., 2007). While other groups of coaches spent roughly 20% of their time on these activities, managerial coaches spent 35% of their time on these activities. Qualitative data revealed that these coaches viewed their position through the lens of their managerial and organizational responsibilities; 40 % of coaches fell into this category. Even though managerial coaches worked with teachers 25% more than both data oriented and student oriented coaches, they still spent more time on managing systems, facilitating meetings, and

keeping up with projects and paperwork at 35%. Some of the monitoring and documenting tasks involved student data. These coaches were similar to student oriented coaches in the amount of time they spent on collecting, managing, and using data on student progress. Coaches were mixed about whether these data were a good use of their time. Like other coaches, managerial coaches spent a good deal of time working with teachers on their instruction at 19% and with teachers in groups at 5%. Managerial coaches view themselves as more of a resource and resource provider to teachers rather than working directly with them. Coggins et al. (2003) also listed resource provider as one of the chief roles of an instructional coach. Some coaches saw their role as helping teachers protect their time by running interference and helping them with administrative tasks. A subset of managerial coaches reported being uncomfortable working with teachers and subsequently, "may have sought alternative ways to support teachers in order to avoid the one-on-one classroom coaching" (p. 17). One source of frustration for managerial coaches was the extent they were pulled away from their jobs to take on other duties such as making travel arrangements for principals, presenting at school board meetings, and organizing school and community events. Ironically, the main complaint of managerial coaches was that they were bogged down with paperwork. Borman et al. (2006) also found that coaches are often asked to do quasi-administrative tasks that did not pertain to working directly with teachers. Often these tasks are rooted in bureaucratic compliance. Sometimes this happens explicitly, as Morgan (2010) discovered. Often principals would give coaches assignments that needed to be done that they did not have time to do. In addition, coaches were often responsible for filling in for the principal as acting principal when the principal had to be out of the building.

Teacher-oriented coaches spend the most time working with teachers in the coaching role (Deussen et al., 2007). These activities comprised 52% of the workweek for coaches in these

groups. These coaches spent time either working one-on-one or with groups of teachers. In addition, this group also worked heavily with unassigned grades (4-6). About 21% of coaches were in this category. Teacher oriented coaches were most similar to the literature's description of coaches (Coggins et al., 2003; Deussen et al., 2007; Knight, 2005). When teacher-oriented coaches described their positions, they focused on teacher professional development (Deussen et al., 2007). Some of the tasks these coaches listed as part of their work included demonstrating implementation of core curriculum, classroom observations, providing feedback, modeling lessons, delivering professional development, conducting meetings, and helping teachers pinpoints areas of instructional improvement with data. These teachers described choosing the teachers with whom they would work very carefully. They invited teachers to come see them if they needed help, but they relied heavily on classroom observations to determine which teachers needed their assistance the most. While teacher-oriented coaches admitted it was easier to work with teachers who had invited them or who were comfortable working with a coach, they also made an effort to work with more challenging teachers. Teacher oriented coaches also reported being very engaged in the work of teaching and learning. While they spent very little time on paperwork at 8% and student interventions at 7%, they spent over 50% of their time working directly with teachers, even arranging classroom observations for teachers to watch other teachers. Morgan (2010) found that most coaches sought to be teacher oriented as evidenced by their desire to build relationships with teachers. One coach stated, "One of the most crucial things to being a coach is developing relationships. You are able to develop personal relationships if you are viewed as being part of the faculty" (p. 105). Another coach echoed this stating "You have to…build relationships. Relationship building is the most important role" (p. 100). And another stressed the importance of relationships by stating "You can have all the

knowledge you want, but if you can't relate to people you are not going to get very far with teachers" (p. 110). This focus on teachers and relationships seems to be the lynchpin of successful coaching (Knight, 2005). Reed-Wright (2009) also recognized the importance of relationships, stating:

> A relationship had to be developed before the teacher would be comfortable with probing questions. A relationship had to be established before a teacher could sit down for a one-on-one dialogue to discuss a lesson just taught. A relationship had to be established before a teacher would be able to reflect upon the past and project to the future. All of this revolved around trust. Relationships and trust surround the success of coaching. (p. 108)

Coggins, Stoddard, and Cutler (2003) studied coaches in the Bay Area School Reform Collaborative (BASRC). The assigned roles of the coach are as follows: "building capacity for instructional leadership at the school level; managing knowledge resources; direct coaching of teachers; and building capacity for instructional support" (p. 6). The coaches focused on instructional leadership, reform leadership, and capacity building in teachers at the building level to close the achievement gap for their students. However, what the coaches actually did from day to day often departed from their assigned roles. Coaches in the BASRC also analyzed data, helped teachers with intervention strategies, worked on the school schedule, researched strategies to improve the literacy level in the school building, communicated feedback from teachers about the quality of professional development they were receiving, and assisted administrators in budget decisions based on the needs of the teachers. This could possibly explain why coaching, which should not be a supervisory or administrative role (Knight, 2007), is often perceived by teachers as one. "Leadership positions intended to be carried out with an emphasis on the classroom level often end up looking like administrative roles in their enactment" (Coggins et al., 2003, p. 28).

Some school districts put measures in place to ensure that coaches do not unintentionally assume administrative or supervisory roles. Stein and Coburn (2008) conducted a comparative analysis of two urban school districts in the midst of mathematics reform. The coaches in their study were part of a "cascading hierarchy" (p. 20) of mathematics reform. Central office mathematics coordinators worked with regional mathematics specialists who in turn worked with coaches on areas of focus for their work with teachers. Coaches only worked directly with central office mathematics coordinators during coaching training during the summer, so they fell outside of the "administrative line" (p. 21). In addition, the coaches in both districts taught half-time, so they were considered part of the faculty of their schools. Stein and Cogburn (2008) attributed the success of the coaches in these districts to their singular focus on mathematics curriculum, the other teachers' perceptions of them as faculty members, and purposeful exclusion of coaches from administrative or supervisory functions. In Morgan's (2009) study teachers emphasized the importance of coaches being supportive rather than evaluative. However, this was at odds with principals' requests for coaches to conduct evaluations of teachers, thus Morgan recommends that "coaches should work with teachers in a nonevaluative capacity" (p. 154). Evidence of the success of a nonevaluative relationship can be seen in the comment a teacher made: "We had an open relationships. I felt like if I [struggled] she was there to help me find a way to make it work. It was like a guardian angel type of situation. If I needed something, I would call her. It was not an authoritative situation. She was there to help me not evaluate me" (p. 100). Reed-Wright (2009) also expressed that coaches were placed in nonevaluative positions, and any data they collected were for their eyes and teachers' eyes only.

Instructional Coach Skills

Successful coaches are required to demonstrate a variety of knowledge, skills, and dispositions (Coggins et al., 2003; Deussen et al. 2007). Killion and Harrison (2005) asserted that in addition to pedagogy skills effective coaches need skills in sensitive communication, or as Knight (2009) stated, effective instructional coaches "are skilled communicators, or relationship builders, with a repertoire of excellent communication skills that enable them to empathize, listen, and build trusting relationships" (p. 31). Coaches need to be expertly attuned to diagnosing teachers' needs and adjusting their responses to meet the particular instructional needs when working in the classroom (West & Staub, 2003).

Knight (2006) stated coaching requires skills in communication, relationship building, change management, and leadership for professional development. Skills in communication and relationship building are components of cognitive coaching proposed first by Costa and Garmston (1994). Chief among the role of the coach is to communicate with teachers about their cognitive processes when teaching and draw from them solutions to instructional problems rather than dispense expert advice. Despite the suggestion that communication is key to coaching, McCrary (2011) found that coaches also need to have intensive content knowledge. In her study she found that math coaches who held degrees in mathematics had more coaching efficacy than those who did not. In addition, she also found that those who had higher content pedagogy knowledge were more likely foster higher levels of teacher satisfaction and have a greater impact on teaching practice. Hull (2011) also reported that principals and teachers mentioned "experience, expertise, or knowledge as prerequisites to positive coaching attributes" (p. 51). Teachers seem to value coaching more from individuals who have first-hand experience of the classroom. Dole (2004) provided a list of knowledge and skills that reading coaches need to

perform their job effectively. She highlighted deep content and pedagogical knowledge of reading and to have successfully taught reading in the past in order to be an effective coach. Also, reading coaches need to be expert diagnosticians to find areas in teaching practice to coach after observing a lesson. Finally, she asserted that reading coaches need exemplary communication skills to articulate to teachers needed areas of improvement in reading instruction tactfully and effectively. Reed-Wright (2009) also found that communication skills were highly important for literacy coaches. One coach stated, "If you do not talk with teachers, ask questions, get their thoughts, you are not going to move forward to new understandings" (p. 114).

West and Staub (2003) also emphasized deep understandings of content when coaching mathematics includes a broad knowledge of curricular materials and curriculum alignment. They emphasized interpersonal skills for coaching in content areas due to varying degrees of confidence of teachers with the subject matter. Coaches must be flexible and dynamic in how they present and carry out the multiple roles associated with coaching in the classroom. For example, a coach may plan a lesson with a teacher, coteach a lesson, observe students, or conduct an observation followed by a conference with a teacher. Hull (2011) also emphasized the importance of content knowledge for literacy coaches to be effective. In Hull's study, both teachers and principals listed content knowledge and experience ahead of all other attributes that led to a successful coach.

Coaching requires interpersonal communication skills including articulating strategies and instructions for classroom observation pre- and postconferences (Neufeld & Roper, 2003). Morgan (2010) found a list of actions of effective coaches through a series of interviews with teachers who had been coached. Teachers listed the following actions: listens, builds relationships, demonstrates instead of telling, asks questions, encourages, and motivates. These

actions are consistent with the model of coaching created by Costa et al. (2002) who asserted that coaches must develop a cognitive relationship with teachers and use the knowledge teachers already have to coach them to improve their practice. Hull (2011), Knight (2009), and Reed-Wright (2009) also considered communication an essential skill for coaches to master in order to be successful coaching teachers.

While the literature focuses on coaching as primarily working one-on-one with teachers, the role may also require skill in group presentation, facilitation, and training and knowledge of district policies when working on district-wide committees (Knight, 2004). Because of the wide variety of roles coaches must play, additional professional knowledge and wisdom has been needed. This included establishing trusting and respectful relationships with teachers also serving as a liaison between teachers and administrators. (Richard, 2003). However, as Morgan (2010) found out, administrators can also derail coaches' work with teachers by giving them assignments outside the scope of their coaching duties and at times even pull them from their work with teachers to do work that administrators consider a more pressing need at the time. Dole (2004) also suggested that a sense of humor is important when trying to manage relationships to find balance between affecting change and trying not to overburden teachers. Many teachers in Morgan's (2009) study mentioned how much fun they had with their coach and placed an emphasis on enjoying their time with their coach.

In addition to content knowledge, communicative, and interpersonal skills required for effective coaching, Feger, Woleck, and Hickman (2004) noted that coaches also need knowledge of how children learn, including a deep knowledge of the learning tasks, inquiry strategies, and engaging structures that can help students develop ideas. In addition, an in-depth understanding of the curriculum and how it aligns through the grade levels is essential for coaches in order for

them to assist teachers with planning instruction. An awareness of coaching resources, including knowledge of professional development materials, current literature, and other teaching resources are also mentioned in the literature.

As with coaching roles and activities, the list of coaching skills and knowledge is broad. The research literature has yet to determine the relative importance of any particular knowledge of skills to the effectiveness of coaching. A small-scale study of digital literacy coaches (Ertmer et al., 2003) found that participating coaches perceived their interpersonal skills contributed more to their success than their technical knowledge. One of the reasons for this belief revealed they believed their content knowledge could always be improved through training, whereas their interpersonal skills were more of a fixed trait.

While most of the extant research reported interpersonal and communicative skills important in order to be an effective coach, there is very little evidence that backs it up. Intuitively, coaches whose job it is to work one-on-one with teachers should have effective communication skills; however, the extent to which this improves teacher practice, student learning, or effects the relationship between coaches and teachers is still unknown to researchers (Coggins et al., 2003; Deussen et al., 2009).

Coaching and Teacher Quality

Findings from some studies suggested the combination of professional development training with the follow-up support of an instructional coach can increase the transfer of knowledge from training to the classroom (Bruce & Ross, 2008; Guskey & Yoon, 2009; Kretlow, Wood, & Cook, 2011; Neuman & Cunningham, 2009; Teeman, Wink, & Tyra; 2011). While the following studies were small-scale, the results were consistent with the notion that follow up was essential to teacher adoption of innovations taught to them in professional

development training sessions (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009; Guskey & Yoon, 2009; Morgan, 2009). Morgan (2010) also found evidence that suggested that coaches who focused on specific content such as writing or reading can improve teacher practice in those areas.

Bruce and Ross (2008) conducted a study to examine the effects of peer coaching on mathematics teaching practices and teacher beliefs about their capacity to have an impact on student learning. This qualitative study focused on four pairs of grade 3 teachers two pairs of grade 6 teachers (n=12). Bruce and Ross (2008) designed four-session in-service series to teach pedagogical practices and to also train the teachers in peer coaching. Their aim was to "move toward mathematics reform implementation as well as [foster] the skills to participate effectively as peer coaches" (p. 353). All 12 teachers were observed at the beginning and end of the project; they were evaluated on the three teaching dimensions on which the in-service was focused: "selection of mathematics tasks, student construction of mathematics knowledge, and support for student-student interaction" (p. 354). Five observers were trained in the evaluation instrument before conducting observations. In addition, participants in the study completed an online self-efficacy assessment before and after the in-services. Furthermore, each teacher was observed by a peer coach on three occasions. Each pair compared peer observations with their own perceptions of their teaching performance. At the end of the study, each pair was interviewed. The interviews focused on teacher perceptions of change in mathematics instruction, specific examples of teacher and student behaviors that indicated changes in practice, and rationales about which parts of the professional learning led to the change. The study found that teachers moved their instruction towards standards-based methods; the in-service coupled with coaching had positive effects on teacher performance; and peer coaching "caused participants to reflect more explicitly" (p. 357). This is consistent with Morgan's findings that suggested teachers

improve their practice when coaches help them focus on a specific practice. One teacher stated, "This is the best year I have had teaching reading. I totally changed, and I enjoyed teaching reading for the first time" (p. 123). The combination of professional development with coaching was effective in supporting teachers in learning as they applied new teaching strategies.

Teemant, Wink, and Tyra. (2011) conducted a study to determine the value of performance-based instructional coaching when focusing on a specific instructional and classroom management model for teaching an ethnically and racially diverse student population called The Five Standards Instructional Model (Five Standards). Participants (n=21) in the study were drawn from a larger database and were selected based on whether they had completed seven coaching cycles and 30 in-service hours focused on the Five Standards. Twenty-one teachers were selected from two elementary schools with diverse student populations. Researchers evaluated teachers with the Standards Performance Continuum, which is an observation rubric that quantitatively measures teacher use of the Five Standards. The study revealed that teacher use of the Five Standards increased with each coaching cycle. Teemant et al. (2011) found that "instructional coaching led to significant transfer of new teaching skills from a workshop to the classroom" (p. 690). Morgan (2010) also found the same results in her study. More specifically, a teacher said the coach "definitely had an impact on my teaching. She gave me the tools I needed to do writer's workshop. She was there to share ideas, model lessons, help develop rubrics. She has made me a better writing teacher and showed me the importance of teaching writing" (p. 122).

Neuman and Cunningham (2009) studied the impact of professional development on teacher knowledge and quality early language and literacy practices in center and home-based care settings. Participants were drawn from 291 sites in four cities and were randomly placed

into three groups. In order to be eligible to participation in the study, participants needed to enroll in a class at a local community college and had to be in the process of pursuing at least an associate's degree. In addition, participants had to work at least 20 hours a week with children ages 3 to 5. Group 1 (n=86) was given a course on early language and literacy; Group 2 (n=85) was given the course plus ongoing coaching; and, Group 3 (n=133) was the control group. Participants from Group 1 and Group 2 were enrolled in a 45-hour, three-credit course in language and literacy held at one of four local community colleges. For Group 2, a yearlong coaching intervention occurred in addition to the college course. To measure increases in teachers' content knowledge in early language and literacy, Neuman and Cunninham (2009) created a survey instrument that measured both the eight core competencies of language and literacy and the foundational knowledge in child development. Two forms of the assessment were developed for pre- and posttest purposes. In addition, observations using the both the Child-Home Early Language Literacy (ELLCO-CHELLO) instruments were conducted. Before the intervention, participants took the teacher knowledge pretest and researchers scored the teachers on the ELLCO/CHELLO rubrics. Researchers then conducted two-way analyses of variance (ANOVA) to examine whether there were differences on between groups on initial outcomes measures. No significant differences between groups were found on the initial tests. Researchers used an analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) to examine the impact of the intervention. In regards to teacher knowledge, Group 1 and Group 2 showed only "modest increases" (p. 551) over Group 3. For teacher practice, however, significant statistical differences were reported for Group 2, the group that received the college course plus coaching in all categories. The results of the study provided evidence that an instructional coaching model in addition to professional development improved the transfer of knowledge from the course to the classroom. "Professional

development plus coaching does seem to matter" (p. 556). Those who received coaching outperformed their colleagues and demonstrated practices that were of a higher quality. Morgan (2010) also found this to be true in her study. A teacher stated "I would say [I have learned the most] in teaching techniques and strategies. I am sure that is where I have grown the most. I feel like I am getting the big picture now" (p. 124).

Kretlow et al. (2011) conducted a study of the effects of in-service plus coaching on kindergarten teachers' delivery of group instructional units in math. Three kindergarten teachers and their classes participated in the study. To measure the teacher effectiveness of delivering group instructional units, interlocking three-term contingencies were scored. A correct group of instructional unit was defined as single three-term contingencies, or a series of three-term contingencies. Data were collected on the percentage of correctly implemented group instructional units during daily 10-min calendar math segments for all teachers. Data were collected for the baseline, post-in-service training, and follow-up coaching. After establishing the baseline, a group in-service training was conducted. After the in-service, post-in-service data were collected until a teacher was identified with the lowest and most stable trend. At that time, that lowest teacher received coaching. Once that teacher's scores indicated a clear change, the second lowest teacher was coached. The same procedure was used on the third teacher. Means of successful single three-term contingencies were compared, and those who received coaching had more successful three-term contingencies. The findings in this study "support previous research on the inadequacies of in-service training along in prompting sustained teacher change" (p. 242).

Teacher Perceptions of Coaching

Helmer et al. (2011) conducted a study that evaluated the effectiveness of the web-based literacy program, ABRACADABRA (ABRA). Following "current views regarding best practices

for the delivery of professional development that emphasize the importance of embedded knowledge" (p. 198), teachers learning the software were given training on the software followed up by work with a literacy coach. Teachers (n=11) attended a one-day workshop that trained them to use ABRA, then they were paired with a literacy coach to reinforce their learning. Data sources included an implementation fidelity measure, researcher field notes, focus groups, teacher logbooks, the Early Language and Literacy Classroom Observation tool, and a teacher support survey. In the teacher support survey, teachers reported that "regular contact is vital to establishing a professional and trusting relationship between the teacher and the coach" (p. 207). Teachers also reported that regular classroom visits were important to implementing effectively ABRA in their classrooms. Teachers also "welcomed someone they could go to when they had questions about the program" (p. 208).

Not all of the teachers' experiences were positive, however. Coaches felt they "walked a delicate line" (Helmer et al., 2011, p. 208) between trust and challenge, and in some cases, coaches "struggled with getting teachers to buy into a coaching relationship" (p. 208). This typically applied to teachers with more experience who had a high sense of self-efficacy. In addition, some teachers reported being uncomfortable with having someone else in their classroom. More experienced teachers tended to be uncomfortable with classroom observations and were afraid that information would be shared with administrators, "making it more difficult to build a trusting and open relationship" (p. 208). Several teachers mentioned trust as a key element to the relationship between the coach and teacher in Morgan's (2009) study. One coach expressed it as

> Teachers want to know that you are not a spy for the principal. They don't want you to discuss what you see going on in their classroom in a negative way to other teachers. For that matter, most don't want you to discuss positive things either. In all honesty, it has to

> remain confidential. The minute you betray the trust of one teacher, you have ruined yourself with the rest of the faculty. (p. 108)

This comment suggests that coaches see the confidentiality they share with the teachers as paramount to their success not only with individuals but with all of the teachers they coach.

The coaching aspect of this research was the one area that Helmer et al. (2011) stated needed more emphasis in the next year of the study. One area that is addressed is giving teachers more information about coaching. This is consistent with descriptive literature that advises those who start coaching programs to ensure coaching roles are well-defined (Borman et al., 2007; Knight, 2004).

Teacher Resistance

Darling-Hammond et al. (2009) cautiously recommended school-based coaching as an improvement for professional learning because of the lack of comparison-group large-scale studies that have shown its effectiveness. However, based on the other recommendations Darling-Hammond et al. (2009) made based on rigorous analysis of research, coaching can be an effective enhancement to traditional professional development. Similarly, Knight (2005) and Deussen et al., (2007) issued the same cautions to districts that are looking to start an instructional coaching program. Whether teachers responded to coaching as a type of professional development or as another phenomenon entirely has not been clear from the literature. Teacher reactions to coaching have been largely ignored in the research literature other than a few occasional mentions of teacher resistance.

While not an anticipated piece of coaches' work, teacher resistance has surfaced as a prevalent theme across several studies as did administrators' differing expectations for coaches (Borman et al., 2006; Deussen, 2007; Knight, 2005, 2007, 2009). In mandated coaching programs, coaches reported that they were often perceived by teachers as supervisors or quasi-

administrators (Borman et al., 2006). In other studies, administrators lacked a clear understanding of coaches' roles and may have "reinforced the view that coaches served a teacher evaluation function" (p. 7). This may explain the finding veteran teachers are more likely to resist coaching (Borman et al., 2006; Richard, 2003; Symonds, 2002). Other studies reported that teachers eventually grew comfortable with having a coach and resistance started to dissipate (Ertmer et al., 2003, Knight, 2004). Structural conditions such as perceiving coaches as administrators or mandatory coaching could also contribute to resistance by teachers towards coaching (Borman et al., 2006).

Neufeld and Roper (2002) reported on the implementation of Collaborative Coaching and Learning (CCL) in the schools that comprise the Effective Practice (EP) schools in the Boston Public Schools. The Boston EP schools have had onsite coaching since the inception of school reforms at the beginning of the 1996-1997 school year (Neufeld & Roper, 2002). The first coaches were change coaches who were subsequently joined by literacy content coaches. Despite being welcomed by the teachers and the principal, the program was plagued by problems such as time barriers, hazy priorities, teacher resistance, and a one-on-one model that made poor use of the coaching resources. The CCL was adopted during the 2000-2001 school year, signifying an innovative approach to professional development and more effective design of the coaching model.

The new model made it possible for more teachers to work with the coaches (Neufeld & Roper, 2002). However, teachers who were used to working with coaches on an individual basis often found it intimidating to learn and practice new knowledge and skills in front of their peers. This is illustrative of the traditional isolation of U.S. teachers that they find it daunting to learn in front of their peers and can explain some of the initial reticence teachers have for working with

an instructional coach. Morgan (2010) found evidence that coaching helped ease the burden of isolation for teachers. One respondent stated, "We are so isolated. We don't have time to work together. It's having the time to work together with a colleague to generate ideas that I like the best. It's always better to put two heads together" (p. 81).

A particularly notable finding was that the principals played a critical role in the successful implementation of the CCL model (Neufeld & Roper, 2002). The researchers noted that regardless of the degree of the teacher dedication, or the coaches' talents, the multifaceted model could not have been implemented without the principals' skills and commitment. Neufeld and Roper (2003b) reinforced the vital importance of the principal support in their follow-up study documenting the second year of the project. More teachers became involved in the project the second year. The teacher understandings and ability to reflect on their skills became sharper. However, the resistance of many teachers to demonstrate lessons in front of their peers was a persistent problem. The extent that the teachers were willing to embrace the collaborative model varied among the different host schools. Morgan (2010) similarly found that some teachers just were not comfortable having another teacher in the room with them while they taught. Other teachers learned to manipulate the system by letting coaches come teach a model lesson, then teach it while the coach was there, and then they would never repeat the practice when the coach was not there.

Conclusion

Legislation such as NCLB has put new demands on teachers to improve their practice in order to get a higher level of student achievement (Seed, 2008). School systems have focused on professional development as a means to improve teacher practice (Desimone et al., 2002). Studies show that teacher quality is essential to student success (Sanders & Rivers; 1996;

Wenglinksy, 2000). Research on professional development has shown that traditional methods such as workshops, seminars, and one-shot training sessions are not effective unless there is some sort of job-embedded follow-up to the professional development (Darling-Hammond, 2009; Guskey & Yoon, 2009). Research on coaching has been limited (Deussen et al., 2007; Knight, 2005); however, results from small-scale studies suggested that coaching can improve teacher practice and crystallize new teaching innovations (Bruce & Ross, 2008; Guskey & Yoon, 2009; Kretlow, Wood, & Cook, 2011; Morgan, 2009; Neuman & Cunningham, 2009; Teeman, Wink, & Tyra; 2011).

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to investigate teacher perceptions on the effectiveness of instructional coaching. Specifically, this researcher assessed the perception of instructional coaching as a whole, support for hiring practices for instructional coaches, the value of instructional coaching for improving teaching practices, the value of instructional coaching for improving student achievement, and the perception of instructional coaches being in supervisory role. This chapter provides a description of the research design, population, data collection procedures, research questions and null hypotheses, data analysis procedures, and a summary of the chapter.

Research Design

Quantitative research designs are positivist in nature focusing on objective analyses of a phenomenon. Research design is of the upmost importance to the success of a study; it provides probable conclusions and validity to the research questions and describes the constructs for the study (McMillian & Schumacher, 2006). A nonexperimental design describes phenomena that have occurred and examines relationships without direct manipulation of the conditions or variables. For the purpose of this study the quantitative research design was placed into the subclassification of nonexperimental.

Quantitative research is a method for testing objective theories through an examination of the relationships among variables (Creswell, 2009). This nonexperimental design used a survey with a four-point Likert-type scale to evaluate teacher perceptions about instructional coaching.

Research Questions and Null Hypotheses

The nonexperimental quantitative design guided the following research questions and null hypotheses.

Research Question 1: To what extent do teachers support an academic coaching program?

$Ho1_1$: The extent to which teachers support instructional coaching program is not significantly positive or negative.

$Ho1_{21}$: The extent to which teachers with 1-5 years of teaching experience support an instructional coaching program is not significantly positive or negative.

$Ho1_{22}$: The extent to which teachers with 6 or more years of teaching experience support an instructional coaching program is not significantly positive or negative.

$Ho1_{31}$: The extent to which elementary teachers support an instructional coaching program is not significantly positive or negative.

$Ho1_{32}$: The extent to which middle school teachers support an instructional coaching program is not significantly positive or negative.

$Ho1_{33}$: The extent to which high school teachers support an instructional coaching program is not significantly positive or negative.

Research Question 2: To what extent do teachers support hiring practices for instructional coaches?

$Ho2_1$: The extent to which teachers support hiring practices for instructional coaches is not significantly positive or negative.

$Ho2_{21}$: The extent to which teachers with 1-5 years of teaching experience support hiring practices for instructional coaches is not significantly positive or negative.

$Ho2_{22}$: The extent to which teachers with 6 or more years of teaching experience support

hiring practices for instructional coaches is not significantly positive or negative.

$Ho2_{31}$: The extent to which elementary teachers support hiring practices for instructional coaches is not significantly positive or negative.

$Ho2_{32}$: The extent to which middle school teachers support hiring practices for instructional coaches is not significantly positive or negative.

$Ho2_{33}$: The extent to which high school teachers support hiring practices for instructional coaches is not significantly positive or negative.

Research Question 3: To what extent do teachers perceive instructional coaching improves teaching practices?

$Ho3_{1}$: The extent to which teachers perceive instructional coaching improves teaching `practices is not significantly positive or negative.

$Ho3_{21}$: The extent to which teachers with 1-5 years of teaching experience perceive instructional coaching improves teaching practices is not significantly positive or negative.

$Ho3_{22}$: The extent to which teachers with 6 or more years of teaching experience perceive instructional coaching improves teaching practices is not significantly positive or negative.

$Ho3_{31}$: The extent to which elementary teachers perceive instructional coaching improves teaching practices is not significantly positive or negative.

$Ho3_{32}$: The extent to which middle school teachers perceive instructional coaching improves teaching practices is not significantly positive or negative.

$Ho3_{33}$: The extent to which high school teachers perceive instructional coaching improves teaching practices is not significantly positive or negative.

Research Question 4: To what extent do teachers perceive instructional coaching impacted student learning?

$Ho4_1$: The extent to which teachers perceive instructional coaching impacted student learning is not significantly positive or negative.

$Ho4_{21}$: The extent to which teachers with 1-5 years of teaching experience perceive instructional coaching impacted student learning is not significantly positive or negative.

$Ho4_{22}$: The extent to which teachers with 6 or more years of teaching experience perceive instructional coaching impacted student learning is not significantly positive or negative.

$Ho4_{31}$: The extent to which elementary teachers perceive instructional coaching impacted student learning is not significantly positive or negative.

$Ho4_{32}$: The extent to which middle school teachers perceive instructional coaching impacted student learning is not significantly positive or negative.

$Ho4_{33}$: The extent to which high school teachers perceive instructional coaching impacted student learning is not significantly positive or negative.

Research Question 5: To what extent do teachers consider instructional coaching an administrative role?

$Ho5_1$: The extent to which teachers perceive instructional coaching an administrative role is not significantly positive or negative.

$Ho5_{21}$: The extent to which teachers with 1-5 years of teaching experience perceive instructional coaching is an administrative role is not significantly positive or negative.

$Ho5_{22}$: The extent to which teachers with 6 or more years of teaching experience perceive

instructional coaching is an administrative role is not significantly positive or negative.

$Ho5_{31}$: The extent to which elementary teachers perceive instructional coaching is an administrative role is not significantly positive or negative.

$Ho5_{32}$: The extent to which middle school teachers perceive instructional coaching is an administrative role is not significantly positive or negative.

$Ho5_{33}$: The extent to which high school teachers perceive instructional coaching is an administrative role is not significantly positive or negative.

Data Analysis

Data from the survey instrument were analyzed through a nonexperimental quantitative methodology. *Statistical Package for Social Sciences* (SPSS) Version 18.0 data analysis software was used for all data analysis procedures in this study. The data sources that were analyzed included a survey design with a Likert-type scale and comments on the question with an option to comment on each question.

All research questions had three corresponding null hypotheses with a total of five subnull hypotheses. All questions were analyzed with a series of single sample *t*-tests comparing calculated means with a value of 2.5 representing neutrality. Because of the relatively large number of null hypotheses, the initial alpha level of .05 was adjusted per the Bonferroni method. Therefore, .05 was divided by 30 (the number of null hypotheses) resulting in testing the hypotheses at a level of .001.

Following the statistical analysis, descriptive writing was used to transfer the knowledge from the comment section of each question. Findings of the data analyses are represented in

Chapter 4. A summary of the findings, conclusions, and recommendations for future research are presented in Chapter 5.

Population

The population in this study consisted of 868 teachers in three school districts in Northeast Tennessee. The researcher surveyed all teachers in the school districts who had access to an instructional coaching program. These teachers included general education, special education, art, music, vocational teachers, and library media specialists. Administrators and instructional coaches were not asked to complete surveys.

Data Collection Procedures

Prior to the beginning of this research project, permission to conduct research was obtained from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of East Tennessee State University and the directors of the participating school systems. A survey instrument with three demographic questions, five questions, and comment sections for each question was developed and distributed via Survey Monkey, an online survey service. A copy of the survey can be found in Appendix A. The survey instrument consisted of five questions that asked participants to indicate their answer based on a four-point Likert-type scale. Each question also had an option for participants to comment on their answer. Participants were advised that all responses were confidential and the demographic information collected did not identify the participants in the study.

To establish validity, the instrument was first administered to eight teachers participating in an Administrative Licensure cohort at East Tennessee State University who have had experience with instructional coaching. Modifications were made based on feedback from this pilot group. After modifying the instrument, the instrument was administered to 16 teachers

participating in a Quantitative Statistics course at East Tennessee State University. Modifications were again made based on feedback from this second pilot group.

Summary

Chapter 3 reported the procedures and methods for conducting the study. After a brief introduction, a description of the research design, selection of the population, data collection procedures, research questions and null hypotheses, and the data analysis procedures were defined.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

The purpose of this study was to investigate teacher perceptions on the effectiveness of instructional coaching. Specifically, this researcher assessed the perception of instructional coaching as a whole, support for hiring practices for instructional coaches, the value of instructional coaching for improving teaching practices, the value of instructional coaching for improving student achievement, and the perception of instructional coaches being in supervisory role. Participants of the study included teachers from three school systems in Northeast Tennessee.

In this chapter data were presented and analyzed to answer five research questions and 30 null hypotheses. Data were analyzed from five survey questions measured on a four point Likert-type scale. Participants were given the option to comment on each question. Those data were not analyzed. Data were retrieved following the completion of a survey administered through an online survey service. The survey was distributed twice; a total of 848 participants were invited to participate in the survey and 536 teachers responded. Participants were advised that all responses were confidential and the demographic information collected did not identify the participants in the study.

Because of the relatively large number of null hypotheses, the initial alpha level of .05 was adjusted per the Bonferroni method. Therefore, .05 was divided by 30 (the number of null hypotheses) resulting in testing the hypotheses at a level of .001.

Research Question 1

Research Question 1: To what extent do teachers support an instructional coaching program?

$Ho1_1$: The extent to which teachers support instruction coaching is not significantly positive or negative.

A one-sample *t* test was conducted on teachers' perceptions of instructional coaching to evaluate whether the mean score was significantly different from 2.5, the value representing neutrality. The population mean of 2.38 (SD = 1.16) was not significantly different from 2.5, $t(532) = 2.29$, $p = .022$. Therefore the null hypothesis $Ho1_1$ was retained. The 95% confidence interval for teachers ranged from -.214 to -.016. The strength of the relationships between teachers and the mean score effect size *d* of .10 indicates a small effect. The results indicated teachers had a neutral support for instructional coaching programs. Figure 1 shows the distribution of the participant responses. The frequency report within each graph represents the number of participants who designated a 1, 2, 3, or 4 on the online survey.

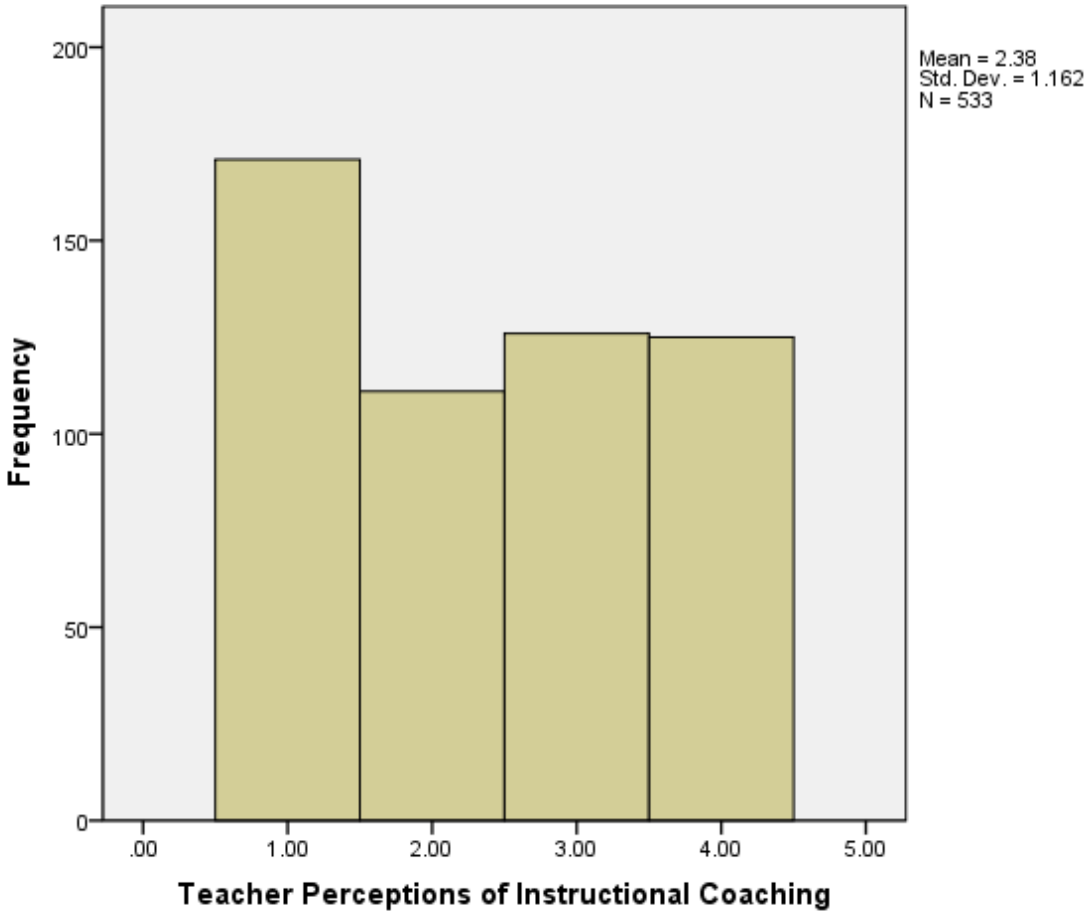

Figure 1. Teacher Perceptions of Instructional Coaching.

$Ho1_{21}$: The extent to which teachers with 1-5 years of teaching experience support an instructional coaching program is not significantly positive or negative.

A one-sample *t* test was conducted on teachers with 1-5 years of teaching experience perceptions of instructional coaching to evaluate whether the mean score was significantly different from 2.5, the value representing neutrality. The population mean of 2.36 (SD = .1.15) was not significantly different from 2.5, $t(126) = 1.36$, $p = .178$, ns. Therefore the null hypothesis $Ho1_{21}$ was retained. The 95% confidence interval for teachers with 1-5 years of teaching experience ranged from -.339 to .063. The strength of the relationships between

teachers and the mean score effect size *d* of .12 indicates a small effect. The results indicated teachers with 1-5 years of teaching experience had a neutral perception of instructional coaching programs. Figure 2 shows the distribution of the participant responses. The frequency report within each graph represents the number of participants who designated a 1, 2, 3, or 4 on the online survey.

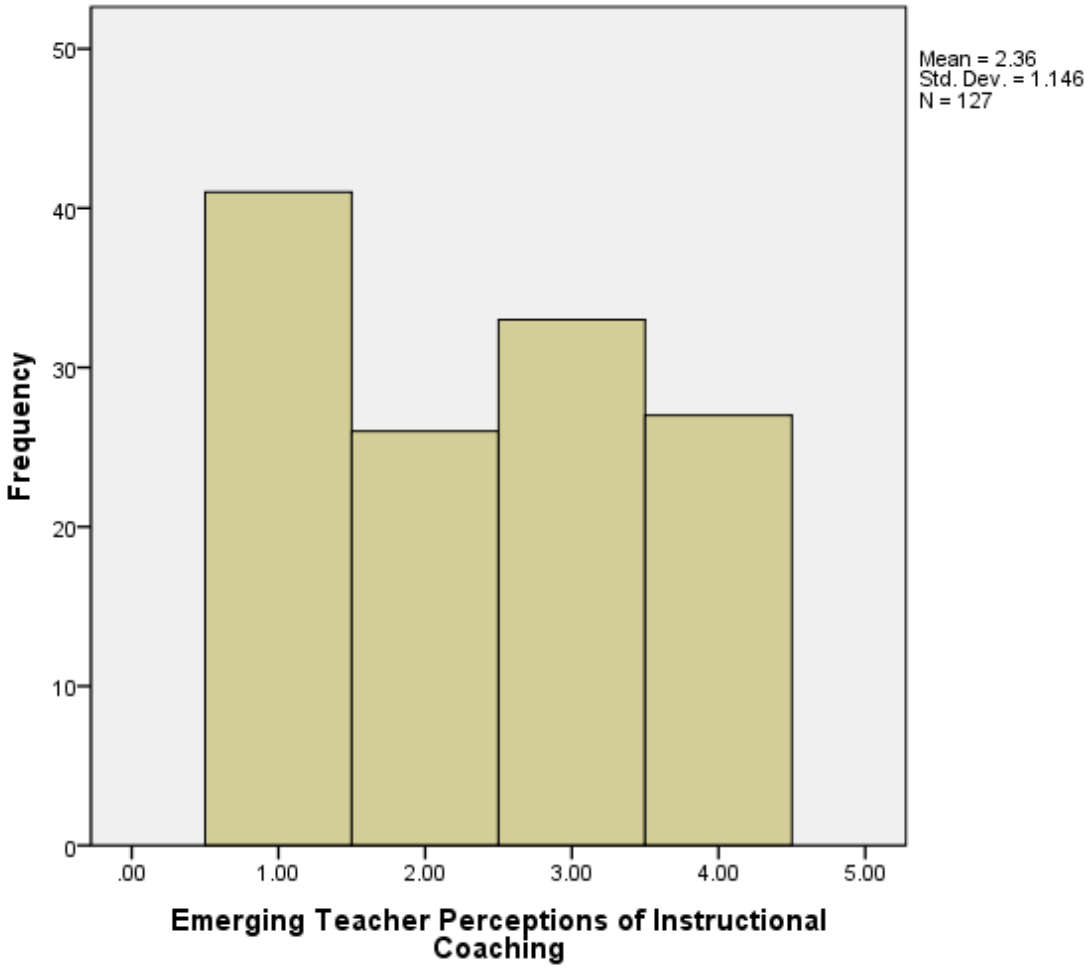

Figure 2. Emerging Teacher Perceptions of Instructional Coaching.

Ho1$_{22}$: The extent to which teachers with 6 or more years of teaching experience's support an instructional coaching program is not significantly positive or negative.

A one-sample *t* test was conducted on teachers with 6 or more years of teaching experience perceptions of instructional coaching to evaluate whether the mean score was significantly different from 2.5, the value representing neutrality. The population mean of 2.38 (SD = 1.17) was not significantly different from 2.5, $t(404) = 1.94$, $p = .053$, ns. Therefore the null hypothesis was retained. The 95% confidence interval for teachers with 6 or more years of teaching experience ranged from -.226 to .002. The strength of the relationships between teachers and the mean score effect size *d* of .09 indicates a small effect. The results indicated teachers with 6 or more years of teaching experience had a neutral perception of instructional coaching programs. Figure 3 shows the distribution of the participant responses. The frequency report within each graph represents the number of participants who designated a 1, 2, 3, or 4 on the online survey.

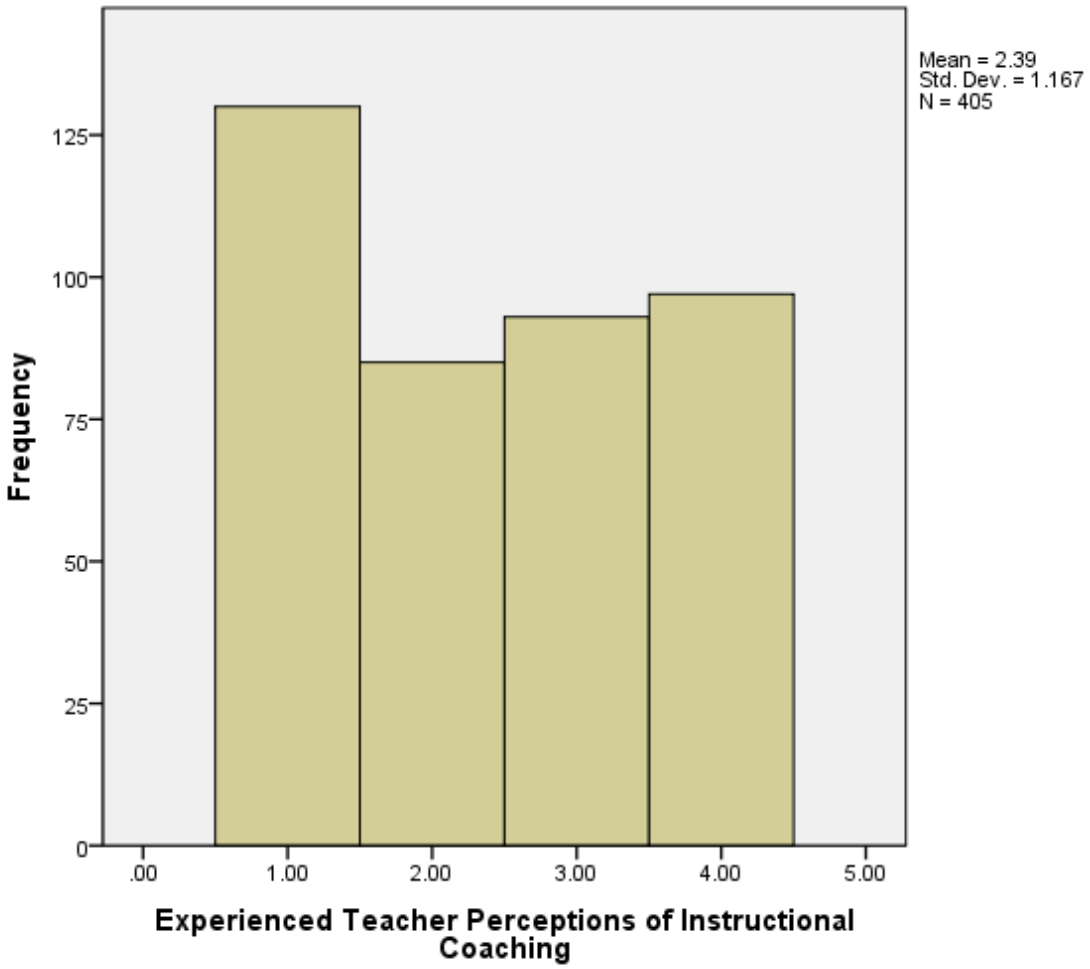

Figure 3. Experienced Teacher Perceptions of Instructional Coaching.

$Ho1_{31}$: The extent to which elementary teachers support an instructional coaching program is not significantly positive or negative.

A one-sample t test was conducted on elementary teachers' perceptions of instructional coaching to evaluate whether the mean score was significantly different from 2.5, the value representing neutrality. The population mean of 2.48 (SD = 1.176) was not significantly different from 2.5, $t(270) = .284$, $p = .777$, ns. Therefore the null hypothesis was retained. The 95% confidence interval for elementary teachers ranged from -.161 to .120. The strength of the relationships between teachers and the mean score effect size *d* of <.001 indicates no effect. The

results indicated elementary teachers had a neutral support for an instructional coaching program. Figure 4 shows the distribution of the participant responses. The frequency report within each graph represents the number of participants who designated a 1, 2, 3, or 4 on the online survey.

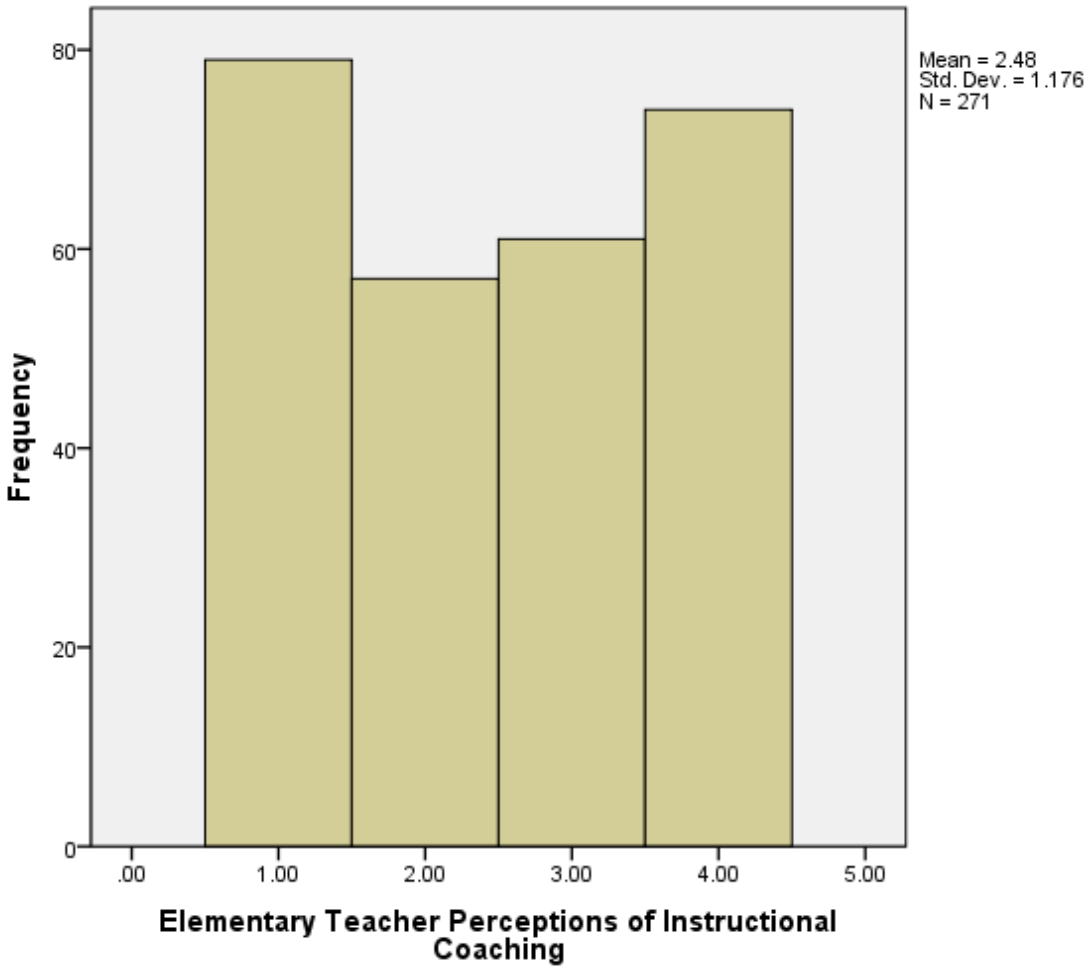

Figure 4. Elementary Teacher Perceptions of Instructional Coaching.

Ho1$_{32}$: The extent to which middle school teachers support an instructional coaching program is not significantly positive or negative.

A one-sample *t* test was conducted on middle school teachers' perceptions of instructional coaching to evaluate whether the mean score was significantly different from 2.5,

the value representing neutrality. The population mean of 2.42 (SD = 1.244) was not significantly different from 2.5, $t(109) = .613$, $p = .541$, ns. Therefore the null hypothesis was retained. The 95% confidence interval for middle school teachers ranged from -.308 to .162. The strength of the relationships between teachers and the mean score effect size *d* of .06 indicates a small effect. The results indicated middle school teachers had a neutral support of an instructional coaching program at their school. Figure 5 shows the distribution of the participant responses. The frequency report within each graph represents the number of participants who designated a 1, 2, 3, or 4 on the online survey.

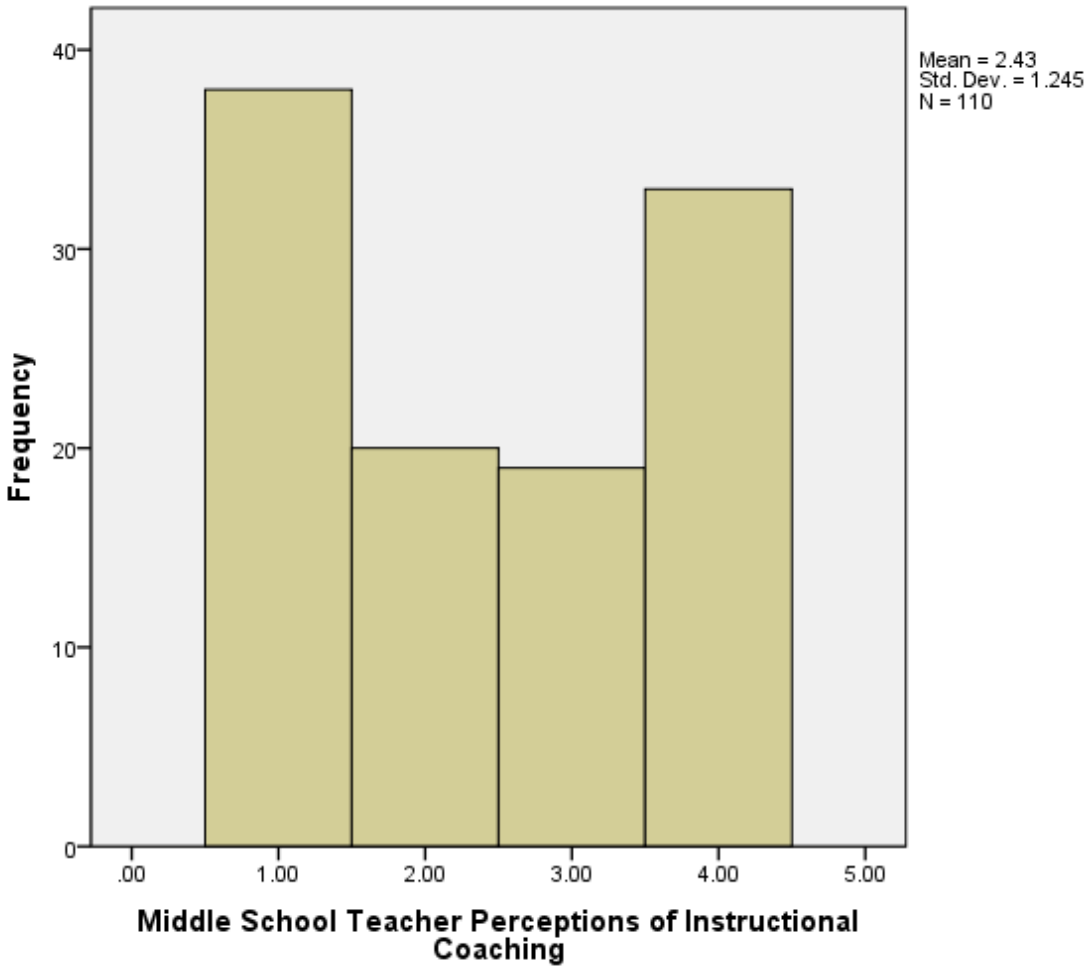

Figure 5. Middle School Teacher Perceptions of Instructional Coaching.

$Ho1_{33}$: The extent to which high school teachers support an instructional coaching program is not significantly positive or negative.

A one-sample *t* test was conducted on high school teachers' perceptions of instructional coaching to evaluate whether the mean score was significantly different from 2.5, the value representing neutrality. The population mean of 2.18 (SD = 1.05) was significantly lower than 2.5, $t(151) = 3.70$, $p < .001$. Therefore the null hypothesis was rejected. The 95% confidence interval for high school teachers ranged from -.484 to -1.47. The strength of the relationships between teachers and the mean score effect size *d* of .30 indicates a small effect. The strength of the relationships between teachers and the mean score effect size *d* of .30 indicates a small effect. The results indicated high school teachers had a significantly negative support for instructional coaching programs. Figure 6 shows the distribution of the participant responses. The frequency report within each graph represents the number of participants who designated a 1, 2, 3, or 4 on the online survey.

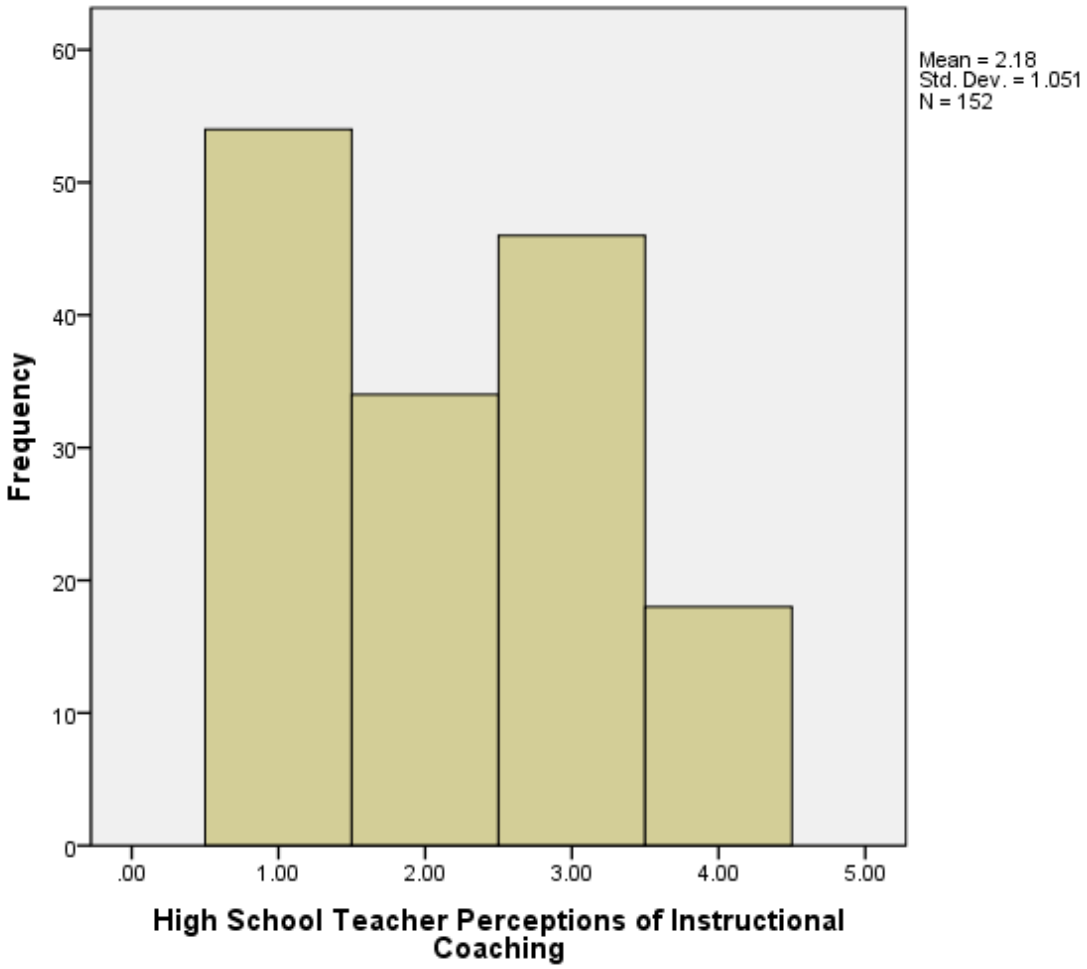

Figure 6. High School Teacher Perceptions of Instructional Coaching.

Research Question 2

Research Question 2: To what extent do teachers support hiring practices for instructional coaches?

$Ho2_1$: The extent to which teachers support hiring practices for instructional coaches is not significantly positive or negative.

A one-sample *t* test was conducted on teachers' perceptions of hiring practices to evaluate whether the mean score was significantly different from 2.5, the value representing neutrality. The population mean of 2.92 (SD = .852) was significantly higher than $t(318) =$

8.835, $p < .001$ Therefore the null hypothesis $Ho2_1$ was rejected. The 95% confidence interval for teachers ranged from .328 to .516. The strength of the relationships between teachers and the mean score effect size *d* of .49 indicates a small effect. The results indicated teachers had a perception that hiring practices were significantly different for instructional coaches. Figure 7 shows the distribution of the participant responses. The frequency report within each graph represents the number of participants who designated a 1, 2, 3, or 4 on the online survey.

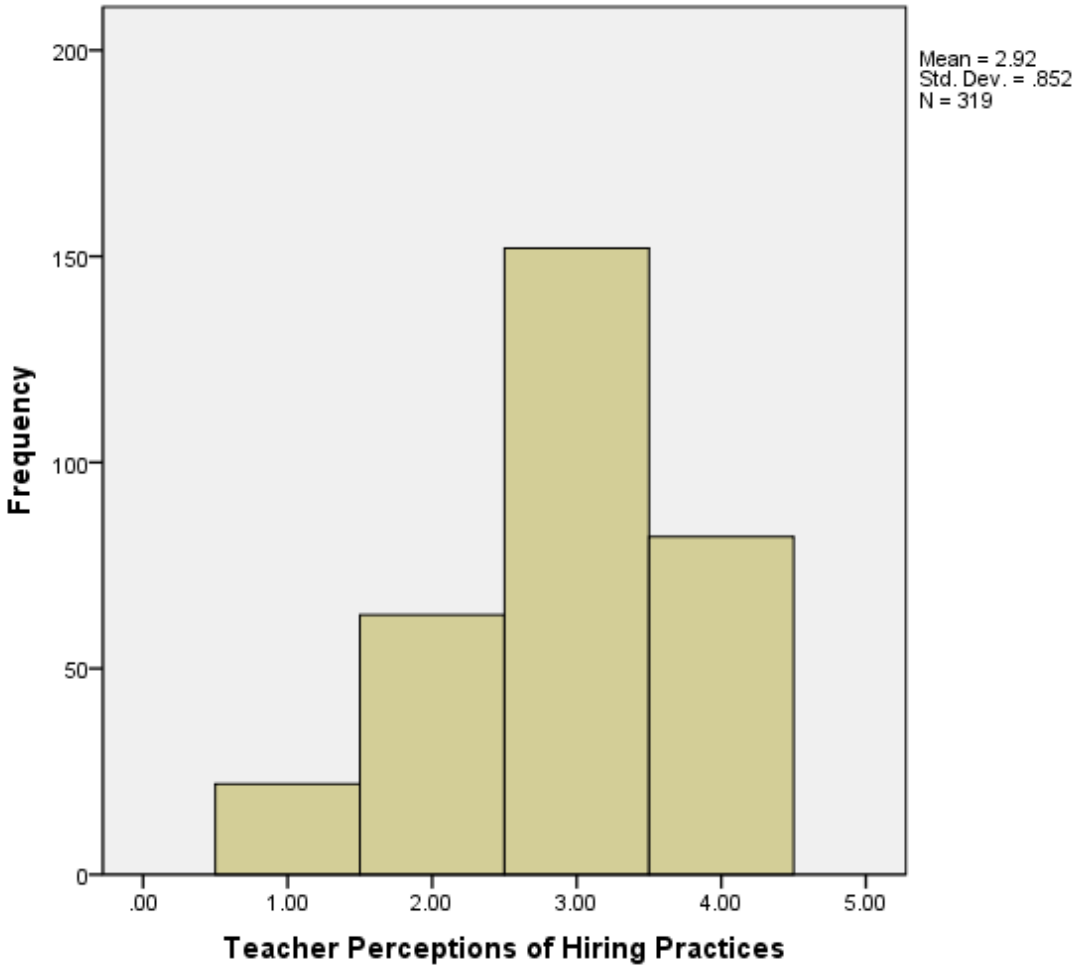

Figure 7. Teacher Perceptions of Hiring Practices.

$Ho2_{21}$: The extent to which teachers with 1-5 years of teaching experience's support hiring practices for instructional coaches is not significantly positive or negative.

A one-sample *t* test was conducted on teachers with 1-5 years of teaching experience perceptions of hiring practices to evaluate whether the mean score was significantly different from 2.5, the value representing neutrality. The population mean of 2.84 (SD = .754) was significantly higher than 2.5, $t(74) = 3.9$, $p < .001$. Therefore the null hypothesis was rejected. The 95% confidence interval for teachers with 1-5 years of teaching experience ranged from .167 to .514. The strength of the relationships between teachers and the mean score effect size *d* of .45 indicates a small effect. The results indicated teachers with 1-5 years of teaching experience had a perception that hiring practices were significantly different for instructional coaches Figure 8 shows the distribution of the participant responses. The frequency report within each graph represents the number of participants who designated a 1, 2, 3, or 4 on the online survey.

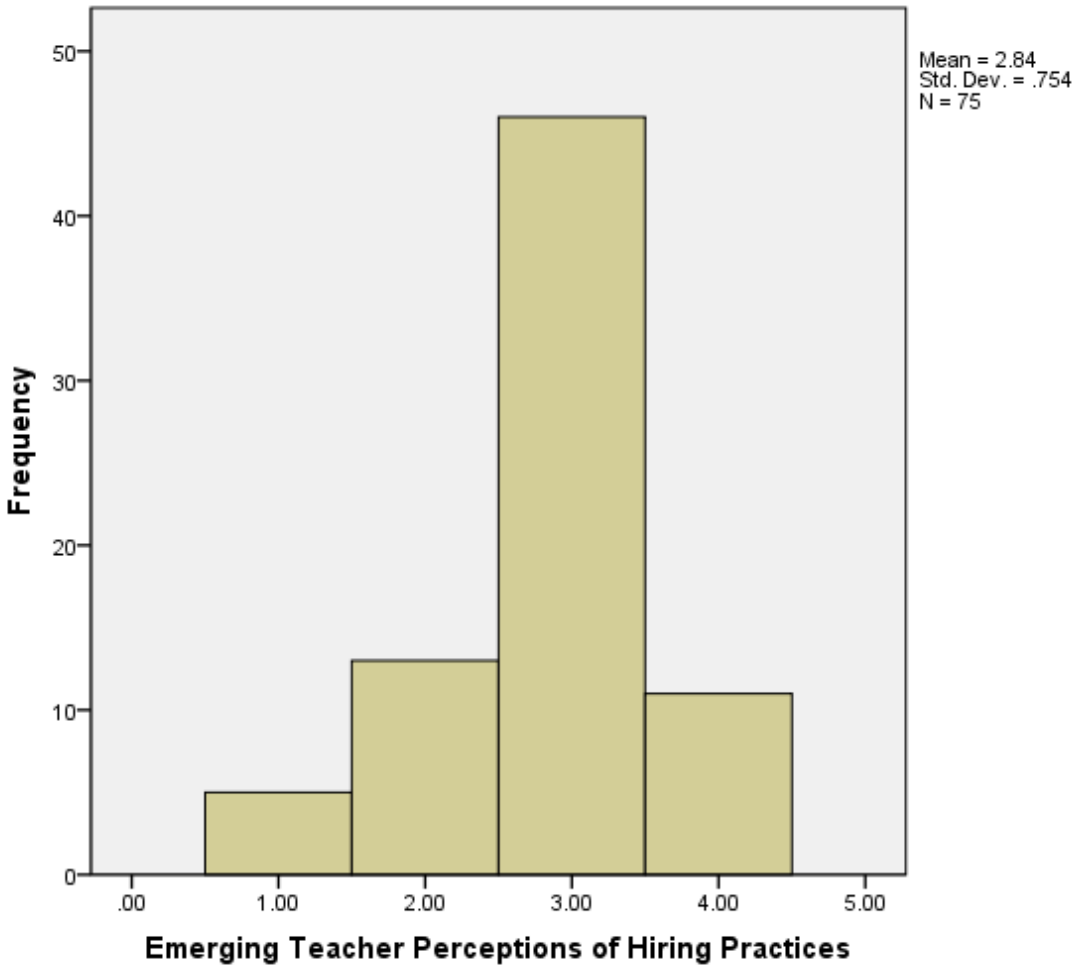

Figure 8. Emerging Teacher Perceptions of Hiring Practices.

Ho2_{22}: The extent to which teachers with 6 or more years of teaching experience's support hiring practices for instructional coaches is not significantly positive or negative.

A one-sample *t* test was conducted on teachers with 6 or more years of teaching experience perceptions of hiring practices to evaluate whether the mean score was significantly different from 2.5, the value representing neutrality. The population mean of 2.94 (SD = .882) was significantly higher than 2.5, $t(242) = 7.89$, $p < 001$. Therefore the null hypothesis was rejected. The 95% confidence interval for teachers with 6 or more years of teaching experience ranged from .335 to .558. The strength of the relationships between teachers and the mean score

effect size *d* of .51 indicates a medium effect. The results indicated teachers with 6 or more years of teaching experience had a perception that hiring practices for instructional coaches were significantly different. Figure 9 shows the distribution of the participant responses. The frequency report within each graph represents the number of participants who designated a 1, 2, 3, or 4 on the online survey.

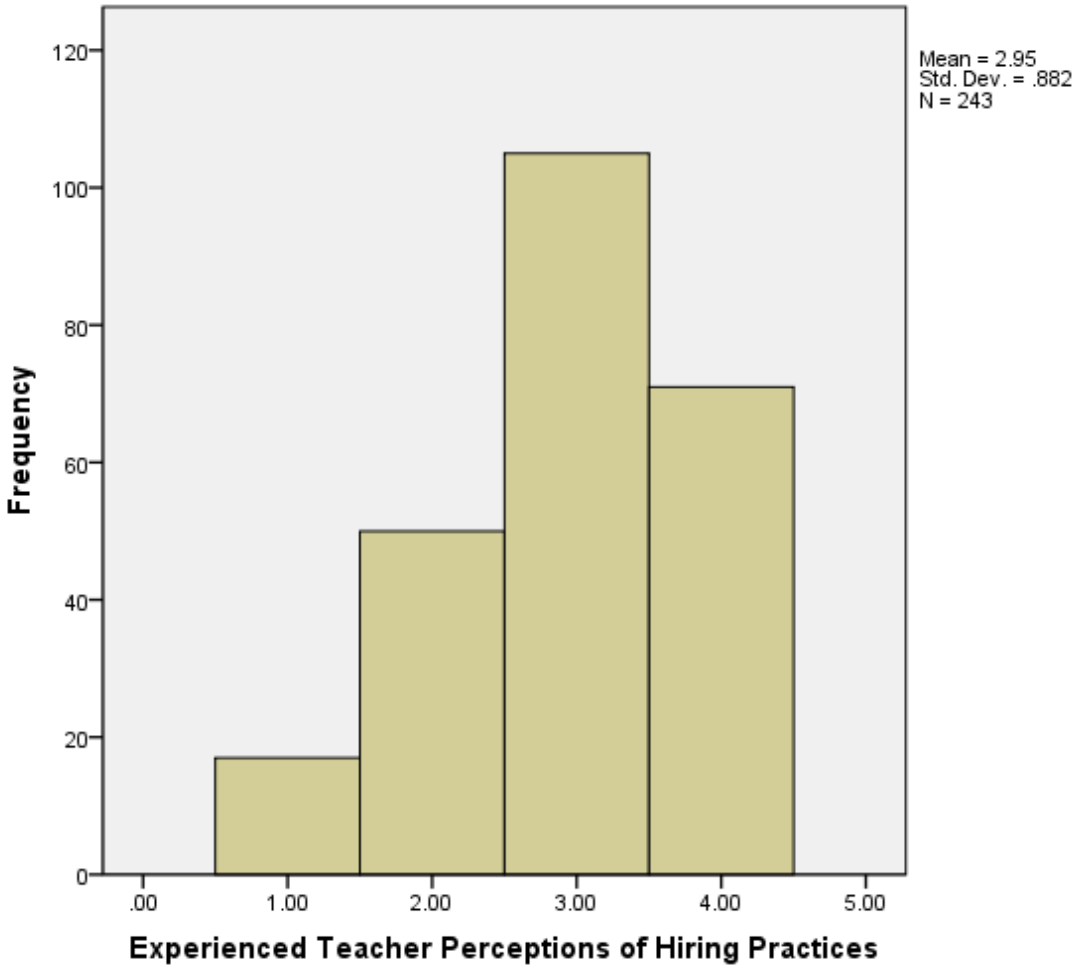

Figure 9. Experienced Teacher Perceptions of Hiring Practices.

$Ho2_{31}$: The extent to which elementary teachers support hiring practices for instructional coaches is not significantly positive or negative.

A one-sample *t* test was conducted on elementary teachers' perceptions of hiring practices to evaluate whether the mean score was significantly different from 2.5, the value representing neutrality. The population mean of 2.88 (SD = .837) was significantly higher than 2.5, $t(160) = 5.888$, $p < .001$. Therefore the null hypothesis was rejected. The 95% confidence interval for elementary teachers ranged from -.258 to .518. The strength of the relationships between teachers and the mean score effect size *d* of .47 indicates a small effect. The results indicated elementary teachers perceived hiring practices for instructional coaches to be significantly different. Figure 10 shows the distribution of the participant responses. The frequency report within each graph represents the number of participants who designated a 1, 2, 3, or 4 on the online survey.

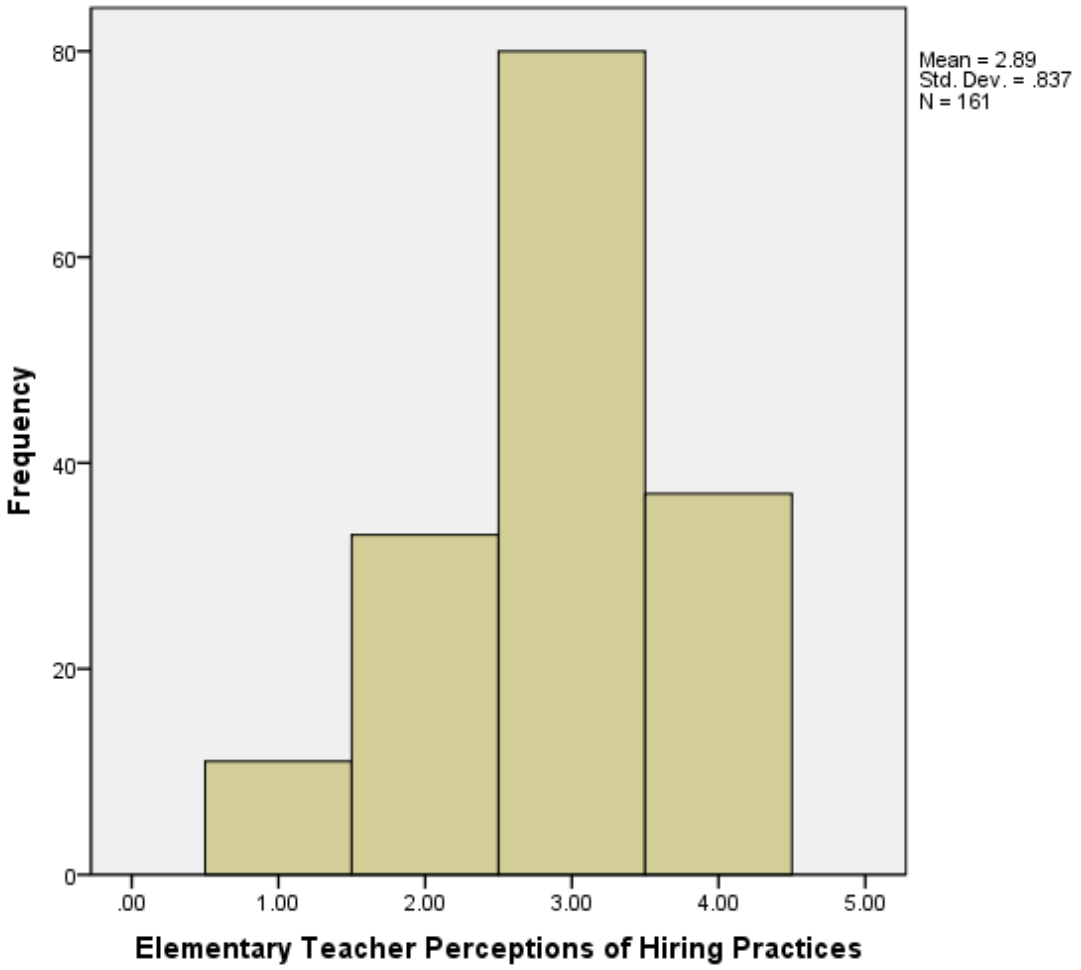

Figure 10. Elementary Teacher Perceptions of Hiring Practices.

Ho2$_{32}$: The extent to which middle school teachers support hiring practices for instructional coaches is not significantly positive or negative.

A one-sample *t* test was conducted on middle school teachers' perceptions of hiring practices to evaluate whether the mean score was significantly different from 2.5, the value representing neutrality. The population mean of 2.99 (SD = .905) was significantly higher than 2.5, $t(67) = 4.417$, $p<.001$. Therefore the null hypothesis was rejected. The 95% confidence interval for middle school teachers ranged from .266 to .705. The strength of the relationships between teachers and the mean score effect size *d* of .53 indicates a medium effect. The results

indicated middle school teachers perceived hiring practices to be significantly different for instructional coaches. Figure 11 shows the distribution of the participant responses. The frequency report within each graph represents the number of participants who designated a 1, 2, 3, or 4 on the online survey.

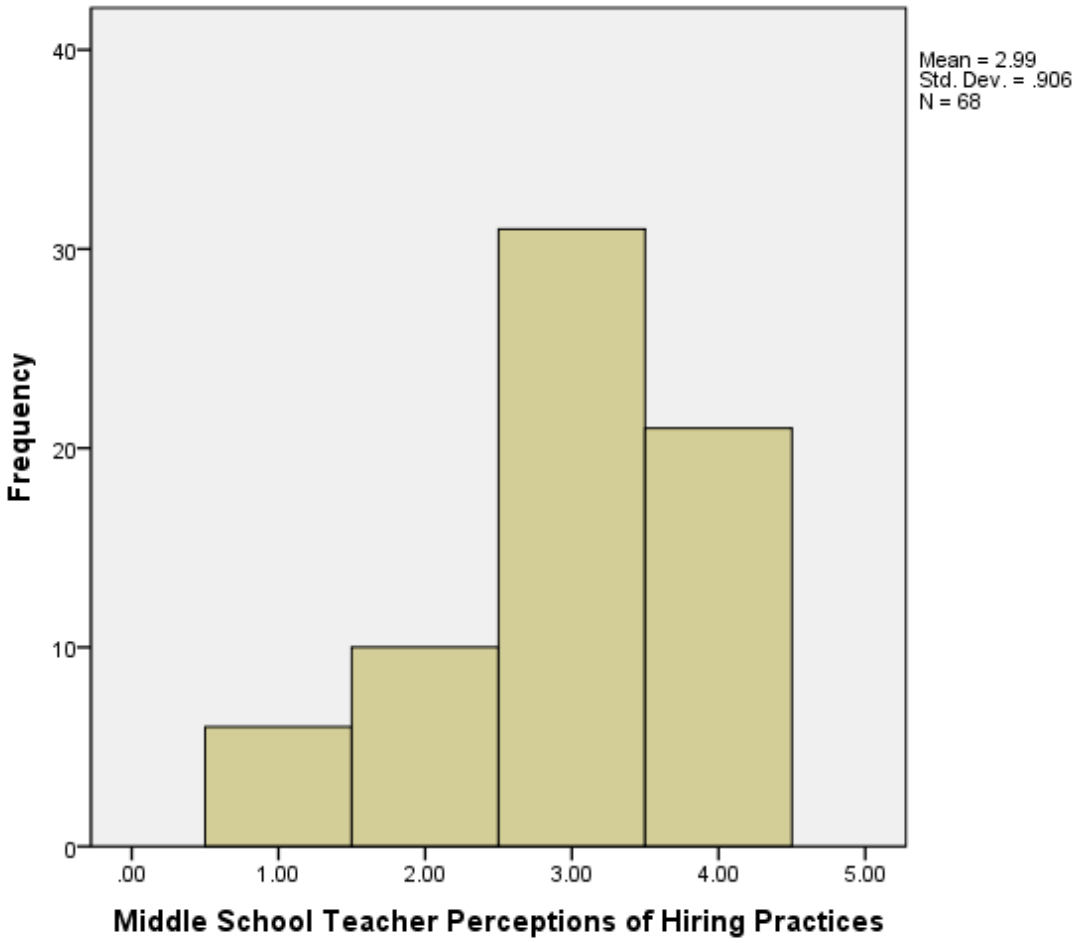

Figure 11. Middle School Teacher Perceptions of Hiring Practices.

$Ho2_{33}$: The extent to which high school teachers support hiring practices for instructional coaches is not significantly positive or negative.

A one-sample *t* test was conducted on high school teachers' perceptions of hiring practices to evaluate whether the mean score was significantly different from 2.5, the value

representing neutrality. The population mean of 2.93 (SD = .845) was significantly higher than 2.5, $t(89) = 4.86$, $p < .001$. Therefore the null hypothesis was rejected. The 95% confidence interval for high school teachers ranged from .256 to .610. The strength of the relationships between teachers and the mean score effect size *d* of .51 indicates a medium effect. The results indicated middle school teachers perceived hiring practices to be significantly different for instructional coaches. Figure 12 shows the distribution of the participant responses. The frequency report within each graph represents the number of participants who designated a 1, 2, 3, or 4 on the online survey.

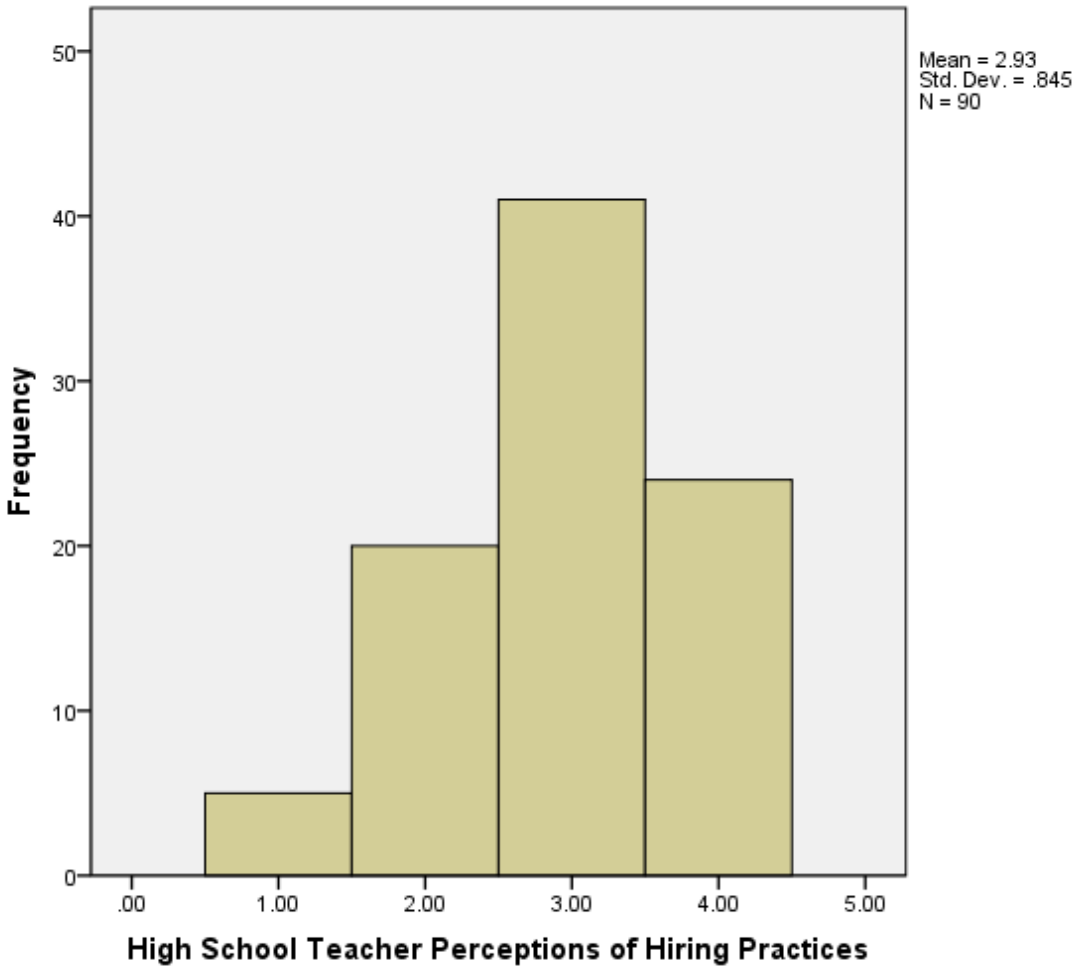

Figure 12. High School Teacher Perceptions of Hiring Practices.

Research Question 3

Research Question 3: To what extent do teachers perceive instructional coaching improves teaching practices?

$Ho3_1$: The extent to which teachers perceive instructional coaching improves teaching practices is not significantly positive or negative.

A one-sample *t* test was conducted on teachers' perceptions of coaching and pedagogy to evaluate whether the mean score was significantly different from 2.5, the value representing neutrality. The population mean of 2.22 (SD = 1.043) was significantly lower than 2.5, $t(526) = 5.991$, $p < .001$. Therefore the null hypothesis $Ho3_1$ was rejected. The 95% confidence interval for teachers ranged from -.361 to -.183. The strength of the relationships between teachers and the mean score effect size *d* of .26 indicates a small effect. The results indicated teachers had a significantly negative perception that instructional coaching improves teacher practice. Figure 13 shows the distribution of the participant responses. The frequency report within each graph represents the number of participants who designated a 1, 2, 3, or 4 on the online survey.

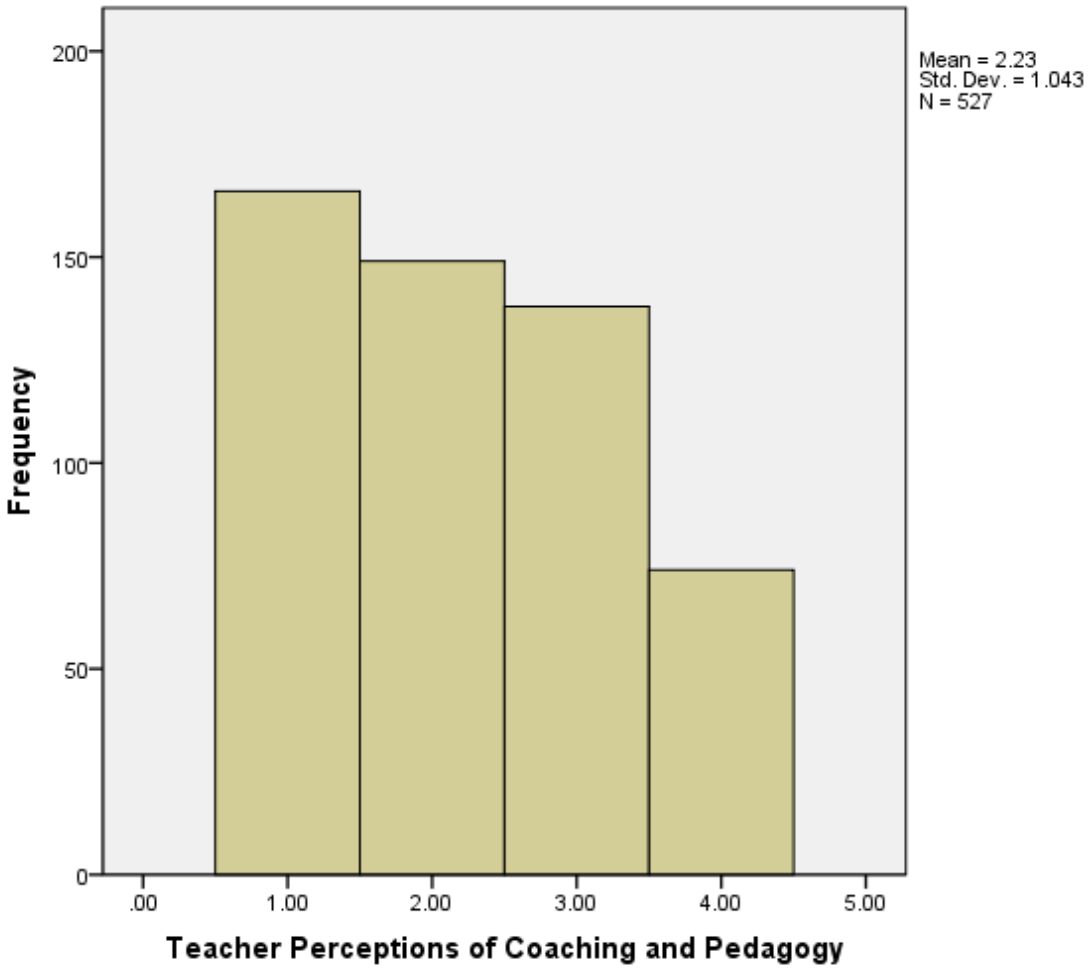

Figure 13. Teacher Perceptions of Coaching and Pedagogy.

$Ho3_{21}$: The extent to which teachers with 1-5 years of teaching experience perceive instructional coaching improves teaching practices is not significantly positive or negative.

A one-sample *t* test was conducted on teachers with 1-5 years of teaching experience perceptions of coaching and pedagogy to evaluate whether the mean score was significantly different from 2.5, the value representing neutrality. The population mean of 2.2 (SD = 1.04) was not significantly different from 2.5, $t(126) = .3.29$, p = .001, ns. Therefore the null hypothesis was retained. The 95% confidence interval for teachers with 1-5 years of teaching experience

ranged from -.49 to -.121. The strength of the relationships between teachers and the mean score effect size *d* of .29 indicates a small effect. The results indicated teachers with 1-5 years of teaching experience had a neutral perception that instructional coaching improves teacher practice. Figure 14 shows the distribution of the participant responses. The frequency report within each graph represents the number of participants who designated a 1, 2, 3, or 4 on the online survey.

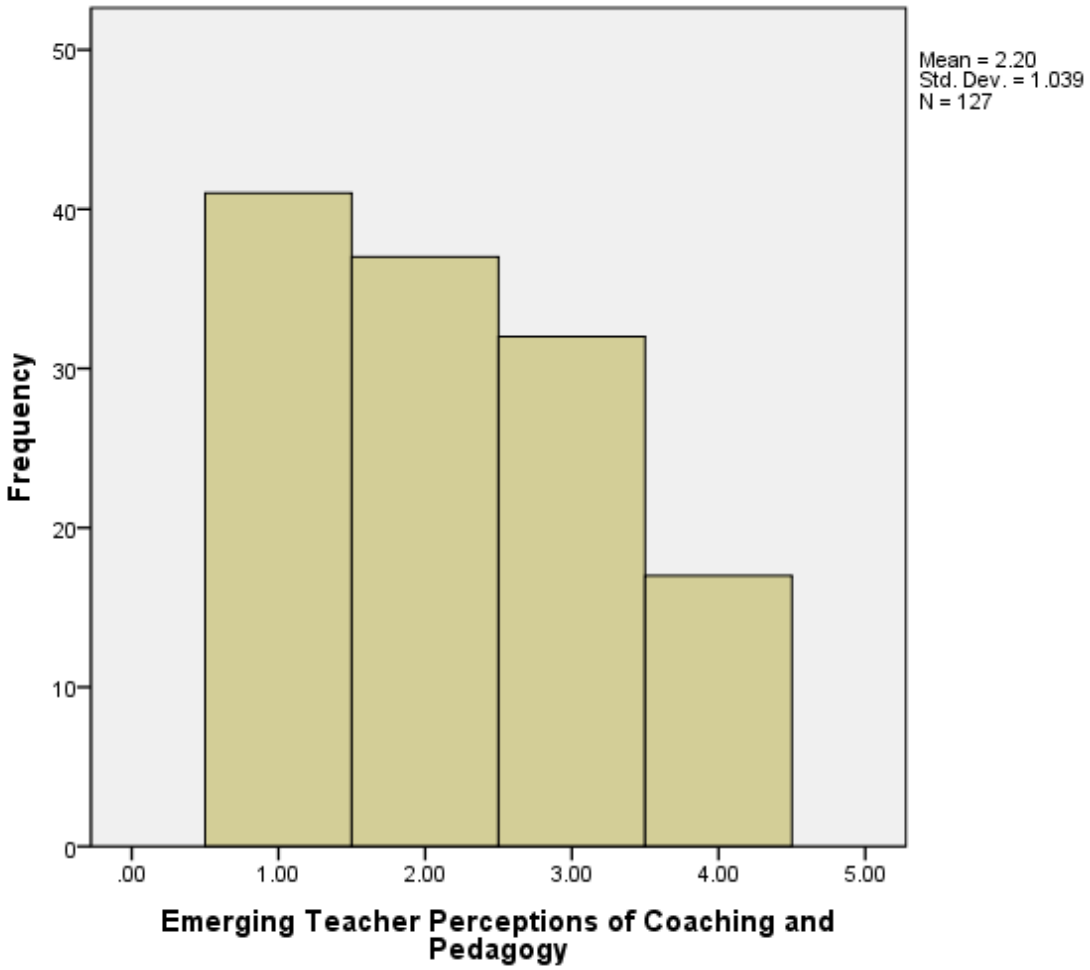

Figure 14 Emerging Teacher Perceptions of Coaching and Pedagogy.

$Ho3_{22}$: The extent to which teachers with 6 or more years of teaching experience perceive instructional coaching improves teaching practices is not significantly positive or negative.

A one-sample *t* test was conducted on teachers with 6 or more years of teaching experience perceptions of coaching and pedagogy to evaluate whether the mean score was significantly different from 2.5, the value representing neutrality. The population mean of 2.23 (SD = 1.04) was significantly lower than 2.5, $t(398) = .511$, $p < .001$. Therefore the null hypothesis was rejected. The 95% confidence interval for teachers with 6 or more years of teaching experience ranged from -.370 to -.164. The strength of the relationships between teachers and the mean score effect size *d* of .26 indicates a small effect. The results indicated teachers with 6 or more years of teaching experience had a significantly negative perception that instructional coaching impacts teaching practices. Figure 15 shows the distribution of the participant responses. The frequency report within each graph represents the number of participants who designated a 1, 2, 3, or 4 on the online survey.

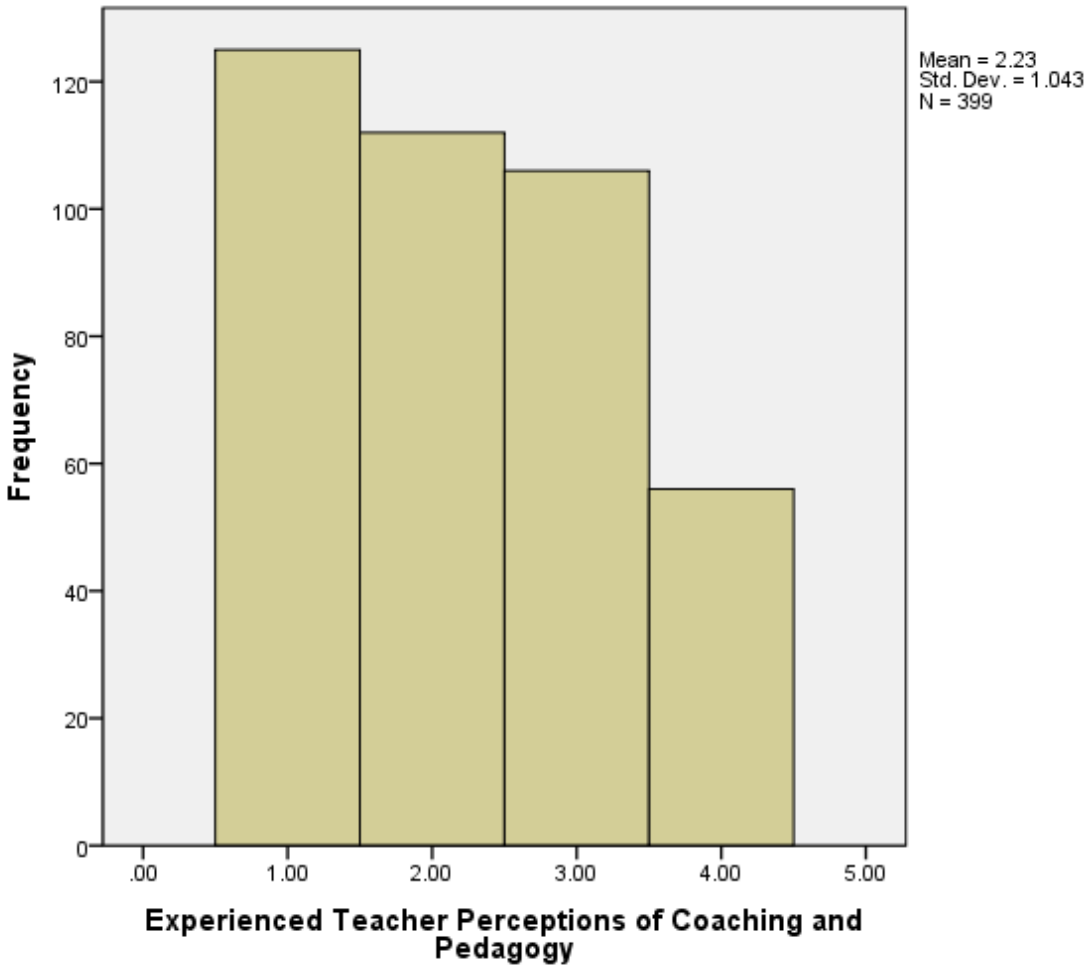

Figure 15 Experienced Teacher Perceptions of Coaching and Pedagogy.

$Ho3_{31}$: The extent to which elementary teachers perceive instructional coaching improves teaching practices is not significantly positive or negative.

A one-sample *t* test was conducted on elementary teachers' perceptions of coaching and pedagogy to evaluate whether the mean score was significantly different from 2.5, the value representing neutrality. The population mean of 2.31 (SD = 1.078) was not significantly different from 2.5, $t(270) = 2.901$, p = .004, ns. Therefore the null hypothesis was retained. The 95% confidence interval for elementary teachers ranged from -.319 to -.061. The strength of the relationships between teachers and the mean score effect size *d* of .18 indicates a small effect.

The results indicated elementary teachers had a neutral perception that instructional coaching improves teaching practices. Figure 16 shows the distribution of the participant responses. The frequency report within each graph represents the number of participants who designated a 1, 2, 3, or 4 on the online survey.

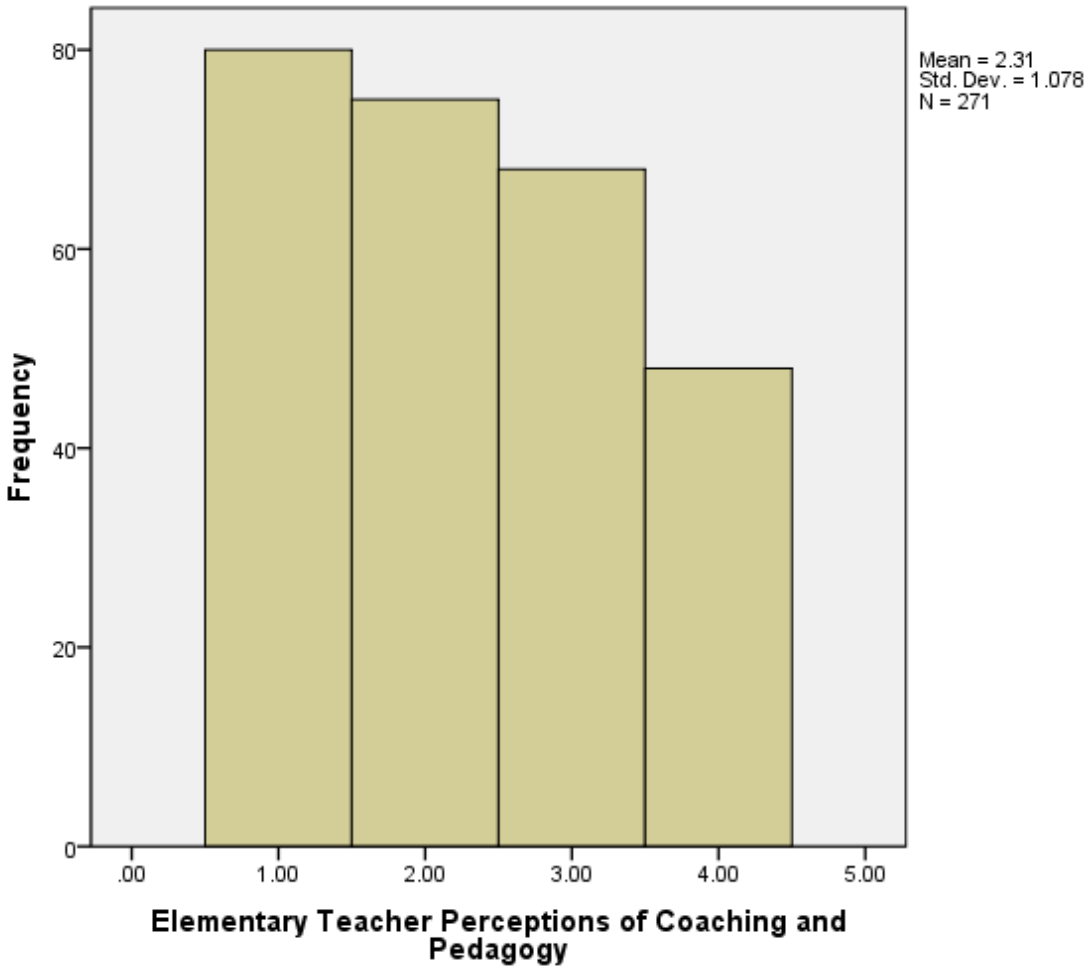

Figure 16. Elementary Teacher Perceptions of Coaching and Pedagogy.

$Ho3_{32}$: The extent to which middle school teachers perceive instructional coaching improves teaching practices is not significantly positive or negative.

A one-sample *t* test was conducted on middle school teachers' perceptions of instructional coaching and pedagogy to evaluate whether the mean score was significantly

different from 2.5, the value representing neutrality. The population mean of 2.36 (SD = 1.081) was not significantly different from 2.5, $t(109) = 1.32$, p = .189, ns. Therefore the null hypothesis was retained. The 95% confidence interval for middle school teachers ranged from -.340 to .068. The strength of the relationships between teachers and the mean score effect size *d* of .13 indicates a small effect. The results indicated middle school teachers had a neutral perception that instructional coaching improves teacher practice. Figure 17 shows the distribution of the participant responses. The frequency report within each graph represents the number of participants who designated a 1, 2, 3, or 4 on the online survey.

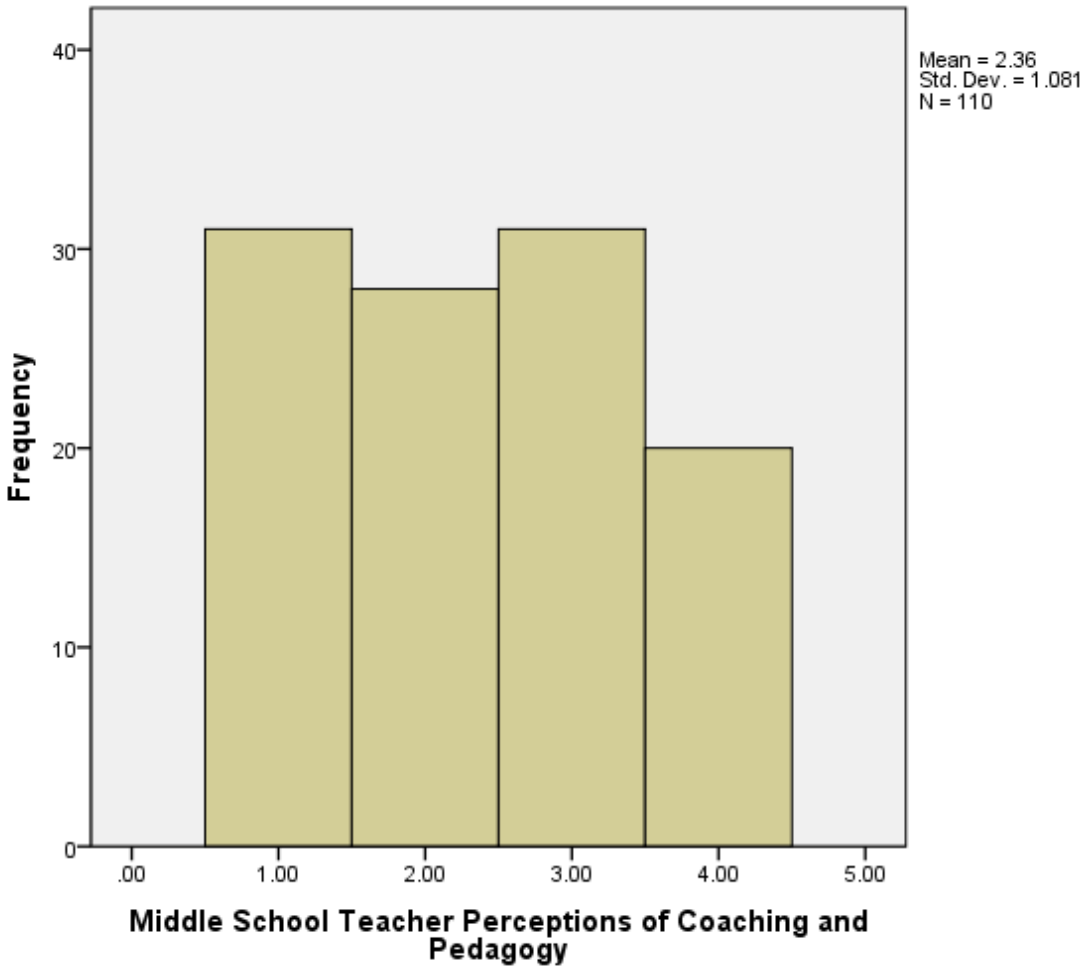

Figure 17 Middle School Teacher Perceptions of Coaching and Pedagogy.

$Ho3_{33}$: The extent to which high school teachers perceive instructional coaching improves teaching practices is not significantly positive or negative.

A one-sample *t* test was conducted on high school teachers' perceptions of coaching and pedagogy to evaluate whether the mean score was significantly different from 2.5, the value representing neutrality. The population mean of 1.97 (SD = .901) was significantly lower than 2.5, $t(145) = 7.07$, $p < .001$. Therefore the null hypothesis was rejected. The 95% confidence interval for high school teachers ranged from -.674 to -.38. The strength of the relationships between teachers and the mean score effect size *d* of .59 indicates a medium effect. The results indicated high school teachers had a significantly negative perception that instructional coaching improves teacher practice. Figure 18 shows the distribution of the participant responses. The frequency report within each graph represents the number of participants who designated a 1, 2, 3, or 4 on the online survey.

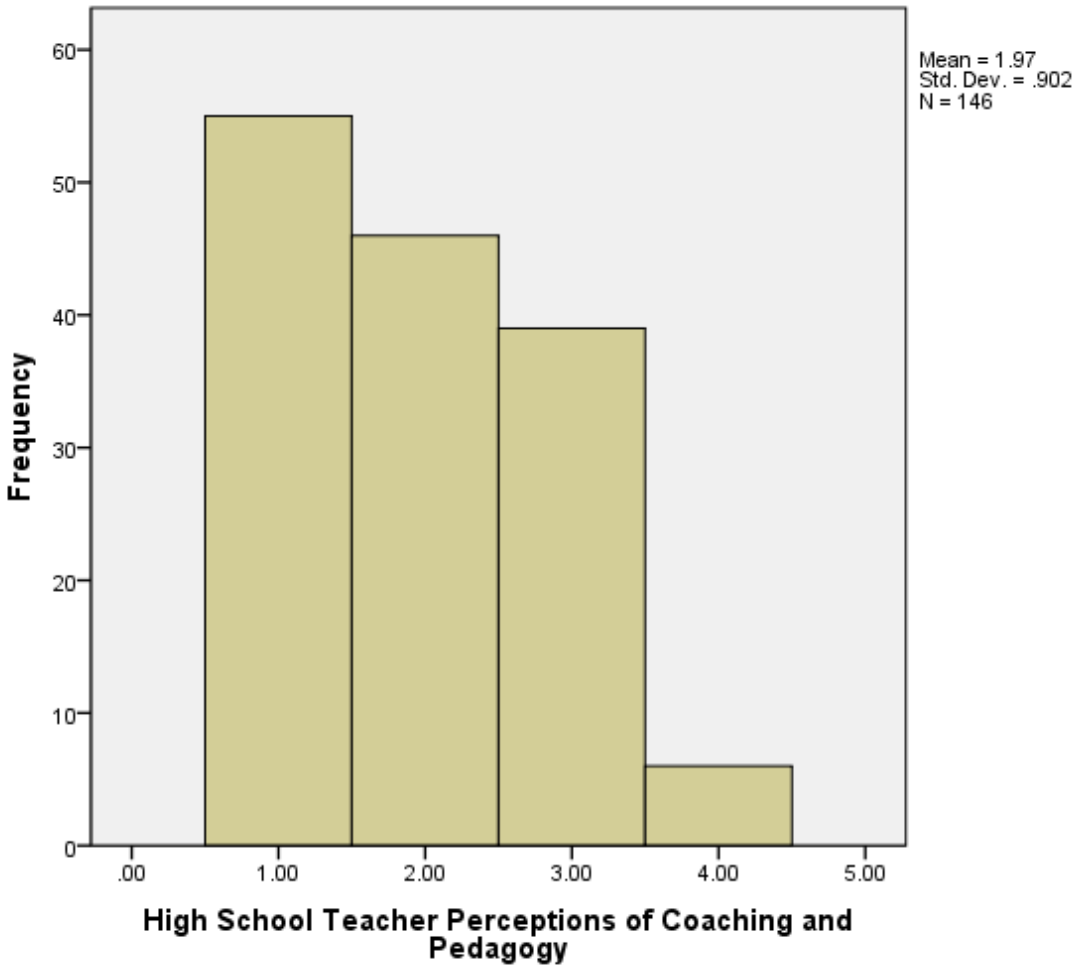

Figure 18. High School Teacher Perceptions of Coaching and Pedagogy.

Research Question 4

Research Question 4: To what extent do teachers perceive instructional coaching impacted student learning?

$Ho4_1$: The extent to which teachers perceive instructional coaching impacted student learning is not significantly positive or negative.

A one-sample *t* test was conducted on teachers' perceptions of coaching and student learning to evaluate whether the mean score was significantly different from 2.5, the value representing neutrality. The population mean of 2.13 (SD = 1.04) was significantly lower than

2.5, $t(525) = 8.083$, $p < .001$ Therefore the null hypothesis $Ho4_1$ was rejected. The 95% confidence interval for teachers ranged from -.458 to -.279. The strength of the relationships between teachers and the mean score effect size *d* of .36 indicates a small effect. The strength of the relationships between teachers and the mean score effect size d of x indicates a small/medium/large effect. The results indicated teachers had a significantly negative perception that instructional coaching impacts student learning. Figure 19 shows the distribution of the participant responses. The frequency report within each graph represents the number of participants who designated a 1, 2, 3, or 4 on the online survey.

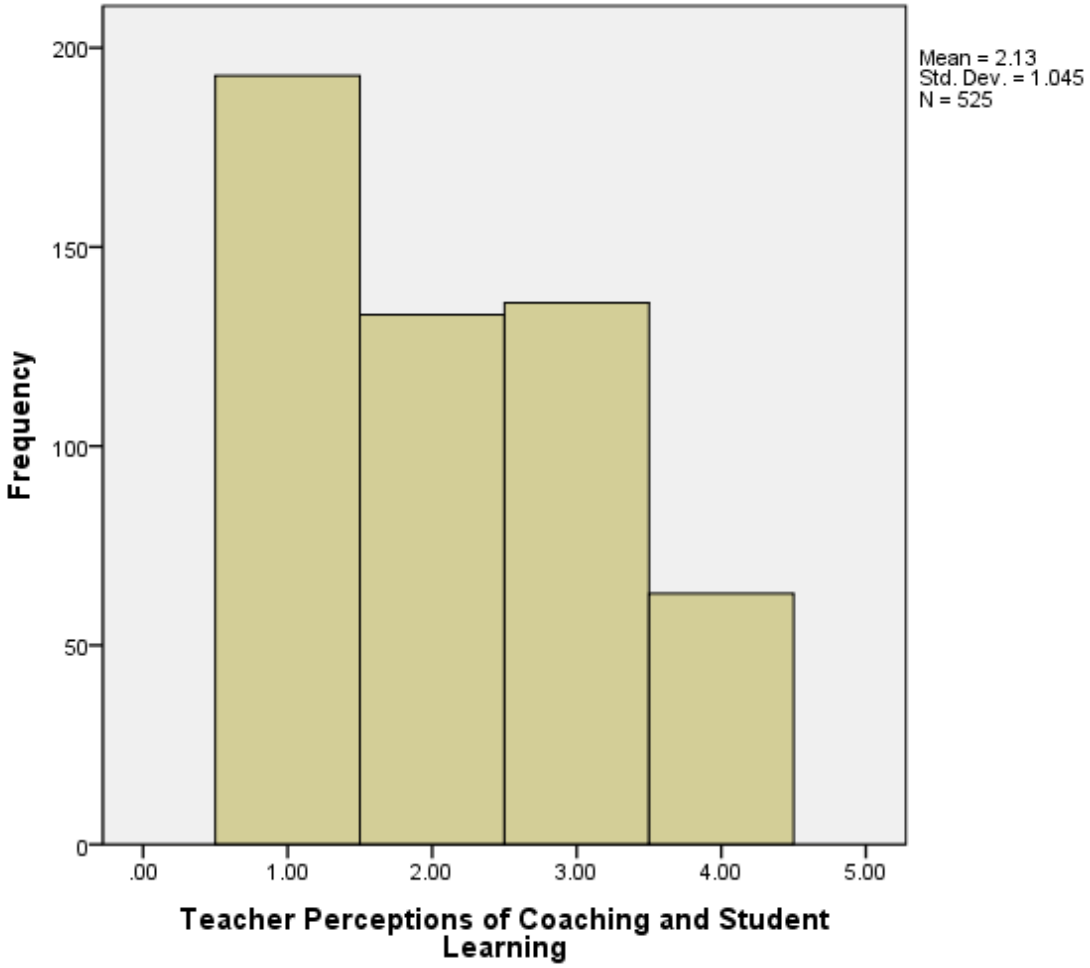

Figure 19. Teacher Perceptions of Coaching and Student Learning.

$Ho4_{21}$: The extent to which teachers with 1-5 years of teaching experience perceive instructional coaching impacted student learning is not significantly positive or negative.

A one-sample *t* test was conducted on teachers with 1-5 years of teaching experience perceptions of coaching and student learning to evaluate whether the mean score was significantly different from 2.5, the value representing neutrality. The population mean of 2.22 (SD = 1.07) was not significantly different from 2.5, $t(126) = 2.95$, $p = .004$, ns. Therefore the null hypothesis was retained. The 95% confidence interval for teachers with 1-5 years of teaching experience ranged from -.467 to -.092. The strength of the relationships between teachers and the mean score effect size *d* of .26 indicates a small effect. The results indicated teachers with 1-5 years of teaching experience had a neutral perception that instructional coaching impacted student learning. Figure 20 shows the distribution of the participant responses. The frequency report within each graph represents the number of participants who designated a 1, 2, 3, or 4 on the online survey.

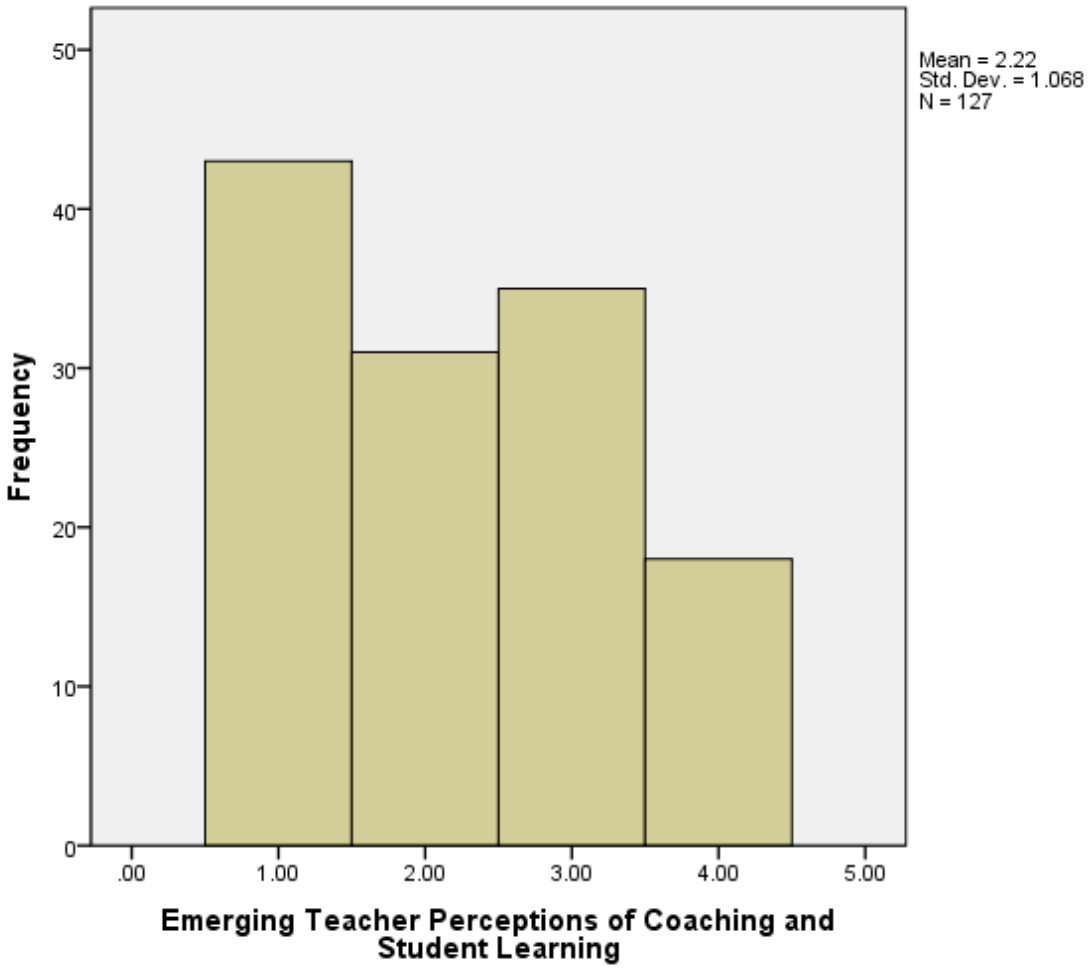

Figure 20. Emerging Teacher Perceptions of Coaching and Student Learning.

$Ho4_{22}$: The extent to which teachers with 6 or more years of teaching experience perceive instructional coaching impacted student learning is not significantly positive or negative.

A one-sample *t* test was conducted on teachers with 6 or more years of teaching experience perceptions of coaching and student learning to evaluate whether the mean score was significantly different from 2.5, the value representing neutrality. The population mean of 2.1 (SD = .1.03) was significantly lower than 2.5, $t(396) = 7.74$, $p < .001$. Therefore the null hypothesis was rejected. The 95% confidence interval for teachers with 6 or more years of teaching experience ranged from -.504 to -.3. The strength of the relationships between teachers

and the mean score effect size *d* of .39 indicates a small effect. The results indicated teachers with 6 or more years of teaching experience had a significantly negative perception that instructional coaching impacts student learning. Figure 21 shows the distribution of the participant responses. The frequency report within each graph represents the number of participants who designated a 1, 2, 3, or 4 on the online survey.

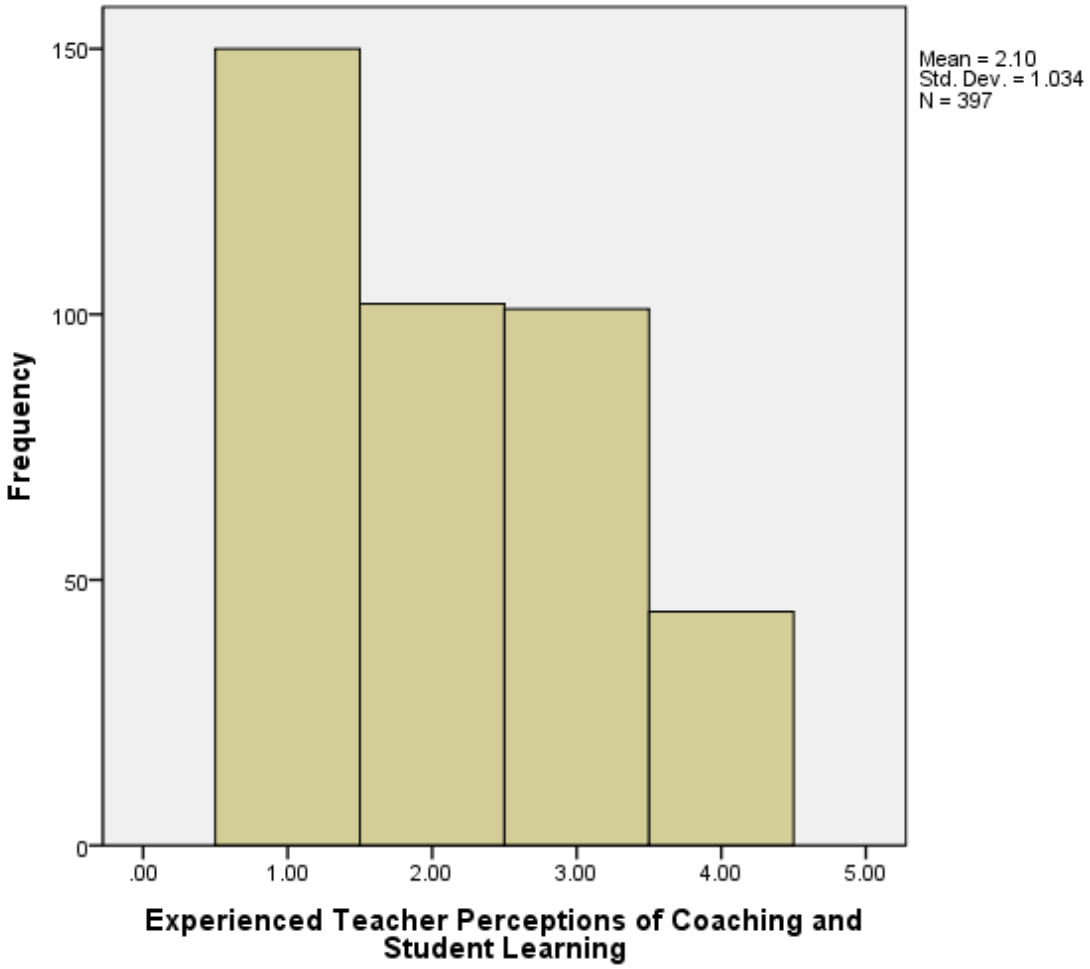

Figure 21. Experienced Teacher Perceptions of Coaching and Student Learning.

Ho4$_{31}$: The extent to which elementary teachers perceive instructional coaching impacted student learning is not significantly positive or negative.

A one-sample *t* test was conducted on elementary teachers' perceptions of coaching and student learning to evaluate whether the mean score was significantly different from 2.5, the value representing neutrality. The population mean of 2.18 (SD = 1.094) was significantly lower than 2.5, $t(271) = 4.69$, $p < .001$. Therefore the null hypothesis was rejected. The 95% confidence interval for elementary teachers ranged from .909 to .055. The strength of the relationships between teachers and the mean score effect size *d* of .28 indicates a small effect. The results indicated elementary teachers had a significantly negative perception that instructional coaching impacts student performance. Figure 22 shows the distribution of the participant responses. The frequency report within each graph represents the number of participants who designated a 1, 2, 3, or 4 on the online survey.

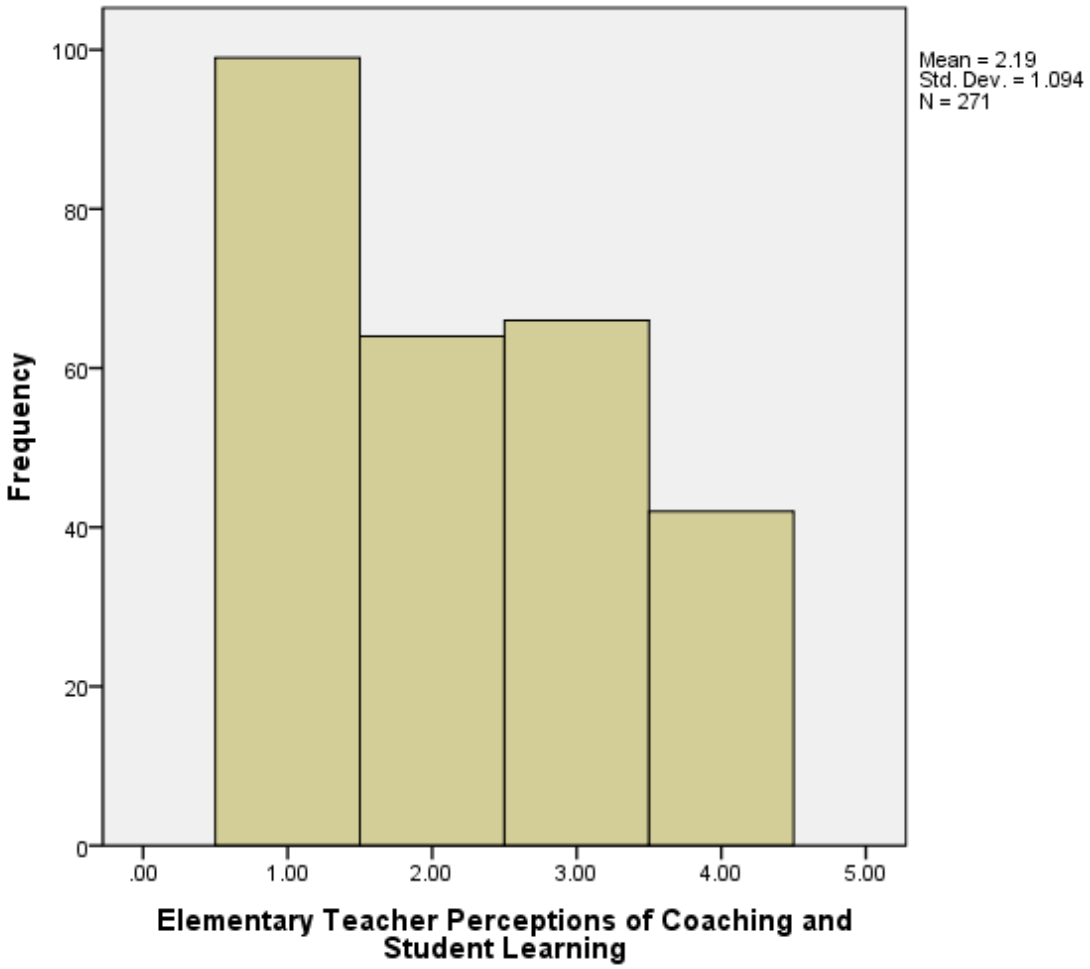

Figure 22. Elementary Teacher Perceptions of Coaching and Student Learning.

$Ho4_{32}$: The extent to which middle school teachers perceive instructional coaching impacted student learning is not significantly positive or negative.

A one-sample *t* test was conducted on middle school teachers' perceptions of coaching and student learning to evaluate whether the mean score was significantly different from 2.5, the value representing neutrality. The population mean of 2.26 (SD = 1.086) was not significantly different from 2.5, $t(108) = 2.25$, $p = .026$, ns. Therefore the null hypothesis was retained. The 95% confidence interval for middle school teachers ranged from -.440 to -.028. The strength of the relationships between teachers and the mean score effect size *d* of .21 indicates a small effect.

The results indicated middle school teachers had a neutral perception that instructional coaching impacts student learning. Figure 23 shows the distribution of the participant responses. The frequency report within each graph represents the number of participants who designated a 1, 2, 3, or 4 on the online survey.

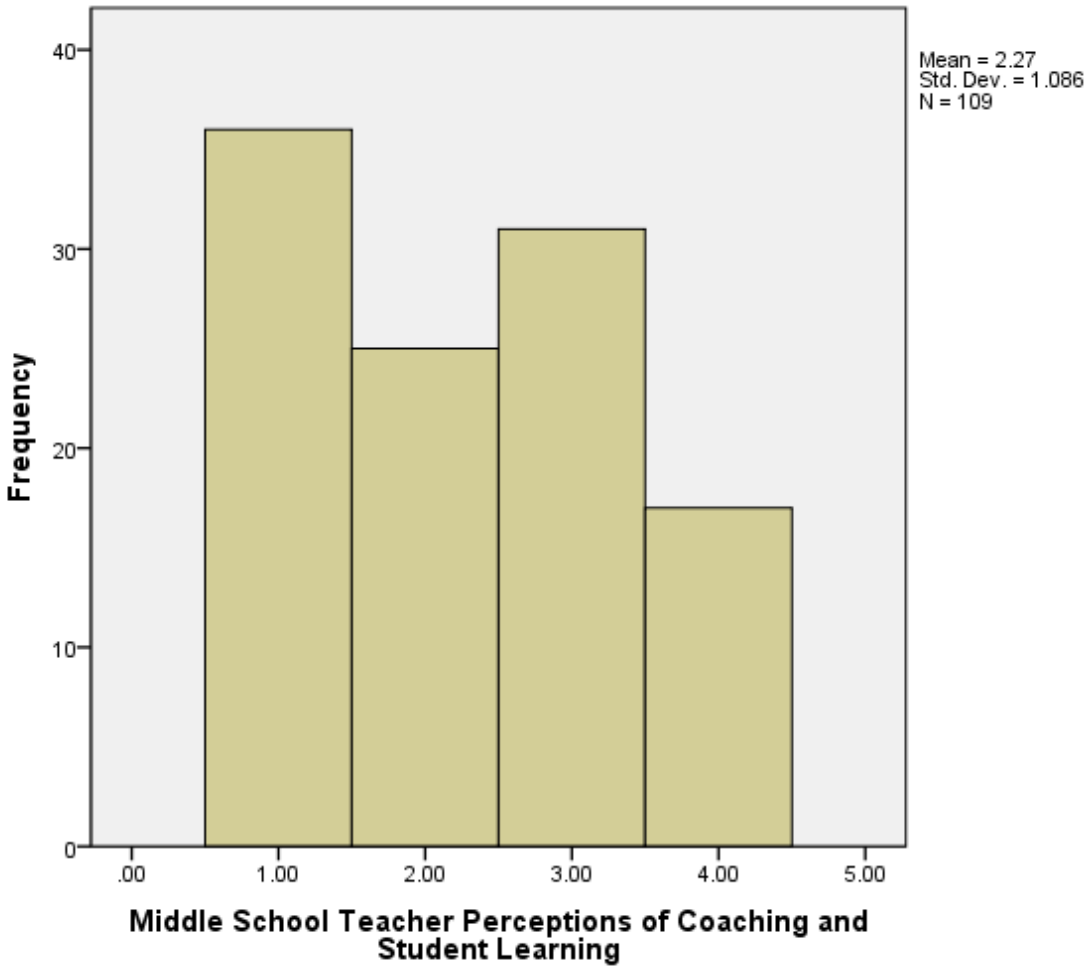

Figure 23. Middle School Teacher Perceptions of Coaching and Student Learning.

$Ho4_{33}$: The extent to which high school teachers perceive instructional coaching impacted student learning is not significantly positive or negative.

A one-sample *t* test was conducted on high school teachers' perceptions of coaching and student learning to evaluate whether the mean score was significantly different from 2.5, the

value representing neutrality. The population mean of 1.92 (SD = .882) was significantly lower than 2.5, $t(144)=7.86$, $p < .001$. Therefore the null hypothesis was rejected. The 95% confidence interval for high school teachers ranged from -.721 to -.431. The strength of the relationships between teachers and the mean score effect size *d* of .66 indicates a medium effect. The results indicated high school teachers had a significantly negative perception that instructional coaching impacted student learning. Figure 24 shows the distribution of the participant responses. The frequency report within each graph represents the number of participants who designated a 1, 2, 3, or 4 on the online survey.

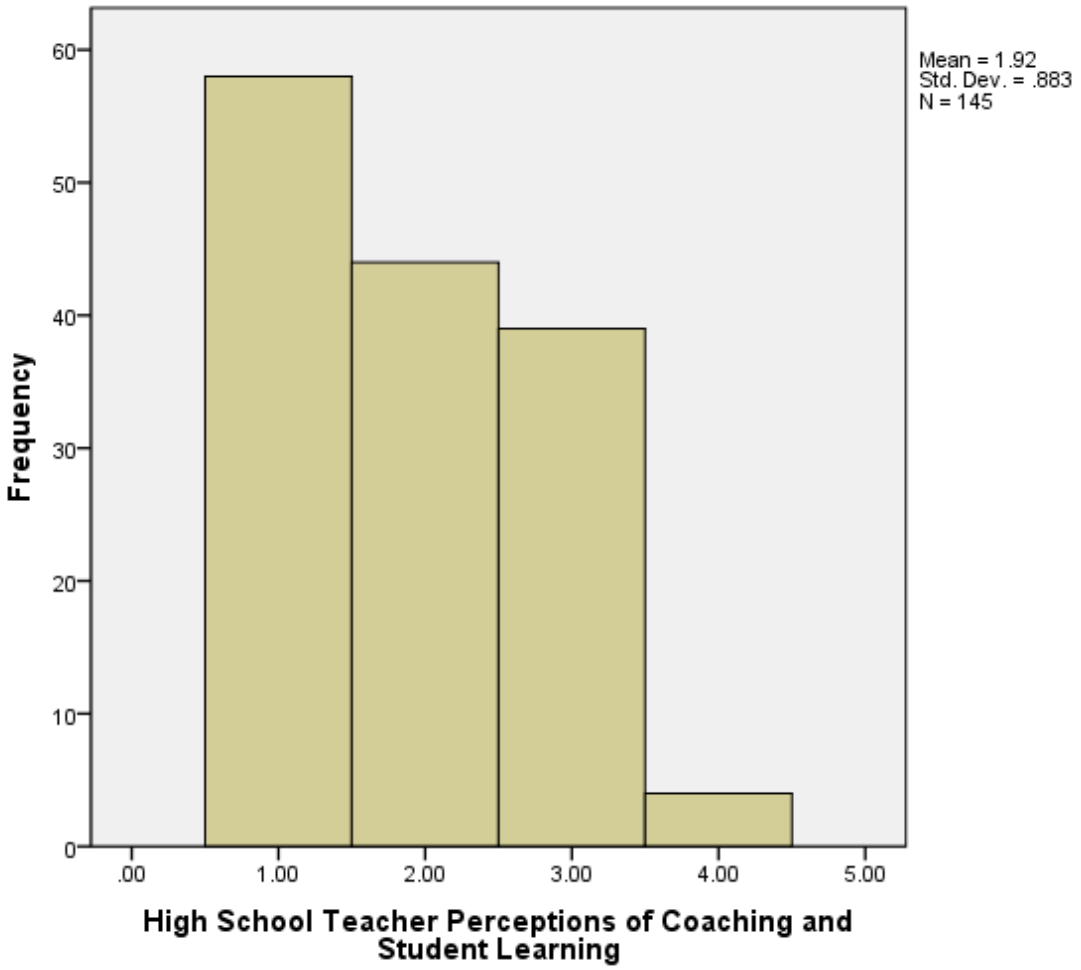

Figure 24. High School Teacher Perceptions of Coaching and Student Learning.

Research Question 5

Research Question 5: To what extent do teacher consider instructional coaching an administrative role?

$Ho5_1$: The extent to which teachers perceive instructional coaching an administrative role is not significantly positive or negative.

A one-sample *t* test was conducted on teachers' perceptions of coaching in a supervisory role to evaluate whether the mean score was significantly different from 2.5, the value representing neutrality. The population mean of 2.57 (SD = .905) was not significantly different from 2.5, $t(531)=1.962$, p = .050, ns. Therefore the null hypothesis $Ho5_1$ was retained. The 95% confidence interval for teachers ranged from -.0001 to .1542. The strength of the relationships between teachers and the mean score effect size *d* of .09 indicates a small effect. The strength of the relationships between teachers and the mean score effect size d of x indicates a small, medium, or large effect. The results indicated teachers had a neutral perception of instructional coaching. Figure 25 shows the distribution of the participant responses. The frequency report within each graph represents the number of participants who designated a 1, 2, 3, or 4 on the online survey.

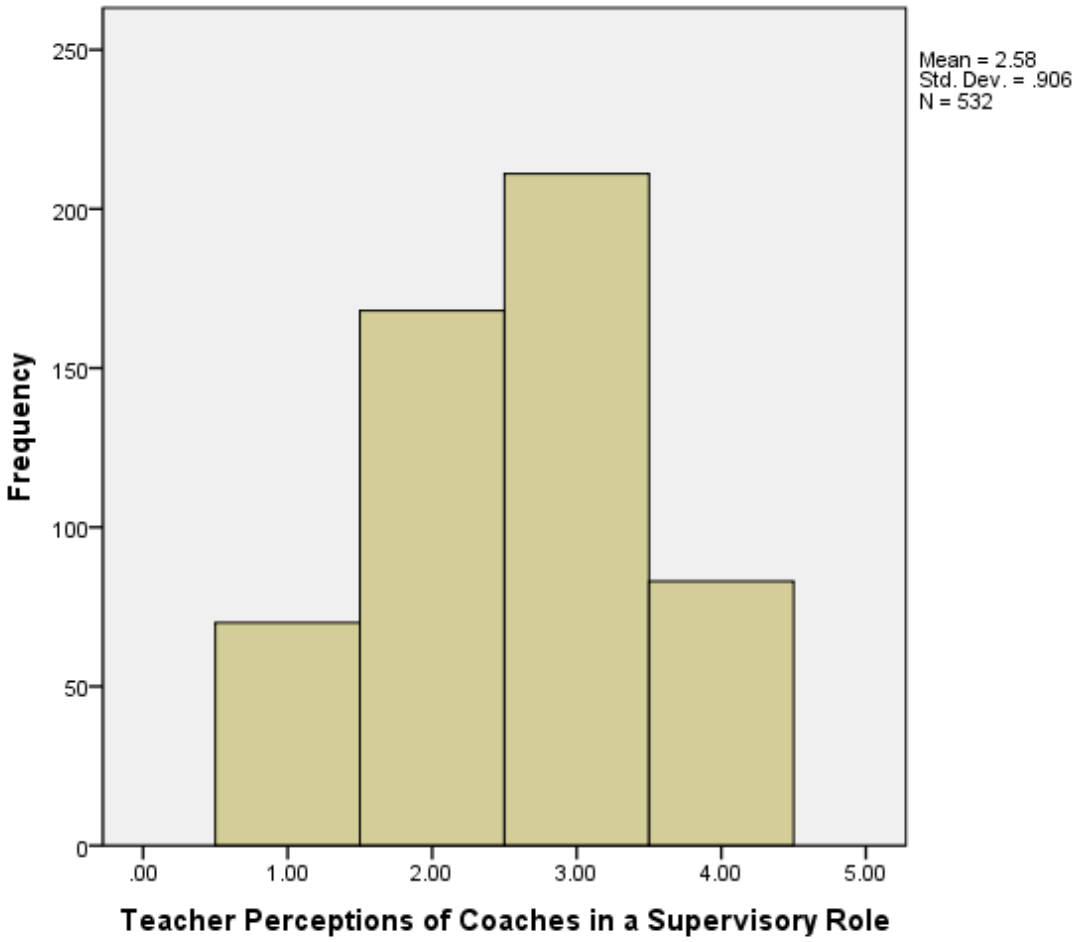

Figure 25. Teacher Perceptions of Coaches in a Supervisory Role.

Ho5_{21}: The extent to which teachers with 1-5 years of teaching experience perceive instructional coaching is an administrative role is not significantly positive or negative.

A one-sample *t* test was conducted on teachers with 1-5 years of teaching experience perceptions of coaching in a supervisory role to evaluate whether the mean score was significantly different from 2.5, the value representing neutrality. The population mean of 2.66 (SD = .837) was not significantly different from 2.5, $t(127)=2.11$, p = .037, ns. Therefore the null hypothesis was retained. The 95% confidence interval for teachers with 1-5 years of teaching experience ranged from .01 to .303. The strength of the relationships between teachers and the

mean score effect size *d* of .19 indicates a small effect. The results indicated teachers with 1-5 years of teaching experience had a neutral perception that instructional coaches were in an administrative role. Figure 26 shows the distribution of the participant responses. The frequency report within each graph represents the number of participants who designated a 1, 2, 3, or 4 on the online survey.

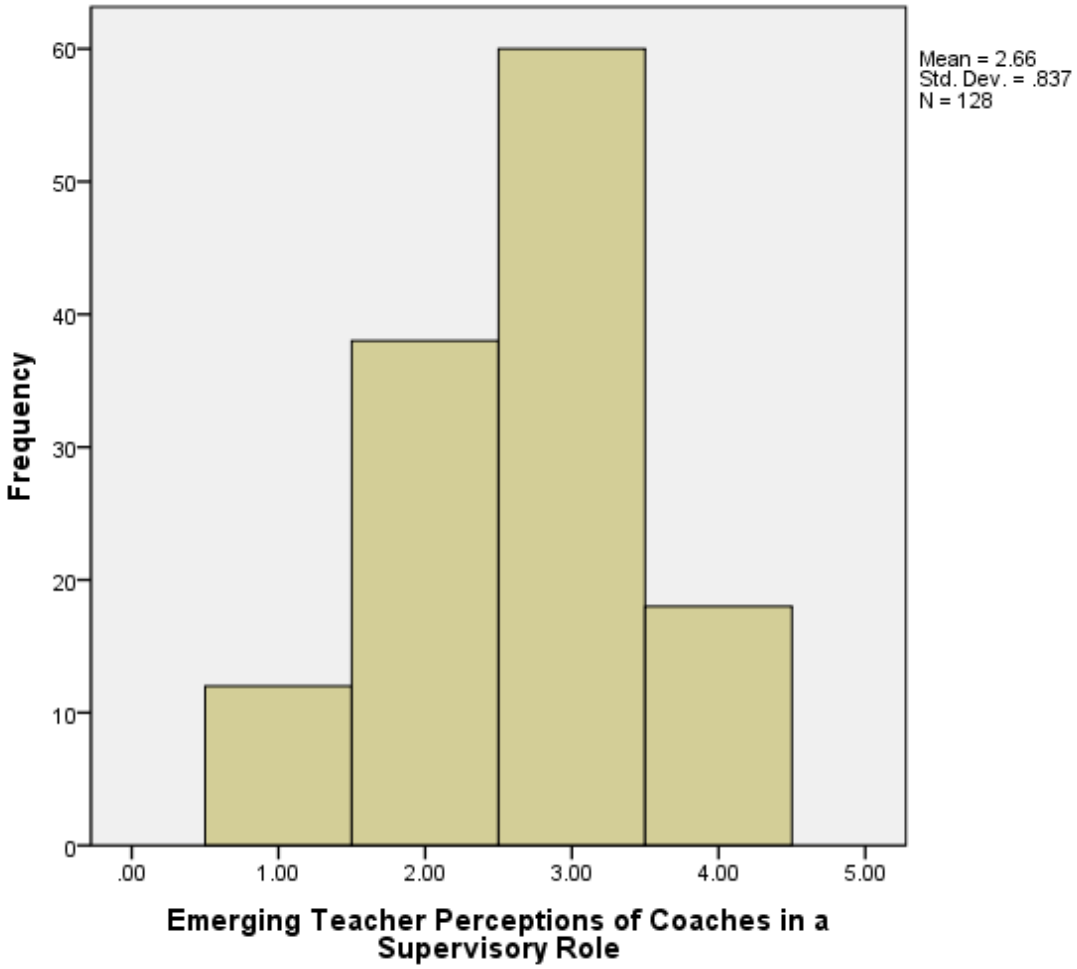

Figure 26. Emerging Teacher Perceptions of Coaches in a Supervisory Role.

Ho5_{22}: The extent to which teachers with 6 or more years of teaching experience perceive instructional coaching is an administrative role is not significantly positive or negative.

A one-sample *t* test was conducted on teachers with 6 or more years of teaching experience perceptions of coaching in a supervisory role to evaluate whether the mean score was significantly different from 2.5, the value representing neutrality. The population mean of 2.56 (SD = .924) was not significantly different from 2.5, $t(402)=1.21$, p = .226, ns. Therefore the null hypothesis was retained. The 95% confidence interval for teachers with 6 or more years of teaching experience ranged from -.035 to .146. The strength of the relationships between teachers and the mean score effect size *d* of .07 indicates a small effect. The results indicated teachers with 6 or more years of teaching experience had a neutral perception of whether instructional coaches were in an administrative role. Figure 27 shows the distribution of the participant responses. The frequency report within each graph represents the number of participants who designated a 1, 2, 3, or 4 on the online survey.

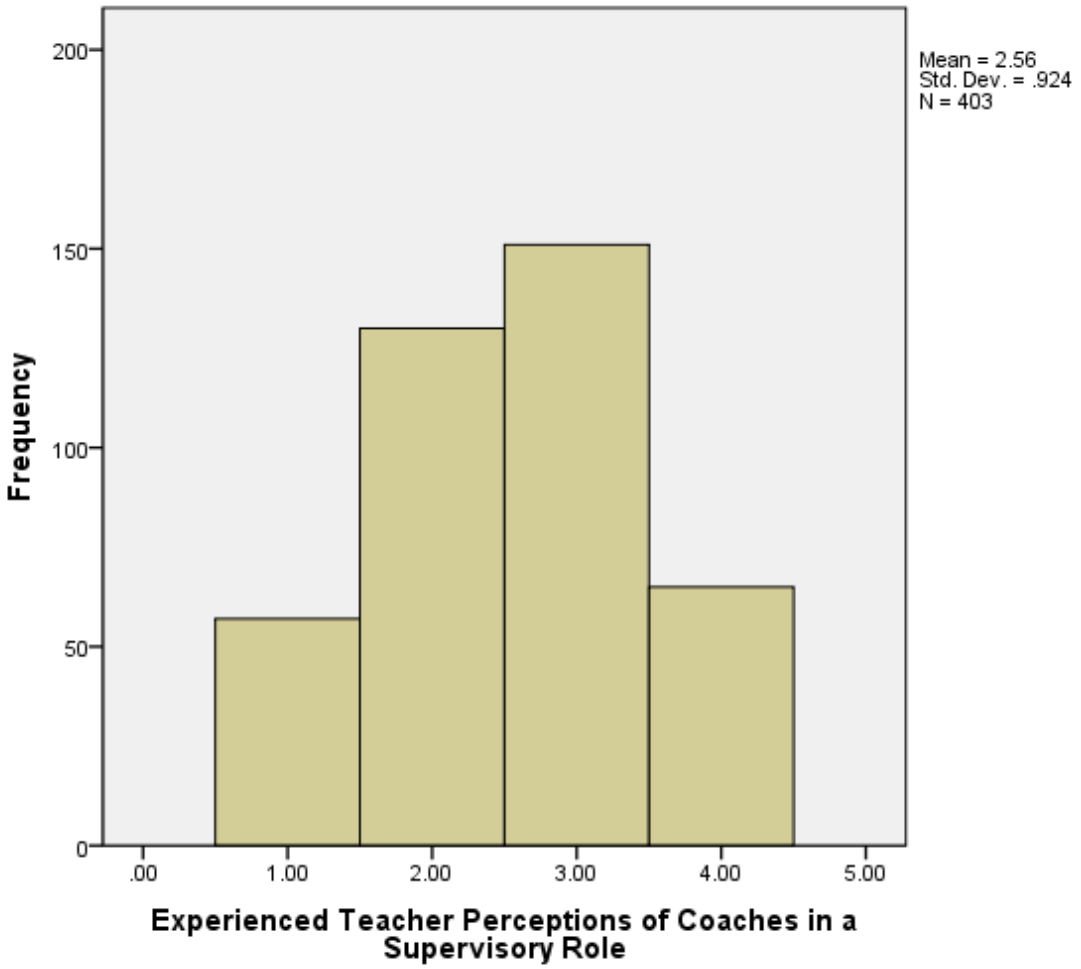

Figure 27. Experienced Teacher Perceptions of Coaches in a Supervisory Role.

Ho5_{31}: The extent to which elementary teachers perceive instructional coaching is an administrative role is not significantly positive or negative.

A one-sample *t* test was conducted on elementary teachers' perceptions of coaching in a supervisory role to evaluate whether the mean score was significantly different from 2.5, the value representing neutrality. The population mean of 2.54 (SD = .909) was not significantly different from 2.5, $t(270) = .768$, p = .443, ns. Therefore the null hypothesis was retained. The 95% confidence interval for elementary teachers ranged from -.066 to .151. The strength of the relationships between teachers and the mean score effect size *d* of .04 indicates a small effect.

The results indicated elementary teachers had a neutral perception that instructional coaches are in an administrative role. Figure 28 shows the distribution of the participant responses. The frequency report within each graph represents the number of participants who designated a 1, 2, 3, or 4 on the online survey.

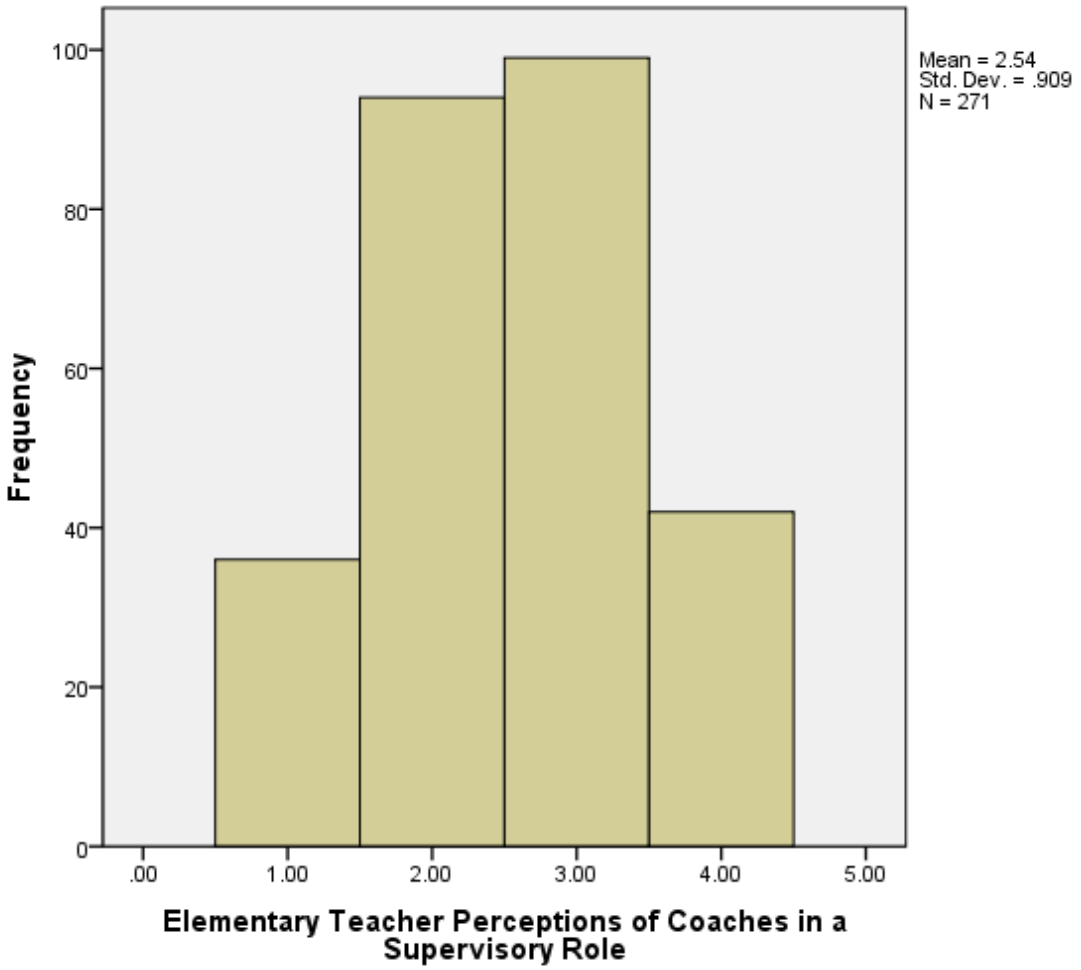

Figure 28. Elementary Teacher Perceptions of Coaches in a Supervisory Role.

Ho5_{32}: The extent to which middle school teachers perceive instructional coaching is an administrative role is not significantly positive or negative.

A one-sample *t* test was conducted on middle school teachers' perceptions of coaching in a supervisory role to evaluate whether the mean score was significantly different from 2.5, the value representing neutrality. The population mean of 2.57 (SD = .952) was not significantly

different from 2.5, $t(109) = .801$, $p = .425$, ns. Therefore the null hypothesis was retained. The 95% confidence interval for middle school teachers ranged from -.107 to .253. The strength of the relationships between teachers and the mean score effect size *d* of .07 indicates a small effect. The results indicated middle school teachers had a neutral perception of whether instructional coaches were in a supervisory role. Figure 29 shows the distribution of the participant responses. The frequency report within each graph represents the number of participants who designated a 1, 2, 3, or 4 on the online survey.

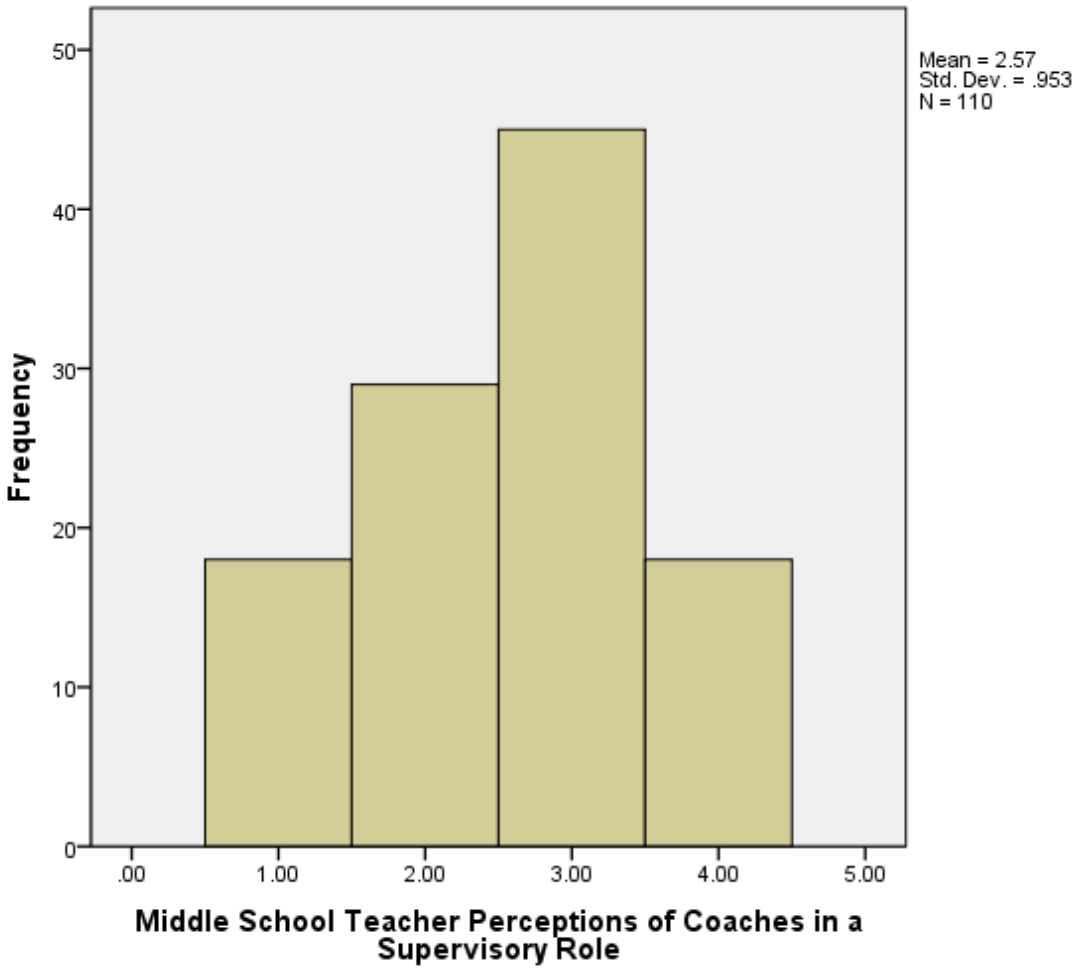

Figure 29. Middle School Teacher Perceptions of Coaches in a Supervisory Role.

$Ho5_{33}$: The extent to which high school teachers perceive instructional coaching is an administrative role is not significantly positive or negative.

A one-sample *t* test was conducted on high school teachers' perceptions of coaching in a supervisory role to evaluate whether the mean score was significantly different from 2.5, the value representing neutrality. The population mean of 2.64 (SD = .867) was not significantly different from 2.5, $t(150)=2.02$, p = .05, ns. Therefore the null hypothesis was retained. The 95% confidence interval for high school teachers ranged from .003 to .282. The strength of the relationships between teachers and the mean score effect size *d* of .16 indicates a small effect. The results indicated high school teachers had a neutral perception of whether instructional coaches are in an administrative role. Figure 30 shows the distribution of the participant responses. The frequency report within each graph represents the number of participants who designated a 1, 2, 3, or 4 on the online survey.

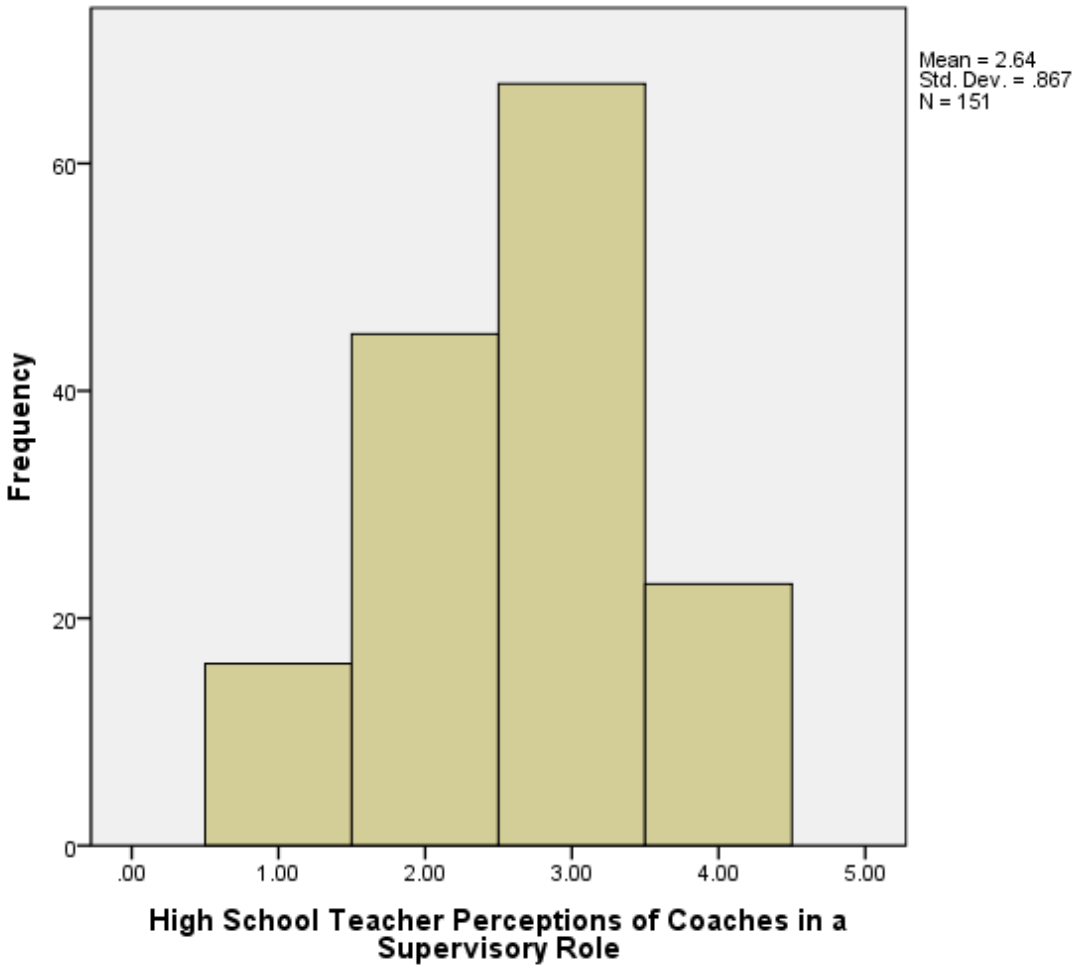

Figure 30. High School Teacher Perceptions of Coaches in a Supervisory Role.

Summary

In this chapter data obtained from teachers were presented and analyzed. There were five research questions and 30 null hypotheses. All data were collected through an online survey distributed to 848 teachers resulting in a 62% return rate with 536 participant responses.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter contains a summary of the findings, conclusions, and recommendations. The purpose of this study was to investigate teacher perceptions on the effectiveness of instructional coaching. Specifically, this researcher assessed the perception of instructional coaching as a whole, support for hiring practices for instructional coaches, the value of instructional coaching for improving teaching practices, the value of instructional coaching for improving student achievement, and the perception of instructional coaches being in supervisory role. This could be helpful for readers who may use the results as a resource when reviewing, revising, or beginning instructional coaching programs. The study was conducted using data collected through an online survey of teachers in three different school districts in Northeast Tennessee.

Summary

The statistical analysis reported in the study was based on five research questions presented in chapters 1 and 3. Each research question had six null hypotheses: one for all participants and five for subgroups of the participants. Each research question was analyzed using a single-sample *t* test. The number of participants in the study was 536. The number of teachers with 1-5 years of teaching experience was 129. The number of teachers with 6 or more years of teaching experience was 406. The number of elementary teachers was 273. The number of middle school teachers was 110. The number of high school teachers was 153. Because of the relatively large number of null hypotheses, the initial alpha level of .05 was adjusted per the Bonferroni method. Therefore, .05 was divided by 30 (the number of null hypotheses) resulting in testing the hypotheses at a level of .001.

Findings indicated that teachers in these school districts are not supportive of instructional coaching as a whole or in any subgroup. High school teachers and teachers with 6 or more years of experience had negative perceptions of instructional coaching.

Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to investigate teacher perceptions on the effectiveness of instructional coaching. Specifically, this researcher assessed the perception of instructional coaching as a whole, support for hiring practices for instructional coaches, the value of instructional coaching for improving teaching practices, the value of instructional coaching for improving student achievement, and the perception of instructional coaches being in supervisory role. The following conclusions were based on the findings from the data in this study:

1. There was no significant difference in teachers' perceptions of instructional coaching except for high school teachers whose mean score of 2.18 was significantly lower than 2.5, the score representing neutrality. To explain the lower score for high school teachers, some comments from participants may add clarity. One participant stated, "The high school was supposed to share a coach with the two middle schools, but she ended up doing ALL of her work with the middle schools." Another participant echoed this sentiment stating, "I have worked with our middle school literacy coach on occasion this year, but we have no literacy coach at the high school." Another viewpoint from participants is captured in this comment: "Our coach is wonderful, but having her work with teachers deprives students of having her as a teacher. Also, at the high school level it is harder for coaches to work with teachers who teach outside of the coach's discipline." These comments are consistent with research that suggests "professional development should focus on student learning and address the teaching of specific curriculum content" (Darling-Hammond, p. 10, 2009). Coaching allows teachers to define specifically which

areas of their practice they want to improve. The high schools surveyed had one coach each. It is difficult for one coach to serve that large of a population and have specific curriculum expertise in several subject areas. While none of the other groups' means were significantly negative, all of the means were below 2.5, the score representing neutrality. This suggests that teachers' support for coaching was overall slight.

2. A significant difference was found for all groups' perceptions of instructional coaching and hiring practices. All groups found that hiring practices were different for instructional coaches than they were for other employees. Participants made comments that indicated that instructional coaches were often appointed or were hired for political reasons. One participant responded, "I have been a master teacher for years. I have a master's in reading and an EDS in curriculum and instruction. I would have been perfect for this job but I was never asked to apply or anything. As far as I know, no one was. They just appointed who they wanted." Another participant echoed this sentiment stating, "Our coach was selected by our principal. Our teachers had no input into the process or we would have chosen a more qualified and experienced person for the position." Others cited not having an application process for the job and not being informed that the positions were being created. All of the participant comments were negative about the hiring process; however, some of the comments possibly illuminate some of the negative perceptions towards instructional coaching. One participant stated, "Instructional coaches in reading should be those with a master's degree in reading. They should know and be able to execute the best practices and strategies in reading and writing. They should have demonstrated the ability to get along with others. So, I do not have a clue how they were hired. They do not have a degree in reading and they do not get along with people." This is consistent with research that indicates that building relationships is a more important aspect of coaching

than content knowledge (Ertmer et al., 2003). Because of the difference in hiring practices, it could be more difficult for coaches to build relationships with teachers.

3. A significant difference was found in teachers' perceptions of instructional coaching and pedagogy for all teachers, teachers with 6 or more years of teaching experience, and high school teachers. The other groups all had means that were lower than 2.5, the neutral score, but they were not significant. Participant comments may explain why veteran teachers and high school teachers perceived instructional coaching did not improve teaching practices. Some participants explained that teachers' attitudes were responsible for improvement in practice stating, "Degree of improvement would be directly linked to attitude of teachers who are willing to be coached and of those coached but not on board with the idea." Several participants had a similar comment. Others cited the lack of experience of the coaches for the shortfall in improvement stating, "I actually think they have messed us up. They advocate one way of teaching and students learn differently. They are less trained than many teachers. They are NOT TRAINED how to coach." Many participants stated that coaches really helped new teachers as captured in the following comment: "I think it's been a great help for new teachers. I also think that it has helped with how effectively information and training for all teachers in the system has occurred and changed throughout the years." Not only are these comments indicative of a mistrust between teachers and coaches, but they are also indicative of a lack of confidence in the coach's ability to lead teachers instructionally. Other comments may shed light on the reasons behind this lack of confidence. Many participants complained about the amount of time the coach was out of the building by stating, "It's very hit and miss. The coaching position offers some of the benefits of a highly qualified assistant. The coach does bring back information from meetings, but she's out of the building so often that teachers can't rely on her for help." Deussen

et al., (2007) found that in order for coaches to be successful they had to spend a large amount of time working directly with teachers modeling lessons and doing follow up conferences with teachers discussing instruction.

4. A significant difference was found in teachers' perceptions of instructional coaching and student learning for all teachers, teachers with 6 or more years of teaching experience, elementary teachers, and high school teachers. All of these groups' means were significantly below 2.5, the score representing neutrality. Both teachers with 1-5 years of teaching experience and middle school teachers did not have statistically significant means, but there means were also below 2.5. Participant comments suggest that some teachers did not like the assumption that coaches could improve student learning. One participant commented, "Teachers impact student learning, not coaches." Another participant echoed this sentiment and gave more detail by stating, "She's benefits the teachers by finding some materials for them but I doubt that has any impact. The impact on student learning comes from the classroom teacher." Other participants felt like coaches should be in the classroom working more as interventionists than coaches. Many participants made comments such as the following: "If the coaches were in the classroom to give support during student learning time, the support could be more beneficial. They could see what you are doing and then give additional instruction/modeling a suggestion." The perception that instructional coaching does not impact student learning is inconsistent with research that states that an improvement in teaching practices can impact student learning. Sanders and Rivers (1996) found that teacher performance had a direct impact on student learning. Because coaching is designed to improve teacher practice, it follows that coaching would impact student performance. The disconnect between coaching, improved teacher

practice, and improved student learning in this survey is inconsistent with other research that links these three elements.

5. No significant difference was found in teachers' perceptions of instructional coaches in a supervisory role.

Recommendations for Practice

The findings and conclusions of this research have enabled me to identify the following recommendations for practice for instructional coaching programs:

1. Teachers should have more input into the design of instructional coaching programs. A committee of teachers should give input and guidance to administrators and coaches to improve instructional coaching in a district. Morgan (2010) suggested that districts involve a "committee of stakeholders" (p. 154) to compose a district-wide vision statement for coaches and their place in the overall professional development plan.

2. Coaches should have all noncoaching job responsibilities that conflict with their coaching removed. From the findings in this research and from the literature, it appears that coaches are being given many responsibilities that do not involve coaching teachers. Comments from participants suggested that coaches were often out of the building and at the central office and did not often work directly with teachers. This is consistent with the Deussen et al. (2007) who found that often teachers were asked to attend meetings, in-service professional development, and serve as the principal when the principal was out of the building.

3. Coaches should focus on relationships with teachers intensively at the beginning of their coaching assignment. Reed-Wright (2009) found that it took 6 to 9 months for coaches to establish effective working relationships with the teachers with whom they were working. As a

result, administrators should be flexible in their assessment of an instructional coaching program's success in the first year or two.

4. Coaches should not be serving in a supervisory capacity. Morgan (2010) also recommended that coaches "work with teachers in a nonevaluative capacity" (p. 154). This is consistent with both Knight (2005) and Costa and Garmston (2002) who found that coaches worked best together when working side by side and not from a supervisory position over teachers. Also, this is consistent with both Morgan (2010) and Reed-Wright (2009) who found that teachers needed to trust the coaches not to report to supervisors what they saw in their classrooms before they would invite them in to do coaching. If the coach is a supervisor, then the dynamic of this relationship would not be conducive to cognitive coaching.

5. Coaches should be taken out of the building less for meetings and other duties. Dussen et al. (2007) noted that one of the major complaints for both teachers and coaches is that they were taken away from coaching duties to do other things in the school.

6. Coaching positions should be posted and hired just like any other position to ensure the best person is hired for the job. Morgan (2010) also recommended that coaches should be hired with the culture of the school in mind. Knight (2007) suggested that understanding school culture is vital for coaches to be in a position to be change agents. Every group perceived instructional coaches were hired differently than teachers. In addition several comments from participants indicated that this difference led to poor selection of coaches and mistrust between teachers and coaches.

Recommendations for Future Research

Results of this study indicate that teachers are divided on their perceptions of instructional coaching by both experience and grade level taught. The districts surveyed have

been careful not to put coaches in supervisory roles, but the connection between coaching and improvement of teaching practices and impact on student learning is not apparent to many teachers. Additional research needs to be conducted to assess the benefit of coaching to teaching practices and student learning (Cornett & Knight, 2008; McCrary, 2011). Recommendation for future research also includes a replication of this study comparing means for districts with different approaches to coaching programs. This study could be expanded to explore reasons for resistance and acceptance of coaching to find elements that make coaching successful. Further, this study could be replicated and expanded further to identify coaching practices and behaviors that lead to positive or negative perceptions of instructional coaching.

With the adoption of the Common Core Standards into the state curriculum, coaches will likely lead the professional development for these new standards in districts that have instructional coaching programs. An experimental study could be conducted measuring teacher adoption of these new standards in similar districts with coaching and similar districts without coaching. Additionally, a case study of a district coaching program could illuminate elements of coaching that improve teacher practice and impact student learning through the lens of the Common Core.

Additionally, research should be done on the effectiveness of informal coaches who are teachers who coach other teachers without being given an official title of coach. These teachers are sought out by their colleagues for their wisdom or expertise. Discovering the impact of these teachers on the performance of other teachers could provide guidance for districts who are developing coaching programs. Oftentimes in education, labeling a program can cause the program to be resisted by teachers who feel who feel like they should wait out the program or feel like one more thing is being added to their job.

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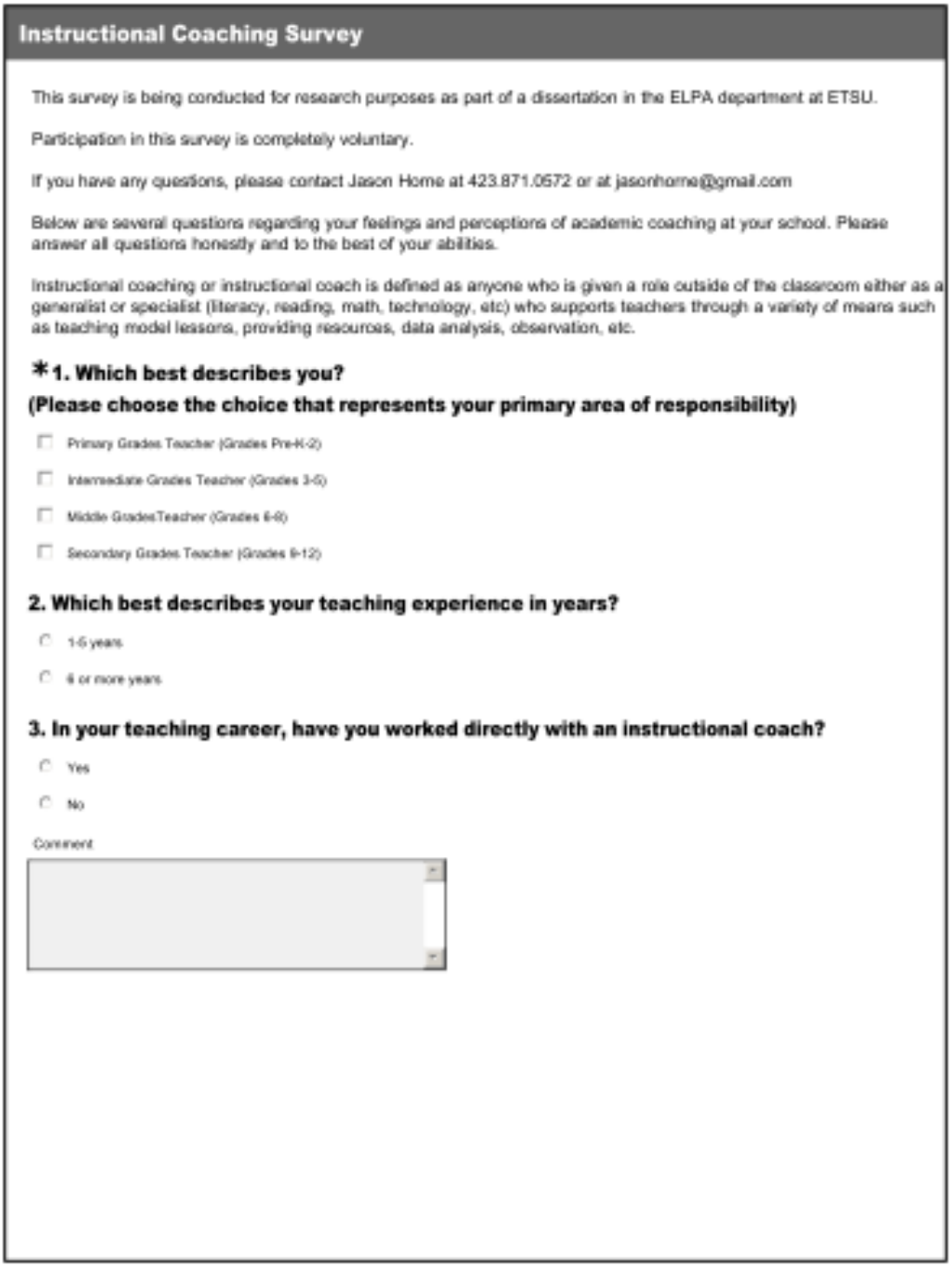
APPENDIX

Instructional Coaching Teacher Survey



Instructional Coaching Survey

This survey is being conducted for research purposes as part of a dissertation in the ELPA department at ETSU.

Participation in this survey is completely voluntary.

If you have any questions, please contact Jason Horne at 423.871.0672 or at jasonhorne@gmail.com

Below are several questions regarding your feelings and perceptions of academic coaching at your school. Please answer all questions honestly and to the best of your abilities.

Instructional coaching or instructional coach is defined as anyone who is given a role outside of the classroom either as a generalist or specialist (literacy, reading, math, technology, etc) who supports teachers through a variety of means such as teaching model lessons, providing resources, data analysis, observation, etc.

***1. Which best describes you?**
(Please choose the choice that represents your primary area of responsibility)

- Primary Grades Teacher (Grades Pre-K-2)
- Intermediate Grades Teacher (Grades 3-5)
- Middle GradesTeacher (Grades 6-8)
- Secondary Grades Teacher (Grades 9-12)

2. Which best describes your teaching experience in years?

- 1-5 years
- 6 or more years

3. In your teaching career, have you worked directly with an instructional coach?

- Yes
- No

Comment

4. To what extent do you support having an instructional coaching program at your school?

	do not support	slightly support	support	fully support
instructional coaching program	○	○	○	○

Comment

5. Hiring practices are different for instructional coaches than for classroom teachers.

	strongly disagree	disagree	agree	strongly agree	unaware of how coaches were hired
hiring practices	○	○	○	○	○

Comment

6. In your opinion, how much (if any) does instructional coaching improve teaching practices at your school?
(teaching practices can include general best practices, classroom management, and content-specific practices)

	does not improve	slightly improves	improves	strongly improves
teaching practices	○	○	○	○

Comment

7. In your opinion, how much (if any) does instructional coaching impact student learning?

	does not improve	slightly improves	improves	strongly improves
impact on student learning	○	○	○	○

Comment

8. In your opinion, academic coaches are in a supervisory role.
(supervisory role is defined as a role in which one employee has an evaluative or supervisory position over another employee, not necessarily in an official capacity)

	strongly disagree	disagree	agree	strongly agree
supervisory role	○	○	○	○

Comment

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	Virtual Learning Coordinator, Greeneville City Schools 2009-2011
	French Teacher, Greeneville High School Greeneville, TN City Schools 2006 – 2009
	French Teacher, Campbell County High School Campbell County, TN Department of Education 2003-2006
	Moniteur d'anglais, Les écoles publiques de Deauville Deauville, France 2002-2003
Presentations:	ETSU ELPA Leadership Symposium, 2011
	Greeneville City School System, TN 2006-2011

Niswonger Symposium, Greeneville, TN 2008-2011

Jefferson County School System, 2011

North Indiana Educational Service Center, 2009 and 2011

Tennessee Educational Technology Association, 2011

Tennessee Educational Technology Conference, 2009
American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, 2008

Indiana state technology leader convention, 2008

Honors and Awards:

Pi Delta Phi, 1998-2000

Sigma Tau Delta, 1999-2000

Phi Kappa Phi, 2000-2002

Kappa Delta Pi, 2001-2002

Technology Award, Greeneville City Schools, 2010