New Teachers' Perceptions on Their Preparation

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NEW TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS ON THEIR PREPARATION

by

Rosemary Cleveland

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Submitted to the
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Dr. Sue Poppink, Advisor

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NEW TEACHERS’ PERCEPTIONS ON THEIR PREPARATION

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In this study, I inquired into new public school teachers’ perceptions of how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom and discipline situations by examining what percentages of new teachers felt that they were well prepared in classroom management. I also investigated whether there were possible variations in those percentages based on teacher gender, teacher level, and the percentage of minority students enrolled in school. Furthermore, I examined the relationship between new teachers’ perceptions on their preparation in classroom management and their job satisfaction as well as their commitment to the teaching profession.

In this study, a new public school teacher was a K-12 teacher in their first, second, or third year of teaching. For this study, I analyzed data extracted from the 1999-2000 Public School Teacher Questionnaire from the Schools and Staffing Survey which was designed by the National Center for Education Statistics and carried out by the U.S. Census Bureau. A research survey design was used. Descriptive statistics were used to identify the percentages of new teachers’ perceptions on their preparation in classroom management through frequency analysis. Inferential statistics with a t-test for Independent Samples were used to compare the mean scores of the new teachers’ perceptions to determine if the mean scores varied by teacher gender, teacher level, and
the percentage of minority students enrolled in school. Descriptive statistics were used with the Pearson Product Correlation to investigate the relationship between new teachers’ perceptions and their job satisfaction as well as their commitment to the teaching profession.

With the results of this study, I hope to add to the national understanding of new teachers during their first year of teaching from the dimension of their perspectives on their preparation in classroom management. I hope the findings provide new information for the K-12 new teacher profile. Last of all, I hope the findings provide information to assist in new teacher preparation and in new teacher support in the teaching profession.
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The dream of completing a doctoral degree in education was a personal and a professional goal for me. It was a path of challenges, intellectual inquiry, and remarkable learning.

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My husband and children loved and patiently supported me throughout this graduate program. Most of all they believed in me. To them, I express my deepest love and heartfelt gratitude.

I dedicate this dissertation to my family: Roy (my husband), Brian (my son), and Sarah (my daughter).

Rosemary Cleveland
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Since President George W. Bush signed the No Child Left Behind Act (2002), an era of educational change has been underway. The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) brought with it accountability, data-driven decisions, and controversy. More than 14,000 public schools districts (Scherer, 2006) across the nation focused their efforts and their resources to meet its goals. With NCLB’s emphasis on a highly qualified teacher in every classroom and the relationship to student achievement, teacher preparation came to the attention of the American public (Cochran-Smith, 2006). Since there was an acknowledged connection between teaching and student academic achievement, the public’s concern for teacher preparation was natural. The media enhanced the public’s interest with its coverage of the national, state and local progress on meeting the goals of NCLB by the required deadlines (Haycock, 2006).

Educational research demonstrated that teachers were key to the academic success of their students. The research of Marzano, Marzano, and Pickering indicated that in the school setting “the teacher was probably the single most important factor affecting student achievement” (2003, p. 6). This was reinforced in the research of Wright, Horn, and Sanders which indicated that “the most important factor affecting student learning was the teacher and that the clear implication of this finding was that more can be done to improve education by improving the effectiveness of teachers than by any other single factor” (1997, p. 63). In other words, in order for new teachers to be effective in their teaching positions with their students, they needed to be thoroughly prepared by research-guided teacher preparation programs in content, pedagogy, and field experiences.
"Studies show that well-prepared and well-supported teachers are important for all students" (Darling-Hammond, 2006, p. 16).

To provide the best possible preparation for today's new teachers, teacher preparation programs made efforts to align their curriculum and field experiences consistent with research findings about effective practice (Cochran-Smith, 2006). One report that was key in its impact on guiding new teacher preparation programs based on "its research-grounded recommendations about how to incorporate core knowledge for beginning teachers" (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005, p. 22) was Preparing Teachers for a Changing World: The Report of the Committee on Teacher Education of the National Academy of Education.

Research further indicated that new teachers needed preparation in classroom management as part of the curriculum requirements in their teacher preparation programs (Landau, 2001). Since one of a teacher's most significant jobs was effectively managing the classroom, Meyer and Williams' findings indicated the importance of a semester course in classroom management as part of teacher preparation programs to provide a knowledge base in classroom management theory and strategies. In addition, the course "helped new teachers with their confidence and success in handling classroom management issues in the school setting" (2006, p. 16).

In response to the concerns regarding teacher preparation, this study inquired into teacher preparation from the perspective of new teachers and their preparation in classroom management. This study explored new teachers' perceptions on how well prepared they were to handle classroom management issues during their first year of teaching. It investigated whether new teachers' perceptions of their preparedness varied
by gender, teacher level, and the percentage of minority students enrolled in school. The study also explored the relationship between new teachers’ perceptions of their preparedness in classroom management with their job satisfaction and their commitment to the teaching profession. This study intended to assist in further understanding the concern for teacher preparation in classroom management and its impact on new teachers’ perceptions, teacher effectiveness in the classroom and student achievement.

Background of the Study

The Importance of Teacher Preparation

Students benefited from teachers who were well prepared for their teaching responsibilities in today’s diverse classrooms; today’s students are tomorrow’s citizens and political leaders. So new teachers needed to have the best research-based training that teacher preparation programs could provide for them. Recent research showed that teachers who completed traditional teacher preparation programs and state certification produced higher student achievement gains (Darling-Hammond, Holtzman, Gatlin, & Heilig, 2005).

Previous to the enactment of the No Child Left Behind Act (2002), there was little federal legislation that set the standard for teacher preparation. So “poor students and those of color were the ones most likely to be taught by inexperienced and under-qualified teachers” (Darling-Hammond & Berry, 2006, p. 15). Shen and Poppink (2003) raised concern for new teacher preparation and certification with their study that showed an increase in the percentage of new teachers who did not have a teaching certificate in their primary teaching field from 5.5% in 1987-1988 to 14% in 1999-2000. With its implementation, NCLB set the framework and the deadline for all teachers to be highly
qualified. It required all teachers to have a bachelor’s degree, full state certification, and
proven competency in the subject areas taught by June 30, 2006 (U.S. Department of
Education, 2002). Some states were granted a one-year extension to June 30, 2007
(Guilfoyle, 2006). By spring 2006, thirty-three states reported that highly qualified
teachers taught 90% of their classes (Feller, 2006).

To meet the needs of today’s new teachers and the diverse student population they
teach in the nation’s schools, teacher preparation programs strived to meet the standards
of their national accrediting agencies as well as used research findings and data to guide
their program evaluations and their curriculum changes. “This trend was reflected in state
program approval and national accreditation standards” (Cochran-Smith, 2006, p. 22).
The faculties of teacher preparation programs used research-grounded recommendations
from the recent report, Preparing Teachers for a Changing World: The Report of the
Committee on Teacher Education of the National Academy of Education (Darling-
Hammond & Bransford, 2005).

The current importance of teacher preparation was also seen in the focus of several
significant initiatives aimed at teacher preparation and teacher quality. One example was
the Teachers for a New Era initiative. The Carnegie Corporation and other supporters at
more than $125 million funded it. One of its aims was to improve teacher preparation.
The second example was the charge given to the National Research Council by the U.S.
Congress to “synthesize data and research on teacher preparation programs as well as
note whether the coursework and preparatory experiences of pre-service teachers were
consistent with research findings about effective practice” (Cochran-Smith, 2006, p. 20).
Teacher Preparation and Today's Students

Teacher preparation programs impacted two groups of students. The first group was this generation’s new teachers composed of the pre-service teachers who were enrolled in the teacher preparation programs and the recent graduates of teacher preparation institutions. The second was the group of students in the nation’s K-12 classrooms who were the recipients of their new teachers’ preparation through their teachers’ daily contact with them in the school setting. Both groups were extremely important in the portrait of teacher preparation.

Many pre-service teachers and recently graduated teachers wanted to be educators who made a difference in the lives of students. They were technologically astute. They met rigorous criteria to be accepted into their institution’s teacher preparation program. They were the transition generation of new teachers who faced the national requirements of No Child Left Behind Act (2002) and the institutional requirements of their teacher preparation programs that strived to meet the accreditation standards of the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education. They showed evidence of their content knowledge and their classroom performance as part of their institution’s data-driven assessment programs (Williams, Mitchell, & Leibbrand, 2003). They were tracked from entry into the teacher preparation program through graduation and beyond (Cochran-Smith, 2006). They experienced the integration of educational theory and practice based on research findings (Whitney, Goele, Nagel, & Nieto, 2002).

In turn, many were part of their teacher preparation program’s ongoing research studies to evaluate their curriculum. Pre-service teachers were surveyed on their preparation as part of the teacher education program evaluation process with the intent of
program improvement (Szabo, Scott, & Yellin, 2002). Findings indicated the importance of nurturing critical thinking, modeling shared dialogue on theory and teaching experiences. In New York 2,956 beginning teachers were surveyed on their preparedness. The findings indicated that teachers who were prepared in teacher education programs felt significantly better prepared than those who entered teaching from other pathways (Darling-Hammond, Chung, & Frelow, 2002).

Next, the second group impacted by teacher preparation programs was the group of students in the nation's K-12 classrooms. Whether they were in urban, suburban, or rural public school districts, they were the beneficiaries of the new teachers' preparation for the teaching profession from their educational institutions. They deserved thoroughly prepared new teachers who were strong in content knowledge, experienced in the field, and showed a passion for teaching.

Well-prepared teachers were important for all students (Darling-Hammond, 2000). In fact, new teachers who attended traditional preparation programs and attained full state certification produced higher student achievement gains than new teachers who entered the teaching profession from alternative programs (Boyd, Grossman, Lankford, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2006; Darling-Hammond, Holtzman, Gatlin, & Heilig, 2005).

In comparison to suburban and rural schools, students in urban schools with high levels of poverty and high percentages of minority students tended to have new teachers who were not fully prepared and did not have full state certification (Shen, Mansberger, & Yang, 2004; Lu, 2005). These findings reinforced the importance of the goals for the No Child Left Behind Act to have a highly qualified teacher who was fully prepared and certified in every classroom.
**Challenge of Preparation in Classroom Management**

Despite the publicity of the No Child Left Behind Act (2002) and the American public’s concern for teacher preparation because of its impact on the nation’s students, there was little agreement on how and to what extent new teachers should be prepared during their teacher preparation programs in the theory and practice of classroom management so that they would be ready to handle classroom management issues in their first teaching positions. The focus points of much of the research in classroom management were on its importance and on effective classroom management strategies. There was limited research on how to prepare new teachers in classroom management through their teacher preparation programs and on new teachers’ perceptions of how well prepared they were to handle classroom management issues during their first year of teaching. This posed some challenges for this study.

Educators debated exactly what constituted effective classroom management. Was it the dynamics of classroom management? Was it the components of classroom management? Was the quality of teacher-student relationships the key to classroom management? Despite these questions, it was generally agreed that students benefit academically and personally from teachers who were effective classroom managers. “It is one of the classroom teachers most important jobs” (Marzano & Marzano, 2003, p. 6). Of 228 variables studied affecting student achievement, classroom management had the largest effect on student achievement (Wang, Haertel, & Walberg, 1993).

Preparation in classroom management in teacher education programs was an important component for new teachers because “good classroom management is the foundation for quality instruction and student achievement, and it requires an ongoing
process of careful crafting and development through planning, implementation, and maintenance” (Classroom Organization and Management Program, 2006, p. 12).

Statement of the Problem

In the last few years since the implementation of the No Child Left Behind Act (2002), questions concerning new teachers' preparation for the teaching profession and new teachers' classroom management increased among educators, policy makers, researchers, and the American public. All parties wanted a competent teaching force. Researchers tended to approach this situation in several ways. With the implementation of the NCLB, some studies focused on teacher preparation from the standpoint of meeting national and state standards (Cochran-Smith, 2006; Darling-Hammond & Berry, 2006) and others from the standpoint of teachers meeting the highly qualified requirements (U.S. Department of Education, 2002; Lu, 2005). Another dimension of the research on teacher preparation was meeting accreditation standards from the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (Darling-Hammond, 1999). Last of all, research studies on teacher preparation focused on databased findings for program evaluation and improvement (Szabo, Scott, & Yellin, 2002; Meister & Melnick, 2005).

Another set of studies focused on new teacher professional support on the job because it was viewed as a continuation of their teacher preparation from the standpoint of new teacher professional development through induction and mentoring (Breaux & Wong, 2003; Kauchak & Eggen, 2003). Studies indicated that new teacher professional development through induction programs with mentoring transitioned beginning teachers into the ranks of the teaching profession and reduced new teacher attrition by one-third (Ingersoll & Smith, 2003). The importance of this type of professional support for new
teachers was documented in other research studies (Ansell & McCabe, 2003; Freiburg & Driscoll, 2000; Fleming, 2004; Wayne, Young, & Fleischman, 2005).

A number of research studies took the approach that new teachers who were well-prepared for teaching and were well-supported on the job were more likely to be satisfied with their teaching positions. In addition, they were more likely to stay in the teaching profession. Addressing new teacher attrition was important to maintaining a stable teaching force. Studies indicated that nearly one-fourth of new teachers left the profession after two years, and one-third left after three years (Ingersoll, 2002). Various approaches were taken by key researchers on decreasing new teachers' attrition rates and increasing their retention rates (Shen, 1997; Useem & Nield, 2003; Ingersoll & Smith, 2003; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004; Ingersoll & Kralik, 2004).

Finally, there were research studies that examined new teacher preparation from the aspect of classroom management. Those that focused on classroom management found that an effective classroom manager was one of the most important roles for new teachers (Marzano, Marzano, & Pickering, 2003). Researchers examined the theory of classroom management and effective classroom management strategies. Their findings indicated that grade level appropriate effective classroom management could be learned and practiced through teacher preparation programs as well as on the job through new teacher professional development (Emmer, Sanford, Clements, & Martin, 1983; Evertson, Emmer, Clements, & Martin, 1983; Marzano, Marzano, & Pickering, 2003; Meister & Melnick, 2005; Meyers & Williams, 2006).

The research studies examined set a valuable foundation for the development of this
particular study. What previous research studies have not yet studied was the perceptions of new public school teachers’ during their first year of teaching on how well prepared they were to handle a range of classroom management situations. Therefore, this study was an investigation of new teachers and their perceptions of how well prepared they were to handle classroom management situations they encountered during their first year of teaching. In this study, this area was investigated by first determining the percentages of new teachers’ perceptions on their preparation in classroom management. Next an examination of new teachers’ perceptions was conducted by gender, teacher level, and the minority student enrollment. This was followed by the investigation of new teachers’ perceptions on their preparation in classroom management to its relationship to new teachers’ job satisfaction and their commitment to the teaching profession. Considering the role of teacher preparation and classroom management on student achievement and new teacher effectiveness, this research topic was one of growing importance in the educational arena.

Purpose of the Study

This study examined classroom management and discipline from the perspective of new public school teachers’ perceptions. It attempted to contribute to the knowledge base by examining: (a) new teacher preparation; (b) new teacher support on the job through professional development; (c) new teacher job satisfaction; (d) new teacher commitment to the teaching profession; and (f) classroom management and discipline.

First, an inquiry was conducted on the perceptions of new teachers on how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching on classroom management and discipline. The response choices on the Schools and Staffing Survey
Public School Teacher Questionnaire were: (a) not at all prepared; (b) somewhat prepared; (c) well prepared; and (d) very well prepared.

Second, an examination was done on new teachers’ perceptions on how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations to see if they varied by teacher gender, teacher level, and the percentage of minority students enrolled in the school.

Third, an inquiry was conducted on the relationship between new teachers’ perceptions on how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations and their job satisfaction.

Finally, an examination was done on the relationship between new teachers’ perceptions on how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations and their commitment to the teaching profession.

This data allowed the following issues to be addressed: (a) new teachers’ perceptions of how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle classroom management and discipline; (b) teacher factors and minority student percentages associated with new teachers’ perceptions of their preparedness in classroom management and discipline; and (c) new teachers’ job satisfaction and their commitment to the teaching profession.

This study was guided by the following research questions.

Research Questions

Question 1

What were new teachers’ perceptions of how well prepared they were during their
first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations?

Question 2

Did new teachers’ perceptions of how well prepared they were to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations vary by teacher gender, teacher level, and the percentage of minority students enrolled in the school?

Question 3

Were new teachers’ perceptions of how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations related to their job satisfaction?

Question 4

Were new teachers’ perceptions on how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations related to their commitment to the teaching profession?

Significance of the Study

In this study, examining new teachers’ perceptions of how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations portrayed an interesting snapshot of today’s new teachers in their profession. This study was significant for several reasons. First, classroom management and discipline received extensive attention in the educational arena because of the high attrition rate for new teachers, which made it a topic of current concern and research. With more in-depth preparation in classroom management and discipline, new teachers will feel better prepared to manage their classrooms effectively and will experience
success in their profession. Hopefully, this will lead to both increased job satisfaction for
new teachers and a greater commitment to teaching.

Second, new teachers' perceptions were addressed in this study specifically on their
preparation in classroom management and discipline during their first year of teaching.
This has important implications for both teacher preparation programs as they conduct
program reviews and plan for the future as well as school districts as they revise their
professional development programs to support their new teachers.

Third, this study was of value to the K-12 educational community because it used data
from the well-respected national data set, the SASS Public School Teacher
Questionnaire.

Fourth, this was a quantitative study that focused on new teachers in the nation’s
public schools by using nationally collected, representative data.

Finally, this study examined whether new teachers’ perceptions on their preparation in
classroom management varied by teacher gender, teacher level, and the percentage of
minority students enrolled in the school. This section of the study indicated that male and
female teachers had different perceptions on their preparation in classroom management,
which gave insight into the gender perspective on this topic. This study investigated
whether elementary teachers and secondary teachers had different perceptions on their
preparation in classroom management that may indicate a need for appropriate teacher
preparation program adjustments for the respective teacher levels. The study also
examined if new teachers’ perceptions varied based on the percentage of minority
students enrolled in the school. This really meant that new teachers’ perceptions on their
preparation in classroom management and discipline may be different in an urban setting
with a high percentage of minority students from a rural or suburban school setting with a low number of minority students. This section of the study gave insights for preparation and support for new teachers in urban schools and other districts with high numbers of minority students.

Teacher preparation programs may use the results of this study to support the inclusion of a classroom management component in one of their courses or even require a semester course in classroom management as part of their program requirements. In addition, they may use it to provide assistance to pre-service teachers through their cooperating teachers in their school placements and their university field coordinators. They may even consider a university partnership with their new teachers and the local school districts to provide on-the-job support through seminars, networking, and online discussion boards.

School districts that are interested in lowering their new teacher attrition rate and increasing their retention rate may use this study to enhance their new teachers’ support on the job in their district through well developed professional development programs that include a comprehensive new teacher inductions program with strong classroom management, mentoring, and online components. In turn, this may impact the new teachers’ job satisfaction as well as their commitment to the teaching profession.

The findings of this study have the potential to provide data and information to teacher preparation programs, school districts, policy makers, and educational researchers in their future work to improve the programs and the status of new teachers in regards to classroom management and discipline.
Operational Definitions

For the purpose of this study, on new teachers’ perceptions of how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations, the following definitions were used.

Classroom management: Good classroom management implied not only that the teacher elicited the cooperation of the students in minimizing misconduct and intervened effectively when misconduct occurred, but also that worthwhile academic activities were occurring more or less continuously and that the classroom management system as a whole (which included but was not limited to, the teacher’s disciplinary interventions) was designed to maximize student engagement in those activities, not merely to minimize misconduct (Brophy, 1988, p. 3).

Commitment to the teaching profession: The commitment to stay in the teaching profession for the long term. For this study, it was defined in terms of the responses to the SASS Public School Teacher Questionnaire (survey item #61b): How long will you remain in teaching? The response choices were: (a) as long as I am able; (b) until I retire; (c) until something better comes along; (d) definitely will leave teaching; and (f) undecided at this time.

Discipline: Discipline was defined as both a noun and a verb. As a noun, discipline was the set of rules established to maintain classroom order. As a verb, discipline was what teachers do to help students behave acceptably at school (Hardin, 2004, p.4).

Job satisfaction: Job satisfaction referred to a positive feeling of accomplishment on the job. For this study, it was defined in terms of the responses to the following two SASS Public School Teacher Questionnaire survey items (items #59t and #60a). Item
I sometimes feel that it is a waste of my time to try my best as a teacher. The response choices were: (a) strongly agree; (b) somewhat agree; (c) somewhat disagree; and (d) strongly disagree. Item #60a is: If you were to go back to your college days, would you become a teacher again? The response choices were: (a) definitely would become a teacher again; (b) probably would become a teacher again; (c) the odds are even for and against becoming a teacher again; (d) probably would not become a teacher again; and (f) definitely would not become a teacher again.


Percentage of minority students enrolled: The percentage of students enrolled in school based on the school file from the Common Core of Data from 1997-1998 (a universal file of all elementary and secondary schools in the United States) whose race or ethnicity was classified as one of the following: American Indian or Alaska Native; Asian or Pacific Islander; Black; or Hispanic.

Teacher level: This was defined as elementary or secondary teaching levels in the public schools (U.S. Department of Education, 2004).

Conceptual Framework

In this study, the four research questions were answered using the perceptions of new teachers in regards to their preparation in classroom management and discipline. The new teachers’ perceptions of their preparation for the teaching profession provided a framework to examine their preparation in classroom management and discipline through three variables: (a) teacher gender; (b) teacher level; and (c) the percentage of minority students enrolled. This framework also allowed for the investigation of the new teachers’
job satisfaction and their commitment to the teaching profession as it related to classroom management and discipline. Figure 1 provided a visual model for this study.

The four questions for this study were answered. The first question addressed new teachers’ perceptions of how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations. The second question addressed whether new teachers’ perceptions on their preparation in classroom management and discipline varied by teacher gender, teacher level, and the percentage of minority students enrolled. The third question investigated the relationship between new teachers’ perceptions on their preparation in classroom management and discipline with their job satisfaction. The fourth question answered the relationship of new teachers’ perceptions on their preparation in classroom management and discipline with their commitment to the teaching profession.
Conceptual Framework
Teacher Preparation

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework
Strengths and Limitations of this Study

One of the important strengths of this study was that a well-respected national data set was used. The SASS data from the Public School Teacher Questionnaire were based on nationally representative samples of teachers which allowed for national estimates that were used in this study and for generalizations on new teachers’ perceptions on how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations.

Current concerns over new teacher attrition rates focused attention on new teachers’ preparation in classroom management and discipline. This study provided updated information for teacher preparation programs, school districts, policy makers, and educational researchers.

Finally, this study investigated new teachers’ perceptions on their preparation in classroom management and discipline from their teacher preparation programs through their first year of teaching with examination of key characteristics (teacher gender, teacher level, and the percentage of minority students enrolled) as well as job satisfaction and job commitment to the teaching profession. This study provided new information to assist future researchers on the issue of training in classroom management and discipline for new teachers in both their teacher preparation programs and in their support on the job through professional development including new teacher induction programs.

Besides the strengths of this study, there were several limitations. The first was that the data from the SASS Public School Teacher Questionnaire were quantitative. Interviews, classroom observations, focus groups, and other information sources were not used to complete and personalize the new teachers’ perceptions on their preparation in
classroom management and discipline. This quantitative study may have just scratched the surface on this complex study on new teachers.

Second, the variables used in this study were limited to the existing data set in the 1999-2000 SASS Public School Teacher Questionnaire.

Finally, the most recent data from the 2003-2004 SASS Public School Teacher Questionnaire were not available at the time this study was conducted.

Organization of the Study

This study was organized into five chapters. Chapter I was the introduction to this study on new teachers’ perceptions of how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations. It included: (a) the background; (b) the purpose of this study; (c) the research problem; (d) the research questions; (e) the significance of this study; (f) the operational definitions; (g) the conceptual framework; and (h) the last section on the significance and the limitations of this study.

Chapter II was the review of literature. It focused on the following: (a) new teachers’ preparation for the teaching profession; (b) new teachers’ professional support on the job; (c) new teachers’ commitment to the teaching profession; and (d) new teachers’ preparation and perceptions on classroom management and discipline.

Chapter III described the methodology for this study. It included: (a) the research design; (b) the data source; (c) the sample; (d) the instrumentation; (e) the quality of the data; and (f) the data analysis procedures.

In Chapter IV, the data gathered for this study were described and analyzed.

Chapter V detailed the conclusions and the implications of this study.
CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this study was to examine new teachers' perceptions of how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations. New teachers' perceptions were described and then compared using the following characteristics: (a) teacher gender; teacher level; and (c) the percentage of minority students enrolled in the school. Next, an investigation was done on the relationship between new teachers’ perceptions on their preparedness and their job satisfaction. Last of all, the relationship between new teachers’ perceptions on their preparedness and their commitment to the teaching profession was examined.

In this review of literature, existing relevant literature was reviewed related to the following areas in regards to new teachers and what they needed to be well prepared and supported during their first year of teaching including: (a) new teacher preparation; (b) professional support for new teachers; (c) new teacher job satisfaction and commitment to the teaching profession; (d) classroom management and discipline; and (e) new teachers’ perceptions on their preparation in classroom management during their first year of teaching. Table 1 displayed the basic structure of the review of the related literature.

Today's new teachers faced an era in education of challenges generated by the requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act (2002), which mandated a highly qualified teacher in every classroom, and the respective state certification requirements. New teachers met more rigorous professional and content standards than any other generation of new teachers entering the teaching profession.
## Table 1

**The Literature Map**

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They needed to be well prepared to teach a standards-based curriculum to a diverse student population. They needed to integrate knowledge they learned in their teacher preparation programs based on current research with their practice (Adams, Shea, Listen, & Deever, 1998). “Beginning teachers today need a new perspective; one that goes beyond covering the curriculum to actually enabling learning for students who need to learn in different ways” (Darling-Hammond, Bradford, & LePage, 2005, p. 2). They needed a strong confidence level with handling a range of classroom management and student discipline situation in order to have a learning environment where teaching and student learning flourished (Marzano, Marzano, & Pickering, 2003). New teachers required transitioning into the teaching profession with on the job support systems from their school districts and ongoing professional development (Bullough, 1997).

Teacher Preparation

For this study, in order to examine new teachers’ perceptions on their preparation in classroom management during their first year of teaching, it was critical to first review the educational literature on the professional preparation those new teachers received in their teacher preparation program before they signed the contract for their first teaching positions. The type, quality, and depth of new teachers’ preparation were vital elements in determining new teachers’ perceptions during their first year of teaching.

There were many pathways into the teaching profession and multiple providers of teacher preparation. School districts and their students were counting on new teachers to be properly and thoroughly prepared to take on the full range of professional responsibilities that came with a teaching position in this nation’s elementary and secondary schools. For new teachers to be fully prepared to meet their professional
responsibilities as classroom teachers, in all areas including classroom management and discipline, they needed to meet the requirements on the national, state, and university levels. In this first section of the review of literature, the roles of the following in new teacher preparation process were presented: (a) the No Child Left Behind Act (2002); (b) the national professional teaching standards; (c) research on teacher education programs; and (d) new teacher preparation and teaching certification.

The importance of well-designed teacher education programs was critical in the preparation of new teachers for the teaching profession. Current teacher education programs were based on national accreditation standards, current research (content and pedagogical), theoretical foundations, and best practices (Kagan, 1992). According to Wubbels and Leary (1993), no one has demonstrated the best method of preparing teachers for the profession. Research showed that formal educational theories in teacher preparation programs were not enough for today’s pre-service teachers; there was a need for an integrative approach in the programs that connected theory and practice (Stuart & Thurlow, 1999). Darling-Hammond, Bradford, and LePage (2005) indicated that teacher preparation programs needed to be coherent with an idea of what good teaching was, followed by the organization of course work with a blend of theory and classroom experience. They emphasized that the focus needed to concentrate not on format, length or location but on the substance of the program (what teachers needed to learn and how they may best be enabled to learn it). Pre-service teachers needed to learn the core ideas and the broad understanding of teaching to prepare them to be lifelong learners. Students in teacher preparation programs needed to be taught to reflect, evaluate, and learn from their teaching. This will guide them to see teaching as a process and show them the
importance of continually striving for improvement in their teaching. This approach was reinforced in the qualitative research of Szabo, Scott, and Yellin (2002) whose findings showed the critical roles of integration and reflection in the preparation of new teachers.

*No Child Left Behind Act*

Empirical studies and theoretically based research supported the notion that teacher education was complex and they supported the importance of rigorous standards for teacher quality. Federal legislation set the national standard for highly qualified teachers with the *No Child Left Behind Act* (2002). The act required that all teachers must be highly qualified by the end of the 2005-2006 academic year. NCLB relied on teachers’ preparation and qualifications. It defined highly qualified teachers as those who earned at least a bachelor’s degree, met the full state certification requirements, and demonstrated competence in each academic subject taught.

State teaching certification regulations were required to be aligned to meet the mandates of the *No Child Left Behind Act* (2002). *Michigan* was an example of this. It required that the graduates of its teacher preparation programs met the following: (a) a baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution; (b) completion of the elementary program for teachers in grades K-5 (the equivalent of an academic major or minor in elementary education); (c) completion of an appropriate major, minor, and professional program for teachers in grades 6-12; (d) a passing score on the Michigan Basic Skills Test and on the Subject Area Test; and (e) the recommendation for teacher certification by the teacher preparation program (Michigan Department of Education, 2006). For the first time, Michigan published the passing rates for the Michigan Test for State Certification for the teacher preparation programs in the state. The passing rate for thirty
programs was 80% to 96%; there was a 20% failure rate for five programs (Detroit Free Press, 2006). The state superintendent announced plans for the development of a new state process to thoroughly evaluate teacher preparation programs. This was an example of ongoing state reform to meet the federal mandate for highly qualified teachers.

Teacher preparation programs throughout the United States were required to make the necessary program adjustments to meet the mandates of the No Child Left Behind Act (2002) for their graduates to be highly qualified teachers. The importance of those teacher preparation program changes were emphasized by a quantitative study that inquired into teacher quality status based on the definition of NCLB. The study examined the relationship between teacher quality and their preparedness. Teacher Quality and Teacher Preparedness in Public Secondary Schools Evidenced from SASS 1999-2000 (Lu, 2005). It revealed that more than 25% of the secondary teachers surveyed by the School and Staffing Survey’s Public School Teacher Questionnaire were not highly qualified in their main teaching assignment. In the sub-field of science, 54% to 84% of the teachers did not meet the highly qualified requirement. The findings indicated that urban schools and schools with a high percentage of minority students were least likely to have qualified teachers. Shen, Mansberger, and Yang (2004) corroborated these findings in their quantitative study. They found that schools with high levels of student poverty tended to have new teachers who were not fully prepared and did not have full certification. In addition, new teachers’ certification status showed a statistically significant difference among schools with various levels of poverty. The percentage of teachers with no teaching certificate or a lower level teaching certificate increased from 5% in 1987-1988 to 14% in 1999-2000 (Shen & Poppink, 2003) reinforcing the need for
National Professional Teaching Standards

In addition to meeting the mandates of the No Child Left Behind Act (2002), teacher preparation programs were aligned with national professional teaching standards. “Standard setting is at the heart of every profession. The accreditation process is meant to insure that all preparation programs provide a reasonably common body of knowledge and structured training experiences that are comprehensive and current” (Darling-Hammond, 2000, p. 49). The accrediting agency for teacher preparation programs was the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). It was founded in 1954 and currently accredits 623 colleges of education. At its website was the following statement, “The primary purpose of the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education is to ensure high quality teacher education and other educator preparation programs through professional accreditation units in U.S. colleges and universities,” (NCATE, 2006). NCATE was a performance-based system of accreditation for teacher preparation programs with evaluation plans that included valid, reliable assessments with field experience emphasis.

Teacher preparation programs accredited by NCATE completed an institutional report based on the 2002 revised NCATE standards followed by an on-site review from an NCATE Team (NCATE, 2006). The six NCATE standards were: (a) candidate knowledge, skills, and dispositions; (b) assessment system and unit evaluation; (c) field experiences and clinical practice; (d) diversity; (e) faculty qualifications, performance, and development; and (f) unit governance and resources (NCATE, 2006).

Darling-Hammond (1999) documented the value of NCATE accreditation in her
teacher quality study. The findings indicated that the strongest predictor of a state's percentage of well-qualified teachers (teachers with a major and full certification in their field) was the percentage of teacher education institutions in a state that met the national accreditation standards through NCATE.

Teacher preparations programs were also aligned with the five propositions of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS). This board was created in 1987; it was an independent, non-profit organization (NBPTS, 2006). Its mission was to: (a) advance the quality of teaching and learning by maintaining high standards should know and be able to do; (b) provide a national system to certify teachers who meet these standards; and (c) advocate for education reforms. The five NBPTS propositions that teacher education programs used to align their courses for their teaching candidates were: (a) teachers committed to students and their learning; (b) teachers who knew the subjects they taught and how to teach them; (c) teachers who were responsible for managing and monitoring student learning; (d) teachers who thought systematically about their practice and learned from their experience; and (e) teachers who were members of learning communities.

The third organization with significant impact on teacher preparation programs was the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC). Established in 1987, INTASC was designed to help states develop better teachers through coordinated efforts of support and assessment. By 1993, it set standards for new teachers in planning, instruction, and motivation (Kauchak & Eggen, 2005). Their ten principles for teacher education were: (a) knowledge of subject; (b) learning and human development; (c) adapting instruction; (d) strategies; (e) motivation and management; (f)
A new direction for teacher preparation programs began in 2002 with the reform initiative called Teachers for a New Era funded by the Carnegie Corporation and other donors. The intent of the initiative was to establish nationally recognized programs of teacher education. The universities selected were: (a) Michigan State University; (b) Bank Street College of Education; (c) California State University at Northridge; and (d) the University of Virginia. Michigan State University received $5 million over five years to develop a model for preparing high quality teachers. They concentrated on changes in five areas of teacher preparation: (a) design of new content courses that were well integrated into educator courses; (b) overhaul of education course work and teacher education field experiences; (c) development of a two year induction program for new teachers; (d) creation of a new focus on preparing teachers for urban schools; and (e) use of assessments to strengthen the teacher education program (Michigan State University, 2006).

*Research on Teacher Education Programs*

In this era of change, teacher preparation institutions were paying close attention to current data and research findings on new teacher preparation and effective practices to guide their immediate program evaluations and their plans for curriculum changes. In a survey of 2,956 beginning teachers in New York City on their preparedness and personal views on teaching, the findings indicated that new teachers who were prepared in teacher education programs felt significantly better prepared across most dimensions of teaching...
than those who entered teaching from other pathways (Darling-Hammond, Chung, & Frelow, 2002).

In a mixed methods study by professors of program graduates teaching in an urban district, the researchers examined the successes and failures of teacher preparation programs with the intent of program improvement. The findings revealed the importance of: (a) field work; (b) the cooperating teacher; and (c) the integration of theory and practice. Participants suggested the need for stronger components in classroom management and parent communication (Whitney, Golez, Nagel, & Nieto, 2002).

In the qualitative action research study on teacher preparation programs conducted by Szabo, Scott, and Yellin (2002) with twenty-seven pre-service teachers, the findings indicated the importance in teacher preparation programs of nurturing critical thinking by modeling. The second area of importance was engaging pre-service teachers in shared dialogue on their student teaching experience and the theory in their university courses.

In another study on improvement of teacher preparation programs, Meister and Melnick conducted an Internet survey of 273 first and second year teachers on their beginning teacher concerns. The four areas surveyed were: (a) classroom management; (b) time management; (c) communication with parents; and (d) academic preparation. Their findings were: (a) in academic preparation that 75% of the respondents felt that their student teaching experience prepared them well to be an effective teacher; (b) 75% felt that their student teaching experience gave them confidence to succeed in their first teaching job; and (c) 68% felt that their teacher preparation program contained sufficient course work in the content areas. "The findings were clear about teacher preparation programs that new teachers need more direct experience in the school setting and
continued assistance in classroom management, time management, and communication skills" (2005, p. 92).

**New Teacher Preparation and Certification**

Shen and Poppink’s quantitative study (2003) was on new teacher preparation and certification. They studied the national trends in teacher preparation by looking at data from the Public School Teacher Questionnaire, a component of the School and Staffing Survey. Their findings showed that the percentage of teachers certified in their primary teaching assignment decreased from 97% in 1987-1988 to 96% in 1999-2000. In 1987-1988, 5% of new teachers did not have a teaching certificate in their primary teaching assignment; in 1999-2000, 14% of new teachers did not have a teaching certificate in their primary teaching assignment.

Further research on teacher preparation programs by Darling-Hammond (1999) found that teachers who had a greater knowledge of teaching and learning were more highly rated and were more effective with their students, especially at tasks requiring higher order thinking skills. Darling-Hammond, Bradford, and LePage’s book emphasized the importance of making the curriculum in teacher preparation programs more research-based. Their book came after the report, *Preparing Teachers for a Changing World: The Report of the Committee on Teacher Education of the National Academy of Education* (2005). Research-based recommendations were given for the incorporation of core knowledge for beginning teachers into the teacher education curriculum based on a common framework that outlined a set of core ideas for all teacher education programs. The framework was called, Framework for Understanding Teaching and Learning (2005, p. 11).
In the analysis by the American Educational Research Association (AERA) of the empirical research in its *Studying Teacher Education: The Report of the AERA Panel on Research and Teacher Education* (Cochran-Smith & Zeichner, 2005), they concluded that the research on the impact of teacher preparation practices and policies was generally weak and inconclusive. The report called for an extensive new research agenda, better research designs, programs of research, and resources to complete the research. This revealed the growing importance in the educational arena on using research evidence to assess the effectiveness of teacher preparation programs (Cochran-Smith, 2006). This has implications not only for educational research but also for the future of teacher preparation programs.

The educational literature reviewed for this study on teacher preparation reinforced the critical role of this nation’s teacher preparation programs in preparing new entrants into the teaching profession and in determining new teachers’ perceptions of their performance in the classroom management and other professional areas during their first year of teaching based on that preparation.

### Professional Support for New Teachers

After a review of the educational literature on teacher preparation, the next logical step for this study reviewed the literature concerning the ongoing new teacher preparation for their career once they accepted their first teaching position with a school district. The review consisted of an examination of job support through professional development designed specifically for new teachers. This support was important to new teachers’ perceptions of their preparation and performance during their first year of teaching.
With their first teaching positions, new teachers officially began their careers as teaching professionals and their transition from the realm of student interns to the reality of full time teaching with all of its responsibilities. The statistics on new teachers from their ages, regions of highest employment, to their diversity were key indicators for teacher preparation programs. From a quantitative pilot study on new teachers (Cleveland, 2004), the data from the 1999-2000 SASS Public School Teacher Questionnaire indicated that 63% of today's new teachers were under 30 years old with 20% between 31 to 39 and 12% between 40 to 49. The highest percentage of new teachers was employed in the South (38%) followed by the Midwest (22%), the West (20%), and the Northeast (18%). The percentages for the diversity of the new teacher population were: American Indian/Alaska Native, 1%; Asian or Pacific Islander, 2%; Black, 8%; Hispanic, 9%; and White 78%. These national statistics painted an interesting picture of new teachers who entered the teaching profession. The study showed that 26% of the new teachers were over 30 years old (over one-fourth of new teachers entered the profession at a more mature age). For new teachers, the highest hiring patterns were in the southern part of the United States, which meant that new teachers moved from their home state to pursue their teaching careers. At a time when the minority student population of the schools increased, the percentage of non-white teachers was 21%. In the future, teacher preparation programs may look at this statistical area to consider plans for recruitment to increase non-white enrollment in their programs.

New teachers often experienced some problems in their first teaching positions because they received only general training and so were not completely ready for a specific job (Good & Brophy, 2003). Though all school districts were required to meet
their state requirements for induction and mentoring new teachers, how they met those requirements varied from district to district. Well-developed new teacher professional development programs with induction and mentoring systems served as a bridge for new teachers from their university teacher preparation programs to the teaching profession (Charnock & Kiley, 1995). Effective school districts knew the importance of supporting their new teachers through effective professional development because it increased their new teachers’ opportunities for success in teaching (Gilbert, 2005).

New Teacher Induction

Professional development for all teachers was a life-long learning and improvement process. The key component for new teachers in their professional development and support was the induction program. Induction was “the process of preparing, supporting, and retaining new teachers. It is a structured training program that begins before the first day of school and continues for two or more years” (Breaux & Wong, 2003, p. 5). Comprehensive induction programs were an important investment in maintaining qualified teachers and stabilizing the future of school districts. They acquainted new teachers to the district’s philosophy, mission, and policies as they improved the effectiveness of new teachers through training in classroom management and teaching strategies. Induction was not an interchangeable term with orientation or mentoring. Both orientation and mentoring were important components of the induction process. The orientation section of the induction program welcomed new teachers to their school; it familiarized them with the policies and procedures of their new place of employment. Often new teachers were paired with experienced teachers who served as their professional partners or mentors. This provided personal, one-on-one support for each
new teacher. “Ideally, mentors not only provided emotional support but also support in planning, conducting lessons, and assessing student learning” (Kauchak & Eggen, 2003, p. 500).

Induction programs with mentoring can reduce new teacher attrition by almost one-third (Ingersoll & Smith, 2003). In fact, the U.S. Department of Education stated that successful induction programs shared the following characteristics: (a) special attention was given in the beginning years of their career to help them link their performance to state and district standards; (b) mentors for beginning teachers were compensated for their work and were trained to be effective mentors; (c) new teachers received assistance and support with everyday problems and were encouraged to develop reflective practice; and (d) teacher preparation programs collaborated with schools to create clinical learning environments for new teachers (1998, p. 17).

Research on Induction Programs

Professional development for new teachers through induction programs needed to be built on a research-based framework (Freiburg & Driscoll, 2000). In addition, new teachers needed release time for professional learning (Sparks, 1998) that strengthened the concept of schools as learning communities (Senge, 2001).

Smith and Ingersoll (2004) in their quantitative study using the SASS Public School Teacher Questionnaire data found that 4 out of 10 new teachers participated in a teacher induction program in 1990-1991; about 5 out of 10 new teachers participated in a teacher induction program in 1993-1994. These findings showed that the percentage of new teachers that participated in a teacher induction program increased from 40% in 1990-1991 to 60% in 1999-2000, which was a significant increase in new teacher participation.
in teacher induction programs. These findings did not indicate the quality, depth, or length of the teacher induction programs for the new teacher respondents. In their study, Smith and Ingersoll also showed that new teachers who had a mentor in the same subject field and who participated in collaborative induction activities were less likely to move to other schools and less likely to leave teaching after their first year. In other words, new teacher participation in a teacher induction programs accompanied by having a mentor in the same subject field had a positive impact on new teacher retention.

Only 1% of new teachers received the comprehension induction package according to the Alliance for Excellent Education (2004). A report by the U.S. Department of Education claimed this comprehensive induction package was extremely critical in the professional support of new teachers and made it a part of its study on new teachers, which will be complete in 2008 (Wayne, Young, & Fleischman, 2005). This study will analyze data from a powerful national data source. The study was scheduled to randomly assign schools to treatment and control groups. The treatment groups will receive: (a) a comprehensive induction program with a reduced number of course preparations; (b) a helpful mentor in the same field; (c) a seminar tailored to the needs of beginning teachers; (d) strong communication with administrators; and (e) time for planning and collaboration with other teachers (p. 76). The control group will receive only the normally provided new teacher induction program.

Research consistently supported the need for systematic induction of new teachers (Breaux & Wong, 2003). By 2004, 16 states required and funded teacher induction programs for new teachers (Ansell & McCabe, 2003). Five state models for new teacher induction programs were: (a) California’s Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment
Program; (b) Connecticut’s Beginning Educator Support and Training Program; (c) Louisiana’s Teacher Assistance and Assessment Program; (d) Ohio’s Formative Induction Results in Strong Teaching Program; and (f) Texas’ Beginning Educator Support System Program.

There was no one perfect model for new teacher induction programs but there were common components that were a part of most successful induction programs. The six components recommended by the Alliance for Teacher Education (2004) were: (a) orientation program; (b) a quality, structured mentoring with common planning time; (c) intensive and ongoing professional development; (d) external network of teachers; and (e) standards-based evaluations.

Comprehensive new teacher induction programs, as part of new teachers’ professional development, impacted the attrition rate of new teachers. An example of this can be seen in Louisiana’s Lafourche Parish Public Schools, which had a nationally recognized new teacher induction program. It was called the Framework for Inducting, Retaining, and Supporting Teachers’ Program. It included a well-planned mentoring component with a strong emphasis on classroom management and instructional strategies. Lafourche Parish Public Schools began collecting data in 1996 when this new teacher induction program began. The findings indicated the decline in the new teacher attrition rate from 53% in 1995-1996 to 7% in 2000-2001 (Lafourche Parish Public Schools, 2006).

In a quantitative study on new teacher induction programs in Arizona (Horn, 2000), 197 public schools districts were surveyed; 137 of those districts had new teacher induction programs with 34 of the districts having a systematic program for new teachers. Horn indicated that the top four supported goals in the new teacher induction programs.
were: (a) classroom management and discipline; (b) culture; (c) knowledge; and (d) teaching strategies.

In a qualitative study with new teachers on their new teacher induction programs (Fleming, 2004), the findings indicated new teachers needed induction programs that were well-organized, planned, and based on adult learner characteristics. The new teacher induction programs needed to include the following: (a) orientation; (b) mentoring; (c) classroom management; and (d) instructional strategies that increased student achievement. In another qualitative study, West analyzed interviews with 20 new teachers (2004) and showed three areas that needed improvement for new teacher induction programs: (a) a formally assigned mentor; (b) a scheduled time for the principal to meet with the new teachers individually; and (c) release time provided for new teachers to observe veteran teachers.

In a study on new teacher induction in six Georgia school districts (Gilbert, 2005) in which all the school districts were partners in the Georgia Systematic Teacher Education Program, new teachers were surveyed in 2003 with 140 respondents and in 2004 with 222 respondents. In 2003, the respondents indicated that the five most valued strategies in the new teacher induction program were: (a) giving new teachers the opportunity to observe other teachers while they were teaching; (b) assigning mentors; (c) providing feedback based on classroom observations; (d) providing co-planning time with other teachers; and (e) assigning new teachers smaller classes. In 2004, the survey respondents indicated the same five strategies in the new teacher induction program except in a different order. Since four of the five strategies concentrated on new teachers working with their teaching colleagues, the research indicated the importance of supporting new
teachers through collaboration with their mentors and other teachers in the process of the new teachers’ professional development through their induction programs.

*Mentoring in New Teacher Induction*

Not every school district’s approach to their professional development for their new teachers through their new teacher induction program included a mentoring component. For the school districts that did include mentoring in the new teacher induction process, they set the protocol for their mentors in regards to selection, training, responsibilities, time commitment, evaluation, and financial reimbursement. Mentoring required time and expertise on the part of the experienced teachers who volunteered to support new teachers in their schools. Currently, only five states paid mentors for the time they spent working with new teachers in their districts (Ansell & McCabe, 2003). Mentors were used to help new teachers in a variety of ways such as to provide one-on-one support or as academic coaches to assist with curriculum.

Beginning in 2003, the School District of Philadelphia used mentors as academic coaches in a school district initiative to support all new teachers (Useem & Neild, 2005). The district adopted the in-class model from Johns Hopkins University Talent Development Program, which stressed that the coaches be matched to the subject area and the grade level. Coaches helped in whatever area the new teachers needed. This form of mentoring had a positive impact on new teacher retention in Philadelphia (Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). The percentage of new teachers who completed their first year of teaching rose from 73% in 2002-2003 to 91% in 2003-2004 (p. 44) as a result of the district’s new support initiatives for its beginning teachers.
Two research studies both linked mentoring of new teachers with their retention. The first study, (Smith & Ingersoll, 2004) found that new teachers who had mentors in the same subject field and other induction activities were less likely to move from their schools and less likely to leave teaching after their first year. The second study confirmed that new teachers who had mentors were more likely to stay in their school district (Lopez, Lash, Schaffner, Shields, & Wagner, 2004).

Ingersoll and Kralik were commissioned by the Education Commission of the States to conduct a comprehensive and critical review of the empirical studies in the field on new teacher induction and mentoring. Only ten studies met the criteria of the Education Commission of the States (2004, pp. 5-13). They were: (a) the California Mentor Teacher Induction Project; (b) the New York City Retired Teachers-as-Mentors Program; (c) the Toronto Teacher-Peer Support Program; (d) the Mentoring Program in an unspecified district; (e) the Montana Beginning Teacher Support Program; (f) the Texas Study of New Teacher Retention; (g) an analysis of the 1993 Baccalaureate and Beyond Longitudinal Survey; (h) an Analysis of the 1999-2000 Schools Staffing Survey; and (i) the Texas Beginning Educator Support Systems. “All ten studies reviewed provided some empirical support for the claim that assistance for new teachers, in particular teacher mentoring programs, had a positive impact on new teachers and their retention” (p. 14).

Support through Technology

Today’s new teachers were technologically savvy. In their teacher preparation programs, they had a variety of technology-based learning experiences from online discussion boards, Internet research, and educational websites to complete online courses. New teachers were comfortable with using technology for professional online support. It
interested them because it was readily accessible. Online support provided professional contact and assistance on a twenty-four basis; it overcame the barriers of time and distance. It was also convenient and flexible.

DeWert, Babinski, & Jones' Lighthouse Project provided online collaborative consultation in professional, practical, social, and emotional support to beginning teachers. It was a mixed methods study. The participants were twelve first year teachers. The consultants were four experienced teachers and eight teacher education program faculty members. The findings from the study indicated that the new teachers perceived that "an online support community was an effective means of providing social, emotional, practical, and professional support to beginning teachers" (2003, p. 319).

The Michigan Department of Education provided funding to Michigan State University for the development of a new online professional program to support new teacher induction. The program was called, Advocating Strong Standards-based Induction Support for Teachers (ASSIST). The goal was to provide high quality induction resources and tools that supported the development of highly qualified new teachers (ASSIST, 2006). The website tools were research-based. Modules were provided in classroom management, instructional strategies, student assessment and other areas. A discussion forum was provided for the new teachers to ask questions and to discuss their professional issues. No research studies have been conducted yet on this program.

The University of Illinois created the Novice Teacher Support Project that allowed new teachers to receive e-mentoring from veteran teachers across the state (Breaux & Wong, 2003). Online support for new teachers has tremendous potential for teacher preparation programs, school districts, and most importantly for new teachers. It was not
a replacement for a comprehensive new teacher induction program for school districts but it was a convenient and cutting-edge professional support for new teachers in this technological age.

New Teachers’ Job Satisfaction and Commitment

If new teachers were well prepared for their first year of teaching and had strong professional support on the job through a comprehensive induction program, they were more likely to enjoy teaching and want to stay in the profession at the conclusion of their first year (Breaux & Wong, 2003). Their job satisfaction was the critical link between their teacher preparation from their education programs, their classroom experience teaching their students, and their career decision to remain in teaching. “Teacher job satisfaction depended on a complex mixture of internal attributes and external conditions” (McCann, Johannessen, & Ricca, 2005, p. 34).

The decision to remain in teaching after their first year, to take a teaching position in another school, or to leave the teaching profession was a personal choice with an impact on new teacher attrition and retention. In fact, experts on new teacher attrition and retention emphasized that the absence of support was cited as a key reason for new teachers leaving the profession over pay and job conditions (Joftus, 2002). Smith and Ingersoll indicated that schools could have a positive impact on how their new teachers feel about their teaching positions. Their findings showed that “well-conceived and well-implemented teacher induction programs were successful in increasing job satisfaction for new teachers” (2004, p. 684).

The review of literature in regards to ongoing preparation for new teachers on their first teaching jobs was important for this study. It showed the valuable role of continued
education for new teachers during their first year of teaching to provide professional transitioning period into teaching. It took new teachers’ preparation into the professional ranks; provided on-the-job support; and impacted new teachers’ perceptions of their preparation and performance in classroom management and other areas of teaching.

Job Satisfaction

After the review of educational literature on professional support of new teachers, a key question came to mind that led to the next step in the literature review process. If new teachers received quality training in their teacher preparation programs especially in classroom management and if they received professional support during their first year of teaching, were new teachers satisfied with their teaching positions? This question directed the review of literature on new teachers’ job satisfaction.

In the quantitative pilot study on new teachers using data from the 1999-2000 SASS Public School Teacher Questionnaire (Cleveland, 2004), the findings indicated that new teacher job satisfaction was shown on the survey through the new teachers’ responses in several important areas. Only 2% of the new teachers surveyed would not become a teacher if they could begin their college classes again with 51% responding that they certainly would go into teaching again and 25% responded they probably would go into teaching again. In regards to general job satisfaction with their teaching positions, 53% of the new teachers were satisfied; 35% were somewhat satisfied; and 3% were not satisfied at all with their teaching positions. When asked in the survey if they felt that trying their best as a teacher was a waste of time, a mere 4% felt that it was while 64% felt that it was definitely not a waste of their time to try to do their best as a teacher. In regards to new teachers’ commitment to the teaching profession, the pilot study found that 50% plan to
stay in teaching as long as they are able with 14% planning to stay in teaching until they retire; 3% plan to leave teaching as soon as they can. The data on new teachers’ satisfaction with their teaching salaries showed that 32% were not satisfied with their teaching salary, 9% were satisfied, and 30% were somewhat satisfied. The data from this pilot study was very interesting in light of the national statistics on teacher attrition and retention. New teachers may not be satisfied with their teaching salaries but only 2% indicated that they definitely would not go into teaching again and 3% plan to leave teaching as soon as they can. There was a strong message in these percentages about new teachers’ job satisfaction and their commitment to the teaching profession. They liked teaching and they wanted to stay in teaching yet nearly 25% of new teachers left within their first two years in the teaching profession, 33% after three years (Ingersoll & Smith, 2002), and 50% after five years (Ingersoll & Smith, 2003). In 1999-2000, approximately 500,000 new teachers left the profession with 125,000 attributing departure to a lack of appropriate support (Ingersoll, 2002). The high attrition rate was a national concern for educators.

Attrition and Retention

Shen’s quantitative study (1997) examined teacher attrition and retention from the 1990-1991 Schools and Staffing Survey and the 1991-1992 Teacher Follow-up Survey. He used two approaches in this study. The first was a multivariate approach, which inquired into a set of variables simultaneously to explain why teachers choose to stay or leave the teaching profession. The second was a bivariate approach that inquired into the relationship between retention, attrition and another variable. This study combined the strengths of the two approaches. The findings were: (a) teachers with less experience
(new teachers) tended to move or leave; (b) the amount of salary was positively correlated with teacher retention; (c) appreciation of the intrinsic merits of teaching helped teachers remain in the profession; (d) empowering teachers was also associated with teacher retention; (e) teachers' moving and leaving behaviors were more associated with poor schools with more free lunch and a higher percentage of minority students; and (f) the locale of the school was not associated with teachers' retention and attrition.

One study on teacher retention looked at characteristics of teachers and their teaching assignments to identify predictors of retention (Boe, Bobbitt, Cook, Whitener, & Weber, 1996). Their findings indicated that the teachers who were most likely to remain in teaching are 39-55 years of age, married with dependent children, placed in a full time position for which they are highly qualified, and receiving a competitive salary.

Retaining New Teachers

Lowering the new teacher attrition rate and retaining new teachers were both very important to school districts for many reasons. “School improvement efforts required a reasonable degree of staff stability; it was almost impossible to create change with a transient, inexperienced staff” (Useem & Neild, 2005, p. 44). Replacing new teachers was expensive. A Texas study on new teacher attrition (Berry, 2004) identified an annual state budget cost of between $329 million and $2.1 billion based on an annual statewide 15% turnover rate of new teachers. Rest and Hulin (1998) estimated that each new teacher that left the profession within the first three years of teaching costs tax payers at least $50,000. per teacher. Though estimates vary, the point was that replacing new teachers costs school districts a significant amount of money.
The Philadelphia School District set teacher recruitment and new teacher retention as top priorities in 2002. In the 2002-2003 school year, 73% of new teachers completed their first year of teaching. In the following school year, 93% of new teachers completed their first year of teaching for a 20% increase in new teacher retention (Useem & Neild, 2004). New research-based strategies were used to support their new teachers including an in-class coach/mentor for each new teacher. The positives of this type of mentoring were supported by research (Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). Philadelphia introduced a core curriculum, intensified new teacher induction, and partnered with two teacher preparation programs for professional support for their new teachers. The district improved working conditions with smaller class sizes and stronger disciplinary policies (Useem & Neild, 2004).

In their analysis of the data from the 1999-2000 Schools and Staffing Survey, Ingersoll and Smith (2003) focused on the effects of new teacher participation in various mentorship and induction activities on the turnover rate of first year teachers. The findings showed that having a mentor in the same field reduced the risk of leaving at the end of the first year by approximately 30% while having a mentor outside the teacher's field did not lower the likelihood of leaving significantly. They also indicated that few of the induction related activities and practices operated in isolation. The attrition rate was approximately 20% for the new teachers who did not participate in any induction related activities or practices. It was 12% for the new teachers who had three induction components: (a) a mentor in their field; (b) common planning time; and (c) collaboration on instruction. The attrition rate was 11% for the new teachers who had an induction program with six components; the three additional ones were: (a) a seminar for new
teachers, (b) regular administrative support, and (c) a formal induction program. The attrition rate was the lowest, 7% for new teachers who participated in a comprehensive induction program with eight components; the two additional components were an external network of teachers and a reduced number of course preparations. Ingersoll and Kralik (2004) in their study on new teacher induction and mentoring commissioned by the Education Commission of the States found in the ten empirical studies they reviewed that there was a positive impact on new teachers and on their retention if they had professional assistance on the job especially a mentor in the same field.

The present and the future of the public education system in the United States depends on teacher preparation programs preparing pre-service teachers in theory and practice to handle the rigors and demands of the teaching profession as well as school districts transitioning their beginning teachers into the ranks of the teaching profession with staff professional development programs that included a comprehensive induction program. Both the teacher preparation programs and the school districts needed strong program components in classroom management to set the new teachers “up for success” in their classrooms during their first year of teaching. The review of literature on new teachers’ job satisfaction indicated that new teachers, who were well prepared for their teaching positions and were professionally supported on the job, were confident in their classroom management skills. They were also successful in their classroom teaching, satisfied with their teaching jobs, and were committed to stay in the teaching profession.

Classroom Management and Discipline

After reading the educational literature on new teacher preparation, professional support for new teachers, and new teachers’ job satisfaction and their commitment to the
teaching profession, it was critical in the last section of the literature review to
concentrate on the educational literature on classroom management and discipline. For
current classrooms, it was important that new teachers were well prepared in handling a
range of classroom management and discipline situations. Both classroom management
and discipline went hand-in-hand in the preparation of pre-service teachers and in the
support of new teachers. The terms were often used interchangeably. For this study,
classroom management was viewed as a system of management skills (Brophy, 1983)
used to manage the classroom environment (Danielson, 1996). The Brophy definition
was the most accurate support for this study:

Good classroom management implies not only that the teacher has elicited the
cooperation of the students in minimizing misconduct and can intervene effectively
when misconduct occurs, but also that worthwhile academic activities are occurring
more or less continuously and that the classroom management system as a whole
(which includes, but is not limited to, the teacher’s disciplinary interventions) is
designed to maximize student engagement in those activities, not merely to minimize
misconduct (1983, p. 5).

For this study, discipline was viewed as a dimension of classroom management but
not as an interchangeable term with classroom management. The Hardin approach on
discipline was the most appropriate for this study. Hardin defined discipline as both a
noun and a verb “As a noun, discipline was defined as the rules established to maintain
classroom order. As a verb, discipline was defined as what teachers do to help students
behave acceptably in school” (2004, p. 4)
New Teacher Preparation on Classroom Management

One of the most important roles in the classroom for new teachers today was that of a classroom manager (Marzano, Marzano, & Pickering, 2003). Effective classroom management can be learned and pre-service teachers in their teacher preparation programs and in their field experiences can practice the strategies. Emmer, Sanford, Clements and Martin (1983) and Evertson, Emmer, Sanford, Clements, and Martin (1983) were among those who documented the impact of teacher training in classroom management techniques on both the elementary and secondary levels. Borg and Ascione’s (1982) research study also concentrated on training teachers in classroom management techniques. Their findings indicated that new teachers improved their use of these techniques when compared to a group of untrained teachers.

In a study of teacher education programs by Vocke and Wesley (1992), the findings indicated that 111 colleges and universities reported that 36% of the programs offered separate courses in classroom management. Meister and Melnick, in their quantitative study, found that 20% of the students surveyed felt unprepared in classroom management. They recommended more extensive training in classroom management in teacher preparation programs with the development of a proactive philosophy of classroom management. In Cleveland’s pilot study on new teachers, the findings from the 1999-2000 SASS Public School Teacher Questionnaire (2004), indicated that new teachers had definite perceptions of how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching in classroom management. These included: (a) 5% felt they were not well prepared; (b) 36% felt they were somewhat prepared; (c) 38% felt they were well prepared; and (d) 5% felt they were very well prepared. These percentages have a strong
implication for the need for a classroom management component in teacher preparation programs.

Szabo, Scott, and Yellin (2002) integrated classroom management and a field study experience with twenty-seven pre-service teachers in the quantitative study in their teacher preparation program. The findings indicated that integration of classroom management theory with the field experience was very successful with pre-service teachers. In Jackman’s study (2003), the researcher investigated the effectiveness of applied and integrated behavior management training on graduate students in a teacher preparation program. Both groups attended seminars on effective behavior management but only one group developed a classroom management plan. The findings showed that the teachers who developed a classroom management plan and applied the behavior management strategies were more effective in the classroom. This study indicated the importance for teacher preparation programs to include a course or a component on classroom management with the possible development of a classroom management plan.

Meyer and Williams (2006) researched whether to integrate or to separate the classroom management component in teacher preparation programs at two midwestern teacher education universities. Their mixed methods research study was conducted with pre-service teachers. At University #1, the 67 participants were enrolled in a semester long course on classroom management. At University #2, the 150 students were enrolled in a general education course with classroom management embedded. “The results represented by the quantitative data clearly showed that the students participating in the semester long class on classroom management felt more comfortable overall when asked to describe their comfort level with the listed scenarios” (p. 14). The researchers
recommended that teacher preparation programs require a semester long course on classroom management for their pre-service teachers to help them be successful in the classroom.

Coronado (2005) conducted a quantitative study of 138 new teachers to examine new teachers’ perceptions of how well prepared they felt they were to teach. They planned to use the findings to improve the teacher education program at Texas A & M International University. The findings indicated that new teachers felt prepared in lesson planning but only somewhat prepared in classroom management. The study provided evidence that two areas for improvement in the teacher education program were in classroom management and special education.

Research on Classroom Management

Classroom management was identified by the national Gallup polls as one of the most challenging problems for today’s teachers (Rose & Gallup, 2002). Charles and Charles (2004) compared it to managing a theatrical production with the teacher in charge of the entire show.

Fritz Redl and William Wattenburg in Mental Hygiene in Teaching (1951) examined group management in the classroom. They studied group dynamics in the classroom including: (a) how student groups behave differently from individuals; (b) student roles; and (c) human approaches to positive relationships with students. “They were the first to suggest that group behaviors differed from individual behaviors and that the influence of group dynamics must be considered in creating an effective classroom management plan” (Hardin, 2004, p. 7).
Jacob Kounin (1970) was the first to study the characteristics of classroom management. He analyzed videotapes of 40 first and second grade classrooms. He coded the behaviors of the teachers and the students. Kounin investigated the effects of classroom procedures and activities. He identified teachers, who were successful classroom managers as those who “produced a high rate of work involvement and a low rate of deviancy in the academic setting,” (Kounin, p. 63). His research identified several key elements of classroom management. They were: (a) withitness, an awareness of what is going on in all parts of the classroom; (b) smoothness and momentum during lesson presentations; (c) group alerting, letting students know what is expected of them; (d) overlapping, dealing with more than one issue at a time; (e) ripple effect; (f) desists, actions and words to stop misbehavior; and (g) programming, providing lesson variety. “Kounin’s research changed the way teachers thought about classroom management by moving the focus on disciplining students to creating and maintaining a classroom environment that supported learning” (Hardin, p. 9).

In 1976, Evertson and Brophy reported the findings of their study on classroom management in Learning from Teaching: A Developmental Perspective. Their sample included two groups of elementary teachers. Their findings indicated that classroom management was one of the most critical aspects of teaching. In addition, their findings supported the research on classroom management approach developed by Kounin.

In the late 1970s, the Research and Development Center for Teacher Education at the University of Texas conducted four significant studies on classroom management. The first study involved twenty-seven third grade teachers and their classrooms (Emmer, Evertson, & Anderson, 1980). The researchers recorded the behaviors of the teachers and
the students from the first day of school through the academic year. The findings indicated that attention to classroom management at the beginning of the school year was important to a well-run classroom. They also found that teachers who were strong classroom managers did the following: (a) analyzed the classroom tasks; (b) taught going to school skills; (c) monitored student behavior; and (d) took the student’s perspective.

The second study examined the effective behaviors of junior high school teachers and their classrooms (Emmer & Evertson, 1982). The findings showed that effective classroom managers did the following in their junior high classrooms: (a) explained rules and procedures; (b) monitored student behavior; (c) held students accountable; (d) communicated effectively; (e) organized instruction; (f) had smooth transitions; and (g) facilitated purposeful activities that led to student success.

The third and fourth studies were in the elementary school setting and the junior high school setting respectively. Emmer, Sanford, Clements, and Martin (1983) reported the elementary school findings. Emmer, Sanford, Evertson, Clements, and Martin (1983) reported the junior high school findings. The results of these studies indicated that teacher training in classroom management led to changes in teacher behaviors that were associated with improved student behaviors.

The Classroom Strategy Study (Brophy & McCaslin, 1992) on classroom management involved interviews and observations that presented vignettes of students in specific situations. One of the key findings was that effective classroom managers used different types of strategies with different types of students. Ineffective classroom managers used the same strategies regardless of the situation or the type of student.
A comprehensive study by Wang, Haertel, and Walberg (1993) combined the results of three previous studies. The first study involved a content analysis of 228 variables that were identified as having an impact on student achievement. The second study involved a survey of 134 experts in education who rated the 228 variables. The third study involved an analysis of 91 major research syntheses. The findings indicated that classroom management was rated first for its impact on student achievement. This clearly showed the importance of effective classroom management.

In 2003, Marzano, Marzano, and Pickering published *Classroom Management that Works: Research-Based Strategies for Every Teacher*. They conducted research in classroom management with meta-analysis on more than 100 studies. Meta-analysis quantitatively combined the results from the studies selected. This research technique allowed the researchers to construct generalizations. Their findings indicated that the quality of teacher-student relationships was the key for all other aspects of classroom management. Teachers who had high quality relationships with their students had 31% fewer classroom management and discipline problems.

*Research-based Model*

The research on classroom management showed studies and strategies for effective classroom management followed by a variety of models for classroom discipline but only one research-based model of classroom management. The classroom management model was Classroom Organization and Management Program (COMP). This model approached classroom management as a system of management skills that start with preparation before the academic year and continued throughout the school year. “The systematic approach creates a positive social and emotional climate stemming from good
interpersonal relationships between the teacher and the students as well as among the students” (Hardin, p. 8).

COMP was based on the classroom management research of Dr. C. Evertson and her colleagues. Dr. C. Evertson and Dr. A. Harris developed the program. “It incorporated the findings of twelve research studies in grades K-12 over fifteen years with over 4,000 hours of observation in 581 classrooms in 100 schools (Evertson, 1995; Evertson & Harris, 1999). The research base provided credibility to this classroom management model. Since 1989, COMP was implemented in more than 6,200 schools in the United States. It was a collaborative model with a theoretical base in social and developmental psychology. The goal was to help teachers improve their classroom management skills and their instructional skills through planning, implementing, and maintaining effective classroom practices. It was an inquiry-based staff development program for teachers that provided six to eighteen weeks of in-service training. The seven components of the program were: (a) organizing the classroom; (b) planning and teaching rules and procedures; (c) managing student work and improving student accountability; (d) managing good student behavior; (e) planning and organizing instruction; (f) conducting instruction and maintaining momentum; and (g) getting the year off to a good start (COMP, 2006).

During the training, teachers analyzed their classroom practices and examined the effectiveness of their efforts. The textbooks used for the training were: Classroom Management for Elementary Teachers (Evertson et al, 2003) and Classroom Management for Secondary Teachers (Emmer et al, 2003). COMP had four principles that guide the program. They were: (a) effective classroom management means
preventing problems; (b) management and instruction are integrally related; (c) students were active participants in the learning environment and (d) professional collaboration supported changes in professional practice (COMP, p.1). Research studies on COMP indicated the program increased student engagement, increased student achievement on standardized tests, decreased student disruptions, and increased the teacher participants’ use of the effective classroom management practices they learned in their training (Evertson, 1995).

Though there was extensive research in classroom management, the amount of research did not reflect the number of research-based classroom management models in practice today in the nation’s classrooms. This was an area for further development for theorists, researchers, and teacher preparation programs for the future.

New Teachers’ Perceptions on Classroom Management

In summary, studies reviewed confirmed the importance of teacher preparation programs and on the job support for new teachers through professional development to provide confidence in their perceptions on how they handle classroom management and discipline. However, at the time of this review of literature, there were no research studies on new teachers’ perceptions on how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations based on teacher gender, teacher level and the percentage of minority students enrolled. Nor were there any studies connecting new teacher job satisfaction and their commitment to the teaching profession to the new teachers’ perceptions on their preparation in classroom management. Since these research areas were not been studied, they were addressed in this study through the following research questions.
1. What were new teachers’ perceptions of how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations?

2. Did new teachers’ perceptions of how well prepared they were to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations vary by teacher gender, teacher level, and the percentage of minority students enrolled in the school?

3. Were new teachers’ perceptions of how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations related to their job satisfaction?

4. Were new teachers’ perceptions of how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations related to their commitment to the teaching profession?

In Chapter III, the methodology for this study was described.
CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

New teachers’ perceptions of how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations were examined in this study. First, new teachers’ perceptions of their preparedness to develop classroom management and discipline practices were studied from data extracted from the 1999-2000 Public School Teachers Questionnaire (PSTQ) of the School and Staffing Survey (SASS) sponsored by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) of the U.S. Department of Education and conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau. Second, the new teachers’ perceptions of their preparedness in classroom management and discipline were analyzed using the following characteristics: (a) teacher gender; (d) teacher level; and (c) the percentage of minority students enrolled in the school. Third, the relationship between new teachers’ perceptions of their preparedness in classroom management and discipline and their job satisfaction were investigated. Fourth, the relationship between new teachers’ perceptions of their preparation in classroom management and discipline and their commitment to the teaching profession were examined.

The survey data from the Public School Teacher Questionnaire were from a national, quantitative survey and contained a representative sample of the elementary and secondary teachers in the U.S. public schools. I used a survey research design for this study. “The survey is a quantitative or numeric description of trends, attitudes, or opinions of a population by studying a sample of that population” (Creswell, 2003, p. 154). The purpose of survey research design was to provide a “collection of information from a sample and then generalize it to a larger population” (Patten, 2002, p. 31).
In this chapter on methodology, this study included the following: (a) the data source; (b) the sample; (c) instrumentation; (d) quality of the School and Staffing Survey data; and (e) the data analysis.

The SASS data set was selected as the method of data collection for the following reasons. First, the data were based on a nationally representative sample of teachers in the United States. Second, the SASS data set was an important data source on teachers, their preparation, perceptions, certification, and other important survey information. Third, SASS was the most extensive survey in the country on elementary and secondary public school teachers. Fourth, the data came from a geographically diverse sample. Fifth, SASS data were reported as statistical summaries so that the individuals could not be identified. Sixth, the SASS data set had the following characteristics: (a) it was quantifiable; (b) objective; (c) systematic; (d) used a comprehensive range of measures; (e) used a large sample size; and (f) could be used for national estimates because it was based on a nationally representative sample of teachers (U.S. Department of Education, 2000).

Research Questions

1. What were new teachers’ perceptions of how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations?

2. Did new teachers’ perceptions of how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations vary by teacher gender, teacher level, and the percentage of minority students enrolled in the school?

3. Were new teachers’ perceptions of how well prepared they were to handle a range
of classroom management and discipline situations related to their job satisfaction?

4. Were new teachers’ perceptions of how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations related to their commitment to the teaching profession?

Data Source

The data for the study were extracted from the 1999-2000 Public School Teacher Questionnaire of the School and Staffing Survey. It was one of six integrated components of the 1999-2000 SASS, a national survey of K-12 education. The six components were: (a) School District Survey; (b) Principal Survey; (c) School Survey; (d) Teacher Survey; (d) School Library Media Survey; and (e) Teacher Follow-up Survey.

In 1985, the NCES reviewed its data system on elementary and secondary schools, which was a number of separate surveys on schools and schools personnel. (U.S. Department of Education, 2004). It re-designed its survey system and the School and Staffing Survey was the result. The NCES conducted the first SASS in 1987-1988. It was conducted every three years since then with the exception of 1996-1997 (due to inadequate funding). SASS was a major source of educational data on a broad range of teacher qualifications measures, such as educational backgrounds, teaching credentials, and teaching assignments. As a national survey, it was a powerful data source. The most recent SASS was conducted during the 2003-2004 academic year; the data were not available at the time this study was underway. Future rounds of the Schools and Staffing Survey were planned for four-year intervals.

A longitudinal (trend) study was not possible on new teachers’ perceptions on how
well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations because this data were not available on the SASS Public School Teacher Questionnaire prior to 1999-2000. All SASS questionnaires underwent a content re-design for 1999-2000. This was the first year the NCES expanded the data collection on teachers to include: (a) teachers’ perceptions; (b) teacher preparations; (c) teacher induction; (d) organization of classes; (e) professional development; and (f) the use of computers.

I was not involved in the design or the administration of the SASS Public School Teacher Questionnaire for this study. Instead, I used the existing the national data from SASS. This type of data was referred to as secondary data.

Sample

Characteristics of the Sample

The population for the SASS Public School Teacher Questionnaire included public school teachers throughout the United States who were regular full-time and part-time teachers assigned to teach kindergarten through twelfth grade. The sampling frame for the public school teachers’ sample was the Common Core of Data school file from 1997-1998, which was a universal file that included all elementary and secondary teachers in the United States. The sample design for the PSQT met the objectives for SASS by providing estimates of teacher characteristics by the nation, the state, the region, and the school level. It also worked to balance the requirements of the sample teachers surveyed.

For this study, only new public school teachers were used. In SASS, new teachers were defined “as those in their first, second, or third year of teaching” (U.S. Department of Education, 2005).
Sampling Selection and Design

The schools in the SASS sample submitted lists of the teachers who taught in the respective schools. The National Center for Education Statistics mailed the teacher list forms at the beginning of the 1999-2000 school year. Selection of schools was first, followed by their school districts. Then the NCES selected a sample of teachers from each sampled school. To make sure that the samples contained sufficient numbers for estimation, SASS used a stratified probability sample design. Unlike a simple random sample design, there was not an equal probability of selection for all public school teachers. The stratified probability design sample used different sample rates across different states that led to different probabilities of selection.

After SASS stratified and sampled the schools, it stratified and sampled the teachers within the schools based on their characteristics. To obtain a suitable teacher sample, SASS selected schools with a probability proportionate to the square root of the number of teachers. SASS sampled the teachers within the schools at a rate that made the overall selection probability approximately constant within strata, subject to the constraints of sampling at least one and no more than twenty teachers per school (U.S. Department of Education, 2004). This was considered a stratified random sampling.

Sampling Weight

SASS weighted the samples to approximate the population, making the sample nationally representative of public school teachers. The sample involved stratification, a disproportionate sampling of certain strata, and clustered probability sampling. The initial samples that resulted were not representative of the public school teaching force. Through weighting, the findings were generalized to the national population of new
public school teachers. The weighting procedures used in the PSTQ had three purposes: (a) to take account of the school’s selection probabilities; (b) to reduce biases that may result from non-unit response; and (c) to make use of available information from external sources to improve the precision of sample estimates (U.S. Department of Education, 2005).

The weighted sample size was 42,086. The actual or unweighted sample size of the sub-group of new teachers was 6,705. It was necessary to use relative weights in the data analysis in order to approximate the population and to adjust to the actual sample size. Due to the fact that this study examined new teachers’ perceptions of how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations, only new teachers numbers were reported. The weighted and unweighted samples were displayed in Table 2.

Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher Samples</th>
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<tr>
<td>Unweighted</td>
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<tr>
<td>Weighted</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Instrumentation

The 1999-2000 SASS Public School Teacher Questionnaire was a voluntary mail survey conducted with a sample of K-12 teachers in the United States. The survey was in the public domain. Sample copies of the PSTQ were available at the NCES website or through the U.S. Department of Education. The data collection for this round was

The 1999-2000 SASS was the largest, most extensive survey of K-12 school districts with nine sections and 362 questionnaire items. The U.S. Census Bureau conducted it by the authority of Section 405 (b) of the National Statistics Act of 1994 as amended (20 USC 9003). Teacher response was voluntary.

SASS was revised regularly. There were four stages of testing conducted in preparation for the 1999-2000 SASS. The first stage was in 1995 with cognitive interviews on the public school teacher questionnaire. The second stage was in 1997 when SASS conducted cognitive interviews and a split-level test. The third stage was the spring 1998 Field Test with a sample size of 571 and a response rate of 56.7%. The findings resulted in changes on the 1999-2000 School and Staffing Survey.

The 1999-2000 re-designed questionnaire continued to measure teacher shortage and demand, characteristics of elementary and secondary teachers, and teacher work place conditions. The questionnaire deleted information on the number and types of undergraduate classes taken and the break in teacher service.

The 1999-2000 teacher questionnaire expanded data collection on teacher preparation, induction, organization of classes, and professional development (U.S. Department of Education, 2005). The data were only reported in statistical summaries so that individuals could not be identified. The 1999-2000 PSTQ response rates were 81.2% (unweighted), 83.1% (weighted), and 76.6% (weighted overall response rate). The respondents in the large sample used allowed for disaggregation of data according to characteristics of teachers.

Researchers, teacher professional organizations, educational advocacy groups,
legislators, and others interested in education in the United States used data from the PSTQ. The data were extremely useful for researchers as they conducted their own focused studies on teachers, in part because it provided data on the national level and the state level.

The data from the PSTQ were available in an abridged form called public-use data and in restricted-use data. The public-use data were available to researchers and the general public. SASS removed all the state identifiers and stratum codes to protect the confidentiality of the participants. The restricted-use data required that interested researchers obtain a license from the NCES. It allowed for researchers to link data across the SASS areas.

For the 1999-2000 PSTQ, the U.S. Census Bureau did the data collection. They sent advance letters to the sampled local education authority officials and schools in August and September (respectively) with a follow-up post card. They contacted the sample teachers by mail in four waves: (a) 49% of the surveys were mailed in December, 1999; (b) 39% in January, 2000; (c) 5% in February; and (d) 7% in March. The cover letter to the questionnaire explained the following: (a) the survey was conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics of the U.S. Department of Education; (b) the purpose was to obtain information about teachers; (c) only a sample of teachers was used in the survey so that individual responses represented many other teachers; and (d) how the survey was to be returned by mail in the envelope provided to the U.S. Census Bureau (U.S. Department of Education, 2005).

The non-response follow-up began with a reminder post card four weeks after the initial mailing. They sent a second copy of the survey six weeks after the reminder post
card. A second reminder post card followed within a week. The survey mailed in March received a post card reminder. For the remaining non-responding teachers, they used the Computer Assisted Telephone Interviews.

Once the U.S. Census Bureau received the completed survey forms, their staff entered responses into electronic data files, which were checked against the survey forms for accuracy. Each survey form was coded according to its status. They removed identifying information (such as names and schools) from the file to protect the confidentiality of the participants. The staff used a school identification number to connect teacher and principal data to the respective school’s data. Only users with official clearance have access to the data files that allowed analysis to connect sampled schools, teachers, or principals to their districts (U.S. Department of Education, 2005).

The U.S. Census Bureau conducted the data processing. They used Imaging Technology to capture the data. The staff coded each questionnaire according to its status followed by a preliminary determination of each case’s interview status. They conducted a computerized pre-edit followed by a second computer edit that included a range check, a consistency check, and a blanking check. Next was the assignment of the final interview status edit.

The following federal laws protected the confidentiality of all participants and their individually identifiable information: (a) the National Education Statistics Act, 1994; (b) the Computer Security Act, 1987; and (c) the Public School Reform Act, 2002. Violation of these federal laws was a felony punishable by up to five years in prison and a fine up to $250,000.

For the purpose of this study, items were used from the following sections of the
PSTQ: (a) Section II on Certification and Training; (b) Section VII on Decision Making; and (c) Section VIII on General Employment. Section II provided information on teacher preparation, teaching levels (elementary and secondary), and teachers’ perceptions on how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching. Section VII provided information on teachers’ job satisfaction and their commitment to the teaching profession. Section VIII provided general employment information such as gender and racial background.

The first research question used data on the new teacher respondents’ perceptions about how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations from the survey section “perceptions of the preparation of the first year of teaching” (Item #21a). The survey used a Likert scale (1-4 scale) for this response. The PSTQ Item #21 included teachers’ perceptions on their preparedness in regards to seven variables during their first year of teaching. Classroom management and discipline situations were the first of the seven variables. The entire question was displayed in Table 3.

Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Not at all prepared</th>
<th>Somewhat prepared</th>
<th>Well prepared</th>
<th>Very well prepared</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Use a variety of instructional materials?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3 - continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3. Teach your subject matter?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Use computers in classroom instruction?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Plans lessons effectively?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Assess students?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Select and adapt curriculum materials?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The second research question used survey items to see if new teachers’ perceptions on how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations varied by: (a) teacher gender; (b) teacher level; and (c) the percentage of minority students enrolled in the school. The t-test for Independent Samples was applied to new teachers’ perceptions of their preparedness in classroom management to compare the means of each of the three areas of study. The gender responses were male and female. The teacher level responses were re-coded into two levels: elementary and secondary. The percentage of minority students enrolled was re-coded into two levels: 0-49% and 50% and above. This question was displayed in Table 4.
Research Question 2: Did New Teachers’ Perceptions Vary by Teacher Gender, Teacher Level, and the Percentage of Minority Students Enrolled?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Elementary</th>
<th>Secondary</th>
<th>Minority students 0-49%</th>
<th>Minority Students 50% plus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New teachers’ perceptions on preparedness in classroom management and discipline</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The third research question investigated the relationship between new teachers’ perceptions on how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations with their job satisfaction. The two items used on the new teachers’ job satisfaction both required responses on the Likert scale (1-5 scale). Item #61a stated, “If you were to go back to your college days and start over, would you become a teacher?” This question is displayed in Table 5. The second teacher satisfaction survey item was #59t, “I sometimes feel it is a waste of my time to try to do my best as a teacher.” It was one of eleven responses under Item #59. This question with several of those response areas (including 59t) was displayed in Table 6.
Table 5
PSTQ Item 61a: If You Could Go Back to Your College Days, Would you become a Teacher Again?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Certainly would become a teacher again</th>
<th>Probably would become a teacher again</th>
<th>Chances are even for and against becoming a teacher again</th>
<th>Probably would not become a teacher again</th>
<th>Certainly would not become a teacher again</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If you were to go back to your college days…</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6
PSTQ Item 59t: Do You Agree or Disagree with Each of the Following Statements?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Somewhat agree</th>
<th>Somewhat disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>n. Staff members are recognized for a job well done.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>q. I am satisfied with my class size.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t. I sometimes feel it is a waste of my time to try to do my best as a teacher.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The fourth research question examined the relationship between new teachers’ perceptions on how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching with their commitment to the teaching profession. The item used on new teachers’ commitment to the teaching profession was PSTQ Item # 61b, “How long do you plan to remain in
teaching?” This item response was on the Likert scale (1-5 scale). This question was displayed in Table 7.

Table 7

PSTQ Item 61b: How Long Do You Plan to Remain in Teaching?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>As long as I am able</th>
<th>Until I am eligible for retirement</th>
<th>Continue unless something better comes along</th>
<th>Definitely plan to leave teaching as soon as I can</th>
<th>Undecided at this time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Length in teaching</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The PSQT items that were used for the purposes of this study were outlined in Table 8. They were all taken from the 1999-2000 survey. The research questions were:

1. What were new teachers’ perceptions of how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations?

2. Did new teachers' perceptions on how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations vary by teacher gender, teacher level, and the percentage of minority students enrolled in the school?

3. Were new teachers' perceptions of how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations related to their job satisfaction?

4. Were new teachers' perceptions of how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations related to their commitment to the teaching profession?
Table 8
Research Questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Research Question 1</th>
<th>Research Question 2</th>
<th>Research Question 3</th>
<th>Research Question 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New teachers’ perceptions on their preparedness in classroom management and discipline</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher level</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Minority students enrolled</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waste of my time to try my best as a teacher (job satisfaction)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would become a teacher again (job satisfaction)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How long the new teacher will remain in teaching (commitment to the teaching profession)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Quality of the SASS Data

The National Council for Education Statistics had documentation of validity and reliability for the questionnaire items on the 1999-2000 SASS Public School Teacher Questionnaire. Since the major purpose of the NCES was to measure information in the field of education, they took steps in the preparation of each administration of the survey to produce valid and reliable results. They reviewed each round for necessary expansion, retention, or deletion of survey items included in the previous survey.

Rudestam and Newton stated, “validity indicates that a measure in fact measures what it purports to measure,” and “reliability refers to the ability of a measure to produce consistent results” (2001. p. 82). Since the PSTQ was not a test instrument, item response rates were the measure of item validity collected by the NCES. The item response rates were in the Data File Users’ Manual. The NCES used cognitive interviewing to test the validity of new items that were under revision. The cognitive interviews allowed the NCES the opportunity to gain insight into how potential respondents thought about answering survey questions. Since the interviews were limited to a few participants, the NCES did not generalize to the entire population. Another measure of validity was the overall unit response rate.

The NCES measured reliability on the PSTQ through a second administration of some of the survey items to the same respondents. This estimated simple response variance. It measured the consistency in response between the original survey and the re-interview. The NCES did this for new and revised items. Items that were administered for some time were not tested each time. Inconsistency or high response
variance indicated one of the following: (a) a data problem with the design of the question; (b) a data problem with the nature of the data collected; or (c) the presence of a bias in the data. The 1999-2000 SASS re-interview program consisted of administering a subset of 57 questions to a subset of public school teachers that originally responded to the survey. The re-interview response rate was 70.5%.

Pearson's Correlation Coefficient provided a measure of data reliability for continuous variables of the 57 questions, 44% showed high response variance; 42% showed moderate response variance; and 14% showed low response variance.

Before each administration of the Public School Teacher Questionnaire of the SASS, the NCEA took the appropriate steps to promote valid and reliable results. For the 1999-2000 survey, they conducted four stages of preparation beginning in 1995 with twenty cognitive interviews to evaluate the format of the 1993 survey and to identify problematic questions. The interviews were tape-recorded followed by written summaries of the interviews.

The second stage was in 1997 with three waves of twenty cognitive interviews followed by a split-level test in October with five hundred schools. There was no statistical difference between the two formats used. The NCES adopted the revised version for the 1999-2000 survey.

The NCES then field-tested the revised survey in spring, 1998 with completion of the data collection in May. The sample size was 550 with a 70% response rate and 11 follow up interviews.

The NCES conducted a second field-test in the fall, 1998 with data collection completed in January, 1999. The sample size was 571 with 56.7% response rate.
After the two field tests, the NCES made appropriate changes in the survey.

Since the items response rates were the measure of item validity for the NCES in the PSTQ, it was important to use the definition in the NCES Data File Users' Manual (p. 9) for the weighted response rates "the number of in-scope responding questionnaires divided by the number of in-scope sample cases, using the basic weight (inverse of the probability of selection) of the record". For the 1999-2000 survey, teachers could only be selected from those schools that returned the Teacher Listing Form. For the 1999-2000 PSTQ, the response rates were: (a) 81.2% (unweighted); (b) 83.1% (weighted); and 76.6% (weighted overall).

Data Analysis

The data analysis, in this study, involved using descriptive statistics and inferential statistics corresponding with the four research questions. The section presented four analyses of new teachers' perceptions on how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations using the 1999-2000 SASS Public School Teacher Questionnaire. The focus of the analysis of each research question differed in what it brought to the study of new teachers' perceptions on their preparedness in classroom management and discipline. Relative weights were used when the frequency analysis and the Pearson Product Correlations were conducted.

Research Question 1

The first question was, what were new teachers' perceptions of how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations? The percentages of how new teachers
perceived their preparation in classroom management were identified and described. New teachers were asked to respond with one of the following response choices: (a) not at all prepared; (b) somewhat prepared; (c) well prepared; and (d) very well prepared. Descriptive statistics were applied to identify the percentages of the new teachers' perceptions through frequency analysis. Relative weights were used when conducting the frequency analysis. The question used from the PSTQ was Item #21a, “In your first year of teaching, how well prepared were you to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations?” The responses were interval data on a 1-4 Likert scale. This question was displayed in Table 9.

Table 9

Research Question 1
In your first year of teaching how well prepared were you to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Not all prepared</th>
<th>Somewhat prepared</th>
<th>Well prepared</th>
<th>Very well prepared</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In your first year of teaching, how well prepared were you to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Research Question 2

The second question was, did new teachers' perceptions of how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations vary by teacher gender, teacher level, and the percentage of minority
student enrolled in the school? The hypothesis was, there was no difference in the means of new teachers’ perceptions of how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations between teacher gender, teacher level (elementary and secondary) and the percentage of minority students enrolled in the school.

Inferential statistics were used in the analysis of the second research question. The t-test for Independent Samples was used to compare the means of new teachers’ perceptions on how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations based on the following variables: (a) teacher gender; (b) teacher level (which was re-coded into elementary and secondary); and (c) the percentage of minority students enrolled in the school (which was re-coded into two levels, 0 to 49% and 50% and above). The significance level was set at .05. Relative weights were not used when the T-test for Independent Samples were conducted. The data on new teachers’ perceptions on their preparedness were interval data (on the Likert scale). The data on the variables of teacher gender, teacher level, and the percentage of minority students enrolled in the school were nominal data. This enabled me to understand the differences that existed in new teachers’ perceptions on their preparedness in classroom management and discipline when their gender and school characteristics were taken into consideration. This question was displayed in Table 10.
Table 10

Research Question 2
Did new teachers’ perceptions of how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations vary by teacher gender, teacher level, and the percentage of minority students enrolled in the school?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Elementary</th>
<th>Secondary</th>
<th>Minority students, 0-49%</th>
<th>Minority students, 50% plus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New teachers’ perceptions on their preparedness in classroom management</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Research Question 3

The third question was, were new teachers’ perceptions of how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations related to their job satisfaction? The null hypothesis was that there was no relationship between new teachers’ perceptions on how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations and their job satisfaction.

Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the third research question. The Pearson Product Correlation was used to investigate the relationship between new teachers’ perceptions on how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations and new teachers’ job satisfaction. “In a simple correlational study, two quantitative variables are measured and

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the degree of relationship between them is determined by a correlational coefficient” (Patton, 2002, p. 33).

In a direct correlation, high scores on one variable tend to have high scores on the other variable that was analyzed; the correlation coefficient ranged from 0.00 (no relationship) to 1.00 (perfect, direct relationship). The data on new teachers’ perceptions of how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations were interval data (on the Likert scale). The data on job satisfaction from PSTQ Item #59t and Item# 60a were interval data on the Likert scale. Item #59t was, “I sometimes feel it is a waste of my time to try to do my best as a teacher”. The response choices are: (a) strongly agree; (b) somewhat agree; (c) somewhat disagree; and (d) strongly disagree. This item was displayed in Table 11.

Item #60a was, “If you were to go back to your college days and start over would you become a teacher again?” The response choices were: (a) certainly would become a teacher again; (b) probably would become a teacher again; (c) chances are even for and against becoming a teacher again; (d) probably would not become a teacher again; (e) certainly would not become a teacher again. This was displayed in Table 12.

Table 11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PSQT Item 59t: I sometimes feel it is a waste of my time to try my best as a teacher.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Item #59t</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I sometimes feel it is a waste of my time to do my best as a teacher.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 12
PSQT Item 61a
If you could go back to your college days, would you become a teacher again?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item #61a</th>
<th>Certainly would become a teacher again</th>
<th>Probably would become a teacher again</th>
<th>Chances are even for and against becoming a teacher again</th>
<th>Probably would become a teacher again</th>
<th>Certainly would not become a teacher again</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If you were to go back to college, would you become a teacher again?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Research Question 4

The fourth research question was, did new teachers’ perceptions on how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations relate to their commitment to the teaching profession?

Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the fourth research question. The Pearson Product Correlation were used in this analysis to investigate the relationship between new teachers’ perceptions on how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations with their commitment to the teaching profession. The data on new teacher’s perceptions and on their commitment to the teaching profession (Item #61b on the PSTQ) were interval data. Item #61b is, “How long do you plan to remain in the teaching profession?” The response
choices are: (a) as long as I am able; (b) until I am eligible for retirement; (c) will
probably continue unless something better comes along; (d) definitely plan to leave
teaching as soon as possible; and (e) undecided at this time. This was displayed in Table
13.

The null hypothesis was that there was no relationship between new teachers’
perceptions on how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a
range of classroom management and discipline situations and their commitment to the
teaching profession.

Table 13

PSQT Item 61b
How long do you plan to remain in teaching?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item #61b</th>
<th>As long as I am able</th>
<th>Until I am eligible for retirement</th>
<th>Will probably continue unless something better comes along</th>
<th>Definitely plan to leave teaching as soon as I can</th>
<th>Undecided at this time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How long do you plan to remain in teaching?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 14

Research Questions and Their Data Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Question</th>
<th>Data Analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. What were new teachers’ perceptions of how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations?</td>
<td>Descriptive statistics (frequency analysis)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Did new teachers’ perceptions of how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations vary by teacher gender, teacher level, and the percentage of minority students enrolled in the school?</td>
<td>Inferential statistics (t-test for Independent Samples)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Were new teachers’ perceptions of how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations related to their job satisfaction?</td>
<td>Descriptive statistics (Pearson Product Correlation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Were new teachers’ perceptions of how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations related to their commitment to the teaching profession?</td>
<td>Descriptive statistics (Pearson Product Correlations)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data analysis for this study was presented in Chapter IV.
CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

In this study, I examined new teachers’ perceptions of their preparation in classroom management. An analysis of new public school teachers was completed to determine their perceptions of how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management situations. The perceptions of new teachers were then compared using teacher gender, teacher level, and the percentage of minority students enrolled in the school. Next the relationship, between new teachers’ perceptions on their preparedness in classroom management and two areas, job satisfaction and commitment to the teaching profession, were examined. In this study, I employed both descriptive statistics and inferential statistics in the data analysis. An alpha level of .05 was used for all inferential procedures. In this chapter, I presented the results of these analyses. The presentation of the results was organized based on the research questions accordingly.

Research Questions

1. What were new teachers’ perceptions of how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations?

2. Did new teachers’ perceptions of how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations vary by teacher gender, teacher level, and the percentage of minority students enrolled in the school?
3. Were new teachers' perceptions of how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations related to their job satisfaction?

4. Were new teachers' perceptions of how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations related to their commitment to the teaching profession?

Research Question 1

What were new teachers' perceptions of how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations?

For the first research question in this study, I used data from the 1999-2000 SASS Public School Teacher Questionnaire to examine the percentage of new teachers' perceptions of how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations. The four response choices for the new teachers were: (a) not prepared; (b) somewhat prepared; (c) well prepared; and (d) very well prepared. The percentages of new teachers' perceptions on their preparation in classroom management were identified and described with the use of descriptive statistics. I used relative weight when conducting the frequency analysis. The results indicated that the percentages of new teachers' perceptions of how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations were: (a) 19.9% very well prepared; (b) 38.5% well prepared; (c) 36.4% somewhat prepared; and (d) 5.2% not prepared. The results were illustrated in Table 15. For a graphic view of Research Question 1, see Appendix B.
Table 15

Percentages of New Teachers’ Perceptions on Their Preparation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Percentage of not prepared new teachers</th>
<th>Percentage of somewhat prepared new teachers</th>
<th>Percentage of well prepared new teachers</th>
<th>Percentage of very well prepared new teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New teachers’ perceptions of how well prepared they were during their first year to handle classroom management</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>36.4</td>
<td>38.5</td>
<td>19.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Research Question 2

Did new teachers’ perceptions of how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations vary by teacher gender, teacher level, and the percentage of minority students enrolled in the school?

For Research Question 2 in this study, I investigated new teachers’ perceptions of how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations to see if the new teachers’ perceptions on their preparedness in classroom management varied by teacher gender, teacher level, and the percentage of minority students enrolled in the school. I used inferential statistics for the data analysis on this question. I employed a t-test for Independent Samples to compare the means on new teachers’ perceptions on their preparation in classroom management based on each of the following three areas: (a) teacher gender; (b) teacher level; and (c)
the percentage of minority students enrolled in the school. The significance level was .05.

“A t-test is a statistical test that determines whether a mean difference is statistically significant” (Suter, 2006, p. 435).

**Teacher Gender**

Since this research question addressed whether new teachers’ perceptions of how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations varied by teacher gender, a t-test for Independent Samples was applied to compare the means and to examine the significance level (at the .05 level).

The results of the t-test for Independent Samples revealed that the mean for new male teachers’ perceptions of how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations was 2.7049 and the mean for new female teachers’ perceptions was 2.6802. Though the mean for new male teachers’ perceptions on their preparedness in classroom management was higher than new female teachers’ perceptions, the difference between the means was quite small. It was not statistically significant and the practical significance was limited. This was illustrated in Table 16. For a graphic view of Research Question 2, see Appendix B.

Table 16

**New Teachers’ Perceptions Based on Teacher Gender**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>Df</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New teachers’ perceptions</td>
<td>2.7049</td>
<td>.82908</td>
<td>2.608</td>
<td>.81982</td>
<td>1.125*</td>
<td>.261</td>
<td>6366</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Equal variance assumed.
Teacher Level

For the second part of Research Question 2, I examined whether new teachers’ perceptions of how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations varied by teacher level (elementary and secondary). I applied a t-test for Independent Samples to compare the mean of the new elementary teachers’ perception on their preparedness in classroom management during their first year of teaching to the mean of the new secondary teachers’ perceptions on their preparedness.

The results of the t-test for Independent Samples indicated the mean for new elementary teachers’ perceptions of how well prepared they were during their first year to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations was 2.7520 and the mean for new secondary teachers’ perceptions was 2.6556. The results revealed a statistically significant difference in the means between new elementary teachers and new secondary teachers. Though the difference in the means revealed that new elementary teachers perceive themselves to be better prepared during their first year of teaching in classroom management than their secondary counterparts, the practical significance was limited since the difference in the means was quite small. This was illustrated in Table 17. For a graphic view of Research Question 2, see Appendix B.
Table 17

New Teachers’ Perceptions Based on Teacher Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>Df</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New teachers’ perceptions</td>
<td>2.752</td>
<td>.80087</td>
<td>2.656</td>
<td>.83230</td>
<td>4.488*</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>4533.11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Equal variance not assumed.

Minority Student Enrollment

In this section of Research Question 2, I examined whether new teachers’ perceptions of how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations varied by the percentage of minority students enrolled in the school. The percentage of minority students was recoded into two categories: (a) 0 to 49%; and (b) 50% and above. I applied a t-test for Independent Samples to compare the mean of new teachers’ perceptions on their preparedness in classroom management in Group 1, who were in schools with a minority student enrollment of 0 to 49%, to Group 2, who were in schools with a minority enrollment of 50% and above.

The results of the t-test for Independent Samples revealed that the mean of new teachers’ perceptions of how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching in classroom management in Group 1 (minority student enrollment of 0 to 49%) was 2.7101. The mean for Group 2 (minority student enrollment of 50% and above) was 2.6357. The test results showed that there was a statistically significant difference in the perceptions of new teachers’ preparation in classroom management between Group 1 and
Group 2. Though the results showed that new teachers who were in schools with a minority student population of 0 to 49% perceive themselves to be better prepared during their first year of teaching in classroom management than their counterparts in Group 2 with a minority student population of 50% and above, the practical significance of the results was limited due to the small difference in the means between the two groups. This was illustrated in Table 18. For a graphic view of Research Question 2, see Appendix B.

Table 18
New Teachers’ Perceptions Based on Minority Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Group 1 (0 to 49%)</th>
<th>Group 2 (50% and above)</th>
<th>t-test for Independent Samples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New teachers’ perceptions</td>
<td>Mean 2.7101</td>
<td>Mean 2.6357</td>
<td>T 3.294*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Standard Deviation .81783</td>
<td>Standard Deviation .83214</td>
<td>p .001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Df 3504.09</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Equal variance not assumed.

Research Question 3

Were new teachers’ perceptions of how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations related to their job satisfaction?

For Research Question 3, I investigated the relationship between new teachers’ perceptions on how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations and their job satisfaction.

Descriptive statistics are used in the data analysis. I used the Pearson Product Correlation to investigate the relationship. “In a simple correlational study, two quantitative variables are measured and the degree of relationship between them is determined by a correlation coefficient” (Patten, 2002. p.33). The correlation coefficient ranges from −1.00 to +1.00.
with 0.00 indicating that there is no relationship between the variables. "The correlation coefficient is a statistical index of the degree of linear relationship between two measures revealing its strength and direction" (Suter, 2006, p. 428). In a direct correlation, high scores on one variable tend to have high scores on the other variable that was analyzed.

The independent variable was new teachers' perceptions during their first year of teaching on their preparation in classroom management. The dependent variable was new teacher job satisfaction. The two items from the SASS Public School Teacher Questionnaire used for new teachers' job satisfaction were Item 61a and Item 59t. Item 61a stated, "If you were to go back to your college days and start over, would you become a teacher?" The response choices for Item 61a were: (a) certainly would become a teacher again; (b) probably would become a teacher again; (c) chances are even for and against becoming a teacher again; (d) probably would not become a teacher again; and (e) certainly would become a teacher again. Item 59t stated, "I sometimes feel it is a waste of my time to try to do my best as a teacher". The response choices were: (a) strongly agree; (b) somewhat agree; (c) somewhat disagree; and (4) strongly disagree.

The results of the Pearson Product Correlation indicated that the correlation coefficient between new teachers' perceptions on their preparation during their first year of teaching in classroom management and their job satisfaction with Item 61a was .162 and their job satisfaction with Item 59t is .172. Since a correlation was significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed), there was a statistical significance that indicated a relationship between new teachers' perceptions on their preparation during their first year of teaching in classroom management and their job satisfaction as defined by Items 61a and 59t on
the SASS Public School Teacher Questionnaire. The correlation coefficient was low so the correlation was not a strong one. Therefore, no strong conclusion was made regarding the relationship between new teachers’ perceptions during their first year of teaching on their preparation in classroom management and their job satisfaction. This was illustrated in Tables 19 and 20 respectively.

Table 19

New Teachers’ Perceptions and Job Satisfaction, Item 61a

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correlations</th>
<th>Preparation in classroom management</th>
<th>Would be a teacher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preparation</td>
<td>Pearson Corr.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>6368</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would be</td>
<td>Pearson Corr.</td>
<td>.162**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a teacher</td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>6368</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 20

New Teachers’ Perceptions and Job Satisfaction, Item# 59t

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correlations</th>
<th>Preparation in classroom management</th>
<th>Agree-waste of time to try my best</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preparation</td>
<td>Pearson Corr.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>6368</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree-waste of time</td>
<td>Pearson Corr.</td>
<td>.172**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>6368</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
Research Question 4

Were new teachers' perceptions of how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations related to their commitment to the teaching profession?

To investigate the fourth research question, I used descriptive statistics. The Pearson Product Correlation were used to examine the relationship between new teachers’ perceptions of how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations and new teachers’ commitment to the teaching profession. The independent variable was new teachers’ perceptions of how well prepared they were in during their first year of teaching in classroom management. The dependent variable was new teachers’ commitment to the teaching profession. Item # 61b on the SASS Public School Teacher Questionnaire provided the data on new teachers’ commitment to the teaching profession. Item #61 b stated, “How long do you plan to remain in the teaching profession?” The response choices were: (a) as long as I am able; (b) until I am eligible for retirement; (c) will probably continue unless something better comes along; (d) definitely plan to leave teaching as soon as possible; and (e) undecided at this time.

The results of the Pearson Product Correlation indicated that the correlation for the relationship between new teachers’ perceptions on their preparation during their first year of teaching in classroom management and new teachers’ commitment to the teaching profession was 0.160. Since the correlation was significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed), there was a statistical significance that indicated a weak relationship between new teachers’ perceptions on their preparation in classroom management and new teachers’
job satisfaction. The correlation was low so the correlation was not considered significant. This meant that the study did not find a significant relationship between new teachers’ perceptions on how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching and new teachers’ commitment to the teaching profession. This was illustrated below in Table 21.

Table 21

New Teachers’ Perceptions and Commitment to Teaching

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correlations</th>
<th>Preparation in classroom management</th>
<th>Remain in teaching</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preparation</td>
<td>Pearson Corr. Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>6368</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remain in</td>
<td>Pearson Corr. Sig. (2 tailed)</td>
<td>.115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>teaching</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).**

Chapter Summary

In this study, I examined new teachers’ perceptions on how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations. First, I examined the percentage of new teachers’ perceptions on how well prepared they were in classroom management. The study indicated that 5.2% of the new teachers perceived that they were not prepared in classroom management and 36.4% perceived that they were somewhat prepared. Only 5.2% of the new teachers perceived that they were very well prepared during their first year to handle classroom management situations with 38.5% indicating they were well prepared in classroom management.
Second, I investigated whether new teachers' perceptions of how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations varied by teacher gender, teacher level, and the percentage of minority students enrollment in the school. The study revealed that new teachers' perceptions on their preparation in classroom management varied in all three areas: (a) teacher gender; (b) teacher level; and (c) the percentage of minority students enrolled. The mean for new male teachers' perceptions on their preparation in classroom management was greater than the mean of new female teachers' perceptions on their preparation. The mean for new elementary teachers' perceptions on their preparation in classroom management was greater than the mean of the new secondary teachers' perceptions of their preparation. Finally, the mean for the perceptions of new teachers on their preparation in classroom management who were in Group 1 with the lower percentage of minority student enrollment was greater than the new teachers' perceptions on their preparation who were in Group 2 (with 50% and more minority student enrollment). Though a statistically significant difference in the means was found for each of the three factors, the difference in the means between the two groups was small and did not meet the standard set for this study for significance.

Third, I examined the relationship between new teachers' perceptions on how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations and their job satisfaction. The results of the Pearson Product Correlation indicated that there was a relationship between new teachers’ perceptions on their preparation in classroom management and their job satisfaction with a statistically significant correlation coefficient for both items used from
the SASS Public School Teacher Questionnaire for job satisfaction (Items #61a and 59t). However, the correlation coefficients were low. Therefore, no strong conclusion can be made regarding the relationship between new teachers’ perceptions during their first year of teaching in classroom management and their job satisfaction.

Finally, the study indicated that no strong conclusions can be made regarding the relationship between new teachers’ perceptions on how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management situations and their commitment to the teaching profession. Through the data analysis, the correlation coefficient for the Pearson Product Correlation was statistically significant but it was low so no strong conclusions can be made about the relationship.

Overall, the results of the percentages of new teachers’ perceptions on how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching in classroom management showed that 41.6% of the new teachers in this study perceived that they were either not prepared or only somewhat prepared during their first year of teaching to handle classroom management situations. Although the mean of new teachers’ perceptions of how well prepared they were in classroom management varied by teacher gender, teacher level, and the percentage of minority student enrollment, the difference in the means were not practically significant and did not allow strong conclusions to be made. While this study indicated a relationship between new teachers’ perceptions of their preparation in classroom management and their job satisfaction, the correlation coefficient, though statistically significant, was not high. So, no strong conclusions can be made on the relationship. Last of all, the study indicated a relationship between new teachers’ perceptions on their preparation in classroom management and their commitment to the
teaching profession. The correlation coefficient was statistically significant but not high. Therefore, no strong conclusions can be made on the relationship between new teachers' perceptions during their first year of teaching on their preparation in classroom management and their commitment to the teaching profession.

The discussion, the implications of this study derived from the findings, and the conclusion will be presented in Chapter V.
CHAPTER V
CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This chapter contained a summary of new K-12 public school teachers’ perceptions of their preparation to handle classroom management and discipline situations. The findings of this study were both consistent with and challenged previous research findings related to new teacher preparation and classroom management. Implications of this study were discussed and recommendations were provided for future research.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to examine new teachers’ perceptions on how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations. Data were used from the 1999-2000 Schools and Staffing Survey Public School Teacher Questionnaire to examine to what extent new teachers’ perceived they were prepared in classroom management. Next, the data were used to investigate the variance of new teachers’ perceptions on their preparation in classroom management by teacher gender, teacher level and the percentage of minority student enrollment. Finally, the data were used to draw conclusions about the relationship between new teachers’ perceptions on the preparedness in classroom management and their job satisfaction as well as their commitment to the teaching profession.

Specifically, the following research questions were answered through completion of this study.

1. What were new teachers’ perceptions of how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline
2. Did new teachers’ perceptions of how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations vary by teacher gender, teacher level, and the percentage of minority students enrolled in the school?

3. Were new teachers’ perceptions of how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations related to their job satisfaction?

4. Were new teachers’ perceptions of how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations related to their commitment to the teaching profession?

New regular full-time and part-time public school teachers in grades K-12 from a nationally representative sample were included in this study. New teachers, in this study, were defined as those teachers who had less than three years of teaching experience. Both descriptive statistics and inferential statistics were applied in this study. Descriptive statistics were used to identify the percentage of new teachers’ perceptions of how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle classroom management situations. The t-test for Independent Samples (inferential statistics) were used to examine and compare the means of new teachers’ perceptions on their preparedness in classroom management by teacher gender, teacher level, and the percentage of minority student enrollment. The Pearson Product Correlation (descriptive statistics) were used to examine the relationship between new teachers’ perceptions of their preparation in
Conclusions and Discussion

Conclusions from this study were both consistent with yet challenge previous research on new teacher preparation in classroom management. Through the examination of the percentages of new teachers’ perceptions on their preparation in classroom management, an overall picture of the wide range of perceptions on preparation provided an interesting insight into new teacher preparation. In this study, new teachers’ perceptions on their preparation in classroom management also allowed for examination of variance by teacher gender, teacher level and minority student enrollment. Last of all, an investigation on new teacher’s perceptions on their preparedness in classroom management allowed for examination between their perceptions and their job satisfaction as well as their commitment to the teaching profession. The following sections gave a detailed description of the findings.

Perceptions on Classroom Management

The data from the 1999-2000 SASS Public School teacher Questionnaire indicated 38.5% of new teachers’ perceived that they were well prepared in classroom management and 19.9% perceived that they were very well prepared in classroom management. Yet there were 36.4% that perceived they were only somewhat prepared in classroom management and 5.2% that felt they were not at all prepared.

In the research literature, teacher preparation took an increased role in public attention with the No Child Left Behind Act’s (2002) emphasis on teacher preparation and having a qualified teacher in every classroom. Findings in a study of 2,956 beginning teachers
indicated that teachers who were prepared in teacher education programs felt significantly better prepared than those who entered teaching from other pathways (Darling-Hammond, Chung, & Frelow, 2002). Teachers were the key to students’ academic success and probably the most important factor, in the school setting, affecting student achievement (Marzano, Marzano, & Pickering, 2003).

Studies indicated that well-prepared and well-supported teachers were important for all students (Darling-Hammond, 2006). Research further indicated, “classroom management was one of the classroom teacher’s most important jobs” (Marzano & Marzano, 2003, p.6). This was reinforced by the findings of Wang, Haertel, and Walberg (1993) that showed of the 228 variables they studied affecting student achievement that classroom management had the largest effect.

In addition, research indicated that new teachers needed preparation in classroom management as part of the requirements in their teacher preparation programs (Landau, 2001). In fact, the research findings of Meyers and Williams indicated the importance of a semester course in classroom management as part of the teacher preparation program to provide a knowledge base in classroom management theory and strategies for new teachers. “This helped new teachers with their confidence and success in handling classroom management issues in the school setting “(2006, p.16).

Previous research studies that were examined provided valuable information for this study. When comparing the findings of previous research on classroom management, the findings of this study tended to suggest the importance of new teachers’ perceptions during their very first year of teaching on their preparation in classroom management. One important finding was that 41.6% of the new teachers surveyed in the 1999-2000
SASS Public School Teacher Questionnaire perceived that they were only somewhat prepared or not prepared in classroom management during their first year of teaching. This percentage was interesting and surprisingly high. This concluding information about the percentage of new teachers' perceptions on their preparation during their first year of teaching on classroom management should stimulate interest and possibly concern for consideration among teacher education programs and public school districts across this nation.

**Variance on Perceptions**

This study found that the means of new teachers' perceptions on how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations varied by teacher gender, teacher level, and the percentage of minority students enrolled in the school. The mean of new male teachers' perceptions on their preparation in classroom management was higher than the mean of new female teachers. The mean of new elementary teachers' perceptions on their preparation in classroom management was higher than the mean of new secondary teachers. The mean of new teachers' perceptions on their preparation in classroom management was higher for those in schools with a low percentage (1-49%) of minority student enrollment than new teachers who were in schools with a high percentage (50% and above) of minority student enrollment. Though there was a statistically significant difference in each of the three sets of factors, the actual difference in the means was small. Therefore, there was little practical significance in the findings. So no strong conclusions were made regarding the variance in means of new teachers' perceptions during their first year of teaching on their preparation in classroom management based on teacher gender, teacher level, and
the percentage of minority student enrollment.

In previous studies, researchers concluded that urban schools and schools with a high percentage of minority student enrollment were least likely to have qualified teachers (Lu, 2004). These findings were corroborated by Shen, Mansberger, and Yang (2004) who found that schools with high levels of student poverty tended to have new teachers who were not fully prepared and did not have full certification.

*Job Satisfaction and Commitment*

Therefore, through descriptive statistics (Pearson Product Correlation), it was determined that there was a relationship between new teachers' perceptions during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management situations and their job satisfaction as well as their commitment to the teaching profession. In both instances, though the correlation was statistically significant, the correlation coefficient was low which meant that the correlation was not practically significant. Therefore, after the results of the correlational study were evaluated, no strong conclusions were drawn regarding the relationship between new teachers' perceptions on their preparation in classroom management and their job satisfaction. The same held true for the relationship between new teachers' perceptions on their preparation in classroom management and their commitment to the teaching profession.

Research studies indicated that nearly one-fourth of new teachers left the teaching profession after two years, one-third left after three years, and one-half left after five years (Ingersoll & Smith, 2003). With such a high number of new teachers that left the teaching the profession, there was a concern for new teachers' job satisfaction and for new teachers' long-term commitment to the teaching profession. New teachers not only
needed to be well prepared through their teacher preparation programs for their teaching positions, they also needed to continue that training on the job in their school districts with professional development designed for them in the form of comprehensive induction programs with a mentoring component. Comprehensive induction programs were an important investment in maintaining qualified new teachers and in stabilizing the future of public school districts. In fact, studies indicated that comprehensive induction programs reduced new teacher attrition by almost one-third (Ingersoll & Smith, 2003). According to the Alliance for Excellent Education (2004), only 1% of new teachers receive the comprehensive new teacher induction program. Smith and Ingersoll’s study (2004) indicated those new teachers who had mentors in the same subject field and other induction activities were less likely to move from their schools and less likely to leave teaching after their first year. New teachers’ job satisfaction was a critical link between new teachers’ preparation for teaching through their teacher education programs and their commitment to the teaching profession.

Implications

This study investigated new teachers’ perceptions on how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations using a nationally representative K-12 new teacher sample which allowed the findings to be generalized to the nation’s public school new teacher population. This study differed from previous studies in that it examined teachers’ preparation in classroom management from the perceptions of new teachers. It further examined whether those perceptions varied by teacher gender, teacher level, and the percentage of minority of minority students enrolled. Last of all, it investigated the
relationship between the new teachers' perceptions on their preparation in classroom management and their job satisfaction as well as their commitment to the teaching profession.

First of all, the findings of this study added to the national understanding of new teachers' perceptions on their preparation for the teaching profession through their teacher preparation programs and provided more specific insights into their perceptions on their preparation in classroom management. Second, the findings provided new information to the new teacher profile of K-12 teachers as well. Third, the findings indicated that 41.6% of new teachers perceive that they are not prepared or only somewhat prepared in classroom management, which suggested the need for more extensive training in classroom management in teacher preparation programs as well as the pervasive nature of this issue. Fourth, the findings indicated a need for professional support for new teachers during their first year of teaching possibly through comprehensive teacher induction programs which may lead to new teacher job satisfaction, commitment to the teaching profession, and higher retention rates. Fifth, consistent with previous studies, this study found that schools with a high percentage of minority students had new teachers who perceived that they were not prepared to handle classroom management. This raised issues of teacher quality and equity in staffing. Last of all, the findings of this study indicated that although statistical significance was detected, both the differences in the means on the t-tests for Independent Samples and the low correlation coefficients on the Pearson Product Correlations, did not allow for strong conclusions to be made. Therefore, no strong conclusion could be made in regards to: (a) variation in new teachers' perceptions on their preparation in classroom management by
teacher gender, teacher level, and the percentage of minority student enrollment; and (b) the relationship between new teachers' perceptions on their preparation in classroom management and their job satisfaction as well as their commitment to the teaching profession.

This study suggested a need for teacher preparation program to prepare new teachers more effectively in classroom management. It also suggested a need for public school districts to provide adequate professional support for their new teachers in classroom management through professional development such as comprehensive new teacher induction programs with mentoring components.

The findings of this study have implications for the following: (a) teacher preparation programs; (b) school districts; (c) policy makers; (d) educational researchers interested in studying new teachers, classroom management, and teacher preparation.

There were limitations to this study. First, the variables in this study were limited to those used in the 1999-2000 SASS Public School Teachers Questionnaire. Second, new teachers' perceptions on how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations may have changed since the 1999-2000 SASS Public School Teacher Questionnaire. It was possible that the results from the 2003-2004 and future surveys may be very different from the results available for this study.

Third, this was a quantitative study so interviews, classroom observations, focus groups and other informational sources were not used to complete and personalize this study so this study may have just scratched the surface on the very complex issue of new teachers' perceptions on their preparation in classroom management.
Recommendations for Future Research

This study on new teachers' perceptions of how well prepared they were during their first year of teaching to handle a range of classroom management and discipline situations provided important information on new teachers, new teachers' perceptions, teacher preparation, and classroom management. However, new teachers' perceptions on their preparation in classroom management were a multifaceted issue. The No Child Left Behind Act (2002) brought an era of educational change. So it was natural to expect that new teachers' perceptions on their preparation in classroom management has changed since the 1999-2000 SASS Public School Teacher Questionnaire. Therefore, future study on new teachers' perceptions on their preparation in classroom management is needed.

This study did not address the concerns such as how new teacher preparation in classroom management affected actual teacher implementation of effective classroom management strategies with students or its impact on student achievement. For future studies on new teachers' perceptions on their preparation in classroom management, this study suggested consideration of the following recommendations.

First, educational researchers should be encouraged to use large scale national data sets like the SASS Public School Teacher Questionnaire for future research on new teachers' perceptions of their preparation in classroom management. This would further inform teacher preparation programs, school districts and the public on this issue.

Second, future studies might consider using multiple approaches for data collection and analysis to broaden the depth of their studies. In addition to survey questionnaires,
the researchers might consider using interviews with new teachers, classroom observations, focus groups, online discussion groups, and other information sources.

Third, future studies might consider studying new teachers in their classroom setting to observe the practice of their classroom management strategies to see if their preparation in classroom management has an impact on their effective implementation in the classroom.

Fourth, future studies might consider studying the impact of new teachers' preparation in the application of effective classroom management strategies and the impact on student achievement.

Fifth, future researchers may want to study the interrelatedness of new teachers' preparation in classroom management with first year teachers' concerns on the job such as relationships with students, classroom organization, professional support, and teacher retention.

Finally, future studies on new teachers' perceptions on their preparation in classroom management might consider developing clearly identifiable measures and focus on how their study can make a difference in new teacher preparation and new teacher practice of effective classroom management strategies.
Appendix A

Human Subjects Institutional Review Board
Letter of Approval
Date: January 22, 2008

To: Sue Poppink, Principal Investigator
   Rosemary Cleveland, Student Investigator for dissertation

From: Amy Naugle, Ph.D., Chair

Re: HSIRB Project Number: 08-01-11

This letter will serve as confirmation that your research project entitled “New Teachers’ Perceptions of their Preparation in Classroom Management during their First Year of Teaching” has been approved under the exempt category of review by the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board. The conditions and duration of this approval are specified in the Policies of Western Michigan University. You may now begin to implement the research as described in the application.

Please note that you may only conduct this research exactly in the form it was approved. You must seek specific board approval for any changes in this project. You must also seek reapproval if the project extends beyond the termination date noted below. In addition if there are any unanticipated adverse reactions or unanticipated events associated with the conduct of this research, you should immediately suspend the project and contact the Chair of the HSIRB for consultation.

The Board wishes you success in the pursuit of your research goals.

Approval Termination: January 22, 2009
Appendix B

Graphic Representations of New Teachers’ Perceptions
Question 1: Percentages of new teachers’ perceptions of their preparation on classroom management during their first year of teaching.
Question 2-1: Variance of new teachers’ perceptions of their preparation in classroom management during their first year of teaching by teacher gender.
Question 2-2: Variance of new teachers’ perceptions on their preparation in classroom management during their first year of teaching by teacher level (elementary and secondary).
Question 2-3: Variance in new teachers' perceptions of their preparation in classroom management during their first year of teaching by the percentage of minority students enrolled.
Appendix C

Technical Notes: SASS Sample Design and Weighting
Technical Notes

Characteristics of SASS Sample Design

The Schools and Staffing Survey’s sample design for its Public School Teacher Questionnaire used a stratified probability sample design so there was not an equal probability of selection for all public school teachers. This was not like a simple random sampling which “assures that each member of the population has an equal chance of being selected” (Suter, 2006, p. 215). Random sampling also “ensures that the sample will be representative of the population” (Creswell, 2003, p. 164). In a stratified sampling design “the individuals in the sampling frame were divided into known subgroups and a fixed percentage was take from each subgroup” (Patten, 2002, p. 63). An important advantage of stratified sampling of a large population was that “it was more likely to yield a sample group that was representative of the population than a simple random sample” (Suter, p. 216).

The SASS stratified probability sample design used different sampling rates across different probabilities of selection. It stratified and sampled the public schools followed by stratifying and sampling the teachers within the schools based on their characteristics. To obtain a suitable teacher sample, SASS selected schools with a probability proportionate to the square root of the number of teachers. SASS sampled the teachers within the schools at a rate that made the overall selection probability approximately constant within strata, subject to the constraint of sampling at least one teacher and no more than twenty teachers per schools (U.S. Department of Education, 2005).
Sampling Weight

SASS weighted the samples to approximate the population, making the sample nationally representative of public school teachers. The sample of public school teachers involved stratification, a disproportionate sampling of certain strata, and clustered probability sampling. The initial samples that resulted were not representative of the public school teaching force because some cases were under-represented and other cases were over-represented. Through weighting, the cases were brought to the correct proportion within the populations and the findings were generalized to the national population of new teachers. The weighting procedure used by SASS had three purposes: (a) to take account of the school’s selection probabilities; (b) to reduce biases that may result from unit non-response; and (c) to make use of available information from external sources to improve the precision of sample estimates (U.S. Department of Education, 2005).

The weighted sample size was 42,086. The actual or unweighted sample size of the subgroup of new teachers was 6,703. It was necessary to use relative weights in the data analysis of new teachers in order to approximate the populations and to adjust to the actual sample size. Due to the fact that this study examined new teachers’ perceptions on their preparation in classroom management during their first year of teaching, only new teachers were reported.


Routledge Publications.


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Santa Cruz, CA: New Teacher Center University of California, Santa Cruz.


New York: Three Rivers Press.


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Wright, S., Horn, S., & Sanders, W. (1997). Teacher and classroom context effects on
