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STUDENT TEACHERS IN SEARCH OF HELP

A DISSERTATION APPROVED FOR THE
DEPARTMENT OF INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP AND ACADEMIC
CURRICULUM

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Table 1. People whose help was sought by student teachers

Student Teachers in Search of Help

Abstract

This study sought to answer the following question: from whom, how and how often did student teachers at a large southwestern university in the United States seek help regarding the various problems that arose during their internship? This two-phased, sequential mixed methods study initially used quantitative data obtained from a sample of 27 secondary student teachers enrolled in a teacher education program. The student teachers completed a self-assessing survey to find out what was their most critical problem, whom they contacted for help, how they made contact with their potential helper, and how often they sought help. Additional data were collected from personal interviews of eleven student teachers, five university supervisors, and eight cooperating teachers.

Student teachers in this study reported at least one critical problem for the week they completed the survey and all but one sought help from multiple helpers. Students, cooperating teachers, and university supervisors agreed that problems during internships were usually discussed via face to face encounters and general classroom management problems were the most common. Problems associated with preparation of lessons were mentioned the least. Cooperating teachers were the single most frequently reported helpers with an average of four requests for help per week from each student teacher. University supervisors and professors were contacted least often for help.

Interestingly when requests for help recorded on the surveys from family members and friends were totaled, they outnumbered the requests for help from the cooperating teachers by five percent. Peers comprised 13% of the requests for help, making the category of helpers outside the triad and university personnel responsible for

46% of the requests for help. Easy access to potential helpers such as family and friends via cell phones and the Internet may have encouraged students to communicate with others outside the traditional triad when problems arose during their internship. These sources could have provided a safe environment for somewhat insecure student teachers to receive advice and encouragement.

The results of this study and other studies (Hsu, 2005: McNally et al., 1997) have shown that student teachers seek others for help with sundry problems during their internship. The triad alone did not suffice for support of student teachers. This study suggests that collaboration and discourse with knowledgeable others during internships should be encouraged whenever possible, and better use of the knowledge within the triad could be profitable to the university, future teachers, and the P-12 students of the United States.

Student Teachers in Search of Help

Chapter 1

Introduction

Field experiences comprise a predominant focus in all teacher-education programs. Most programs today include some types of field experiences prior to the final internship in order to introduce students to the profession of teaching and allow for more integration of practice with their university course work (Barrett, 1995; Morehead, Lyman, & Foyle, 2003; Posner, 1985). Students are usually given increasing responsibility with each field experience until the internship, at which time most student teachers assume the responsibility for teaching a whole class for an extended period of time under the watchful eyes of a cooperating teacher and a supervisor from the university.

Within this environment, student teachers must deal with a whirlwind of changes in their lives and sundries of stressful situations as they tackle the attendant responsibilities of this new classroom experience (Veenman, 1984). Not only are they working closely with a person they do not know, but they are pelted with germs from students, have to eat lunch in less than 20 minutes, must dress in a professional manner, and attempt to apply classroom management skills learned in a teacher education class to the real classroom. Research has shown that the psychological experience of student teaching mimics that of adolescence. Preservice teachers find themselves fluctuating between dependency and independency (Lindman & Grimes, 1973). Simultaneously, they feel "the need to be protected and guided by cooperating teachers and supervisors" while having the desire for independence and "the desire to function skillfully in the

classroom…This ambivalence often creates feelings of inner turmoil and insecurity in the novice teacher" (Lindman & Grimes, 1973, p. 11).

Why should teacher educators care about whom student teachers go for help, how and how often they seek help or why they seek help? Student teachers' dispositions affect future generations by determining what kinds of learning opportunities will be present in future classrooms. Will student teachers' dispositions reflect researched methods of instruction learned at the university or will their disposition be a reflection of their own experiences as a student? Will the student teacher nurture all students, believing that all students can learn? Will they be committed to a safe and supportive learning environment in their future classrooms? Knowing to whom student teachers go for help and how and why they seek help will inform those involved in teacher education programs how they can create caring programs that effectively support their student teachers as they develop their teaching disposition.

According to Veenman (1984), "Many studies provide evidence that students become increasingly idealistic, progressive, or liberal in their attitudes toward education during their preservice training and then shift to opposing and more traditional, conservative, or custodial views as they move into student teaching and the first years of teaching" (p. 145). Changes of attitudes that focus on teaching methods seem to reduce the impact of teacher education courses as the student teacher is influenced by the cooperating teacher, school bureaucracy, and other individuals in the school (Hoy & Rees, 1977). Hoy (1968, 1969), Hoy and Rees (1977), and McArthur (1981) support Veenman's (1984) assertion about changes in student teachers' attitudes. More recent studies by Kagan (1992), Borko and Putnam (1996), and Wideen, Mayer-Smith, and

Moon (1998) document how new teachers struggle with classroom management and the development of teacher dispositions or attitudes as they begin their professional careers. The novices' focus is on the contexts closest to them; hence their primary concerns involve their own ability as teachers and the immediacy of classroom management.

It is in this context that the discourse communities in the traditional school play an important role in shaping the way the novice teachers view their world and their work. Patterns of teaching and learning have historically been resistant to change because students, teachers, and administrators participate in discourse communities that enculturate the participants into traditional school activities and ways of thinking (Lortie, 1975; Sarason, 1997). As student teachers begin to teach, they settle on the practices and values of the P-12 classrooms, setting aside those advocated by the university as being too theoretical (Anagnostopoulos, Smith, & Basmadjian, 2007).

Grossman and Thompson (2004) discuss how district policies affect student teachers and novices as they learn what to worry about and how to get help. In their study, two of three beginning teachers experienced a great deal of anxiety and frustration about the lack of specific directions on how to teach in a language arts program. Although all three novices acknowledged being free to creatively plan their curriculum, two of them expressed a decided desire to have a structured curriculum. They sought after sources that provided concrete guidance on what to teach and how to teach. The third novice in the Grossman and Thompson (2004) study worked in a school with a collaborative atmosphere where she received support from colleagues who provided her with curricular resources and conversation about goals and objectives for the language arts program. She took advantage of creative planning opportunities available to her

seizing the opportunity to customize her curriculum to the needs of her students thus reflecting a more constructivist approach.

During student teaching, students attempt to translate theory into practice in the classroom. They encounter differences between the ideal images presented at the university and the reality of the classroom. Student teachers are concerned with establishing order, gaining student cooperation, and with their own competence as teachers (Hoy & Woolfolk, 1990). The resolution of issues concerning class control, motivation of students, and personal competence is significant in the "socialization" (Hoy & Woolfolk, 1990, p. 280) of student teachers; hence they reach out to others for help. Interactions with people who are in one's environment determine what is learned and how learning takes place (Putnam & Borko, 2000). From this standpoint, learning is enculturation into a community's ways of thinking and dispositions as well as explicit instruction in concepts, skills, and procedures (Hung & Chen, 2007). Ragland (2007) demonstrated how creating a discourse community between secondary history teachers and historians changed teachers' attitudes and views of teaching. The teachers became less dependent on lectures, worksheets, and textbook readings; they increasingly used student activities involving research, genuine group activities, artifact analysis and other such activities.

Central to student teaching at many universities are mentors who guide, coach, and counsel student teachers as they participate in preservice experiences through the final student teaching internship. These mentors often consist of university supervisors and cooperating teachers (Shaw-Baker, 1995), both of whom student teachers may go to for help. Researchers have reported the cooperating teacher, in particular, has a great

influence on the student teaching experience (Hoy & Woolfolk, 1990; Weiser, 1995; Zeichner, 2002). However, the results of a study by Hsu (2005) revealed student teachers at a university in Taiwan went to their peers for help more frequently than university supervisors or cooperating teachers. Perhaps this occurred because of the "openness of intellectual conversation and an opportunity for true reflection of the experience" (Fairley, 1995, p. 58) between equals.

In summary, field experience for student teachers can be very stressful because of changes in their life-styles and attitudes. The general tendency for teaching habits to be formed prior to formal teacher education may add to the problems of student teachers. As student teachers search for help, they may go to several sources including university supervisors or faculty, cooperating teachers, or other faculty members, friends, family members, or peers. This study sought to find out from whom student teachers were seeking help and how. It also sought to explore the frequency with which the student teachers were seeking help regarding various problems that arose during their internship.

Purpose of the Study

This study investigated from whom, how and how often student teachers sought help regarding the various problems that arose during their internship? In order to learn more about the help-seeking behavior of student teachers, this study sought to obtain information by first using a survey to find out what problems student teachers perceived to be most critical, whom they sought out for help, how and how often they sought help. To provide rich detail, this study obtained additionally information via interviews with student teachers, cooperating teachers, and university supervisors. The study was developed using a sequential, mixed methods approach because collecting diverse types

of data would provide a way to triangulate the different sources of information using it to build a sound justification for the reported themes as recommended by Creswell (2003).

Research Question

This research question asks the following question: from whom, how and how often do student teachers seek help regarding the various problems that arise during their internship?

Significance of the Study

Previous research indicates that many teacher habits are formed prior to formal training. In other words, the way teachers act in the classroom is largely determined by their own experiences as a student (Hanson & Herrington 1976; Hoy & Woolfolk, 1990; Lortie, 1975; Petty & Hogben, 1980; Veenman, 1984). Since methods they have learned at the university are likely different from the methods used by their own teachers, student teachers may be more likely to implement newly acquired methods if they have a strong support system. However, traditional methods of support for student teachers may not provide the help they need. Finding new ways to evaluate the support programs is important because it is vital to find out who is helping the student teacher and how often before new support programs may be developed (Hsu, 2005).

Knowing from whom student teachers most often sought help with their critical problems could improve teacher preparation programs. It would help those involved in the organization of the programs to know what kind of support system may be used most often by student teachers so these types of systems could be implemented. This may increase the likelihood of student teachers practicing instructional strategies learned at the university and possibly continuing these strategies as they begin their teaching careers.

Limitations of the Study

Potential limitations are an innate part of every research project. This section discusses four potential limitations within the study along with strategies for potentially counteracting these limitations. Two possible limitations involving the survey were time and accuracy of self-reporting. In addition, sample size and interview format were possible limitations regarding the interviews.

Concerning the survey's limitations, the participants were in a university class when I made a request for volunteers to complete the survey. Their professor introduced me as a doctoral student who was investigating problems encountered during student teaching. The participants were allowed 15 to 20 minutes to complete the survey and they may have hurried through the survey without adequately reflecting on the past week to determine their most critical problem for the week. Some participants may have written inaccurate information just to finish the survey because they felt compelled to complete the survey as an assignment without care for its accuracy. I attempted to counteract these possible limitations by assuring the participants the survey was strictly voluntary, would not affect their grade in the class or in student teaching, and that hopefully the results of my research would help future student teachers at the university.

The study focused on face to face interviews with those participants who would and could meet with me. Of the 27 student teachers who completed surveys, 11 volunteered to participate in an interview. Eight cooperating teachers and five university supervisors also volunteered to be interviewed. Hence, I concentrated on a smaller number of participants as a sample of convenience. A drawback of conducting interviews is the small sample size limits the generalizability of findings. The findings of

the investigation were not generalizable to all student teachers. Using student teachers from only one university in one community in a southwestern state further limited my ability to generalize on a national scale. I attempted to counteract the effect of having a small sample size by seeking rich detail during the personal interviews which was a benefit of using the qualitative approach with an open-ended format.

The open-ended questions in the interviews encouraged students and teachers to describe experiences in their own words. However, some participants may have chosen not to be totally truthful or to give socially desirable answers. I dealt with this possibility by establishing a nonjudgmental atmosphere during the interviews. I reminded the participants that their responses would be kept confidential, that their responses would not be connected to their real name, and that neither the surveys nor the interviews would have an effect on their student teaching grade. I used mixed methods and triangulation of sources to counteract the tendency of participants to use dishonest answers. "By combining multiple observers, theories, methods and data sources," researchers can hope to "overcome the intrinsic bias that comes from single-methods, single-observer, and single-theory studies" (Denzin, 1970, p. 313).

Definitions of Terms

Candidates: "Individuals admitted to, or enrolled in, programs for the initial or advanced preparation of teachers, teachers continuing their professional development, or other professional school personnel. Candidates are distinguished from 'students' in P–12, schools" (NCATE, 2008, p. 3).

Category: "a unit of information composed of events, happenings, and instances" (Creswell, 1998, p. 56).

Clinical Faculty: “School and higher education faculty responsible for instruction, supervision, and assessment of candidates during field experience and clinical practice” (NCATE, 2008, p. 3).

Clinical Practice: “Student teaching or internships that provide candidates with an intensive and extensive culminating activity. Candidates are immersed in the learning community and are provided opportunities to develop and demonstrate competence in the professional roles for which they are preparing” (NCATE, 2008, p. 3).

Coding: “the process of organizing the material into ‘chunks’ before bringing meaning to those ‘chunks’” (Rossman & Rallis, 1998, p. 171).

Content Analysis: “the process of identifying, coding, and categorizing the primary patterns in the data. This means analyzing the content of interviews and observations” (Patton, 1990, p. 381).

Cooperating teacher: is a teacher at a school who encourages the student teacher “to try out innovative ideas as well as develop an understanding for and appreciation of established practices” (University of Oklahoma, 2007, p. 4).

Data triangulation: “The use of a variety of data sources in a study to strengthen a study design” (Patton, 1990, p. 187).

Dispositions: “The values, commitments, and professional ethics that influence behaviors toward students, families, colleagues, and communities and affect student learning, motivation, and development as well as the educator’s own professional growth. Dispositions are guided by beliefs and attitudes related to values such as caring, fairness, honesty, responsibility, and social justice. For example, they might include a belief that

all students can learn, a vision of high and challenging standards, or a commitment to a safe and supportive learning environment" (NCATE, 2008, p. 4).

Field Experiences: "A variety of early and ongoing field-based opportunities in which candidates may observe, assist, tutor, instruct, and/or conduct research. Field experiences may occur in off-campus settings such as schools, community centers, or homeless shelters" (NCATE, 2008, p. 5).

Full-time Faculty: "Employees of a higher education institution with full-time assignments with the professional education unit as instructors, professors at different ranks, administrators, and professional support personnel" (NCATE, 2008, p. 5).

Grounded Theory: seeks to "generate or discover a theory, an abstract analytical schema of a phenomenon that relates to a particular situation" (Creswell, 1998, p. 560).

Initial Teacher Preparation: "Programs at baccalaureate or postbaccalaureate levels that prepare candidates for the first license to teach" (NCATE, 2008, p. 6).

Internship: "Generally, the post-licensure and/or graduate clinical practice under the supervision of clinical faculty; sometimes refers to the preservice clinical experience" (NCATE, 2008, p. 6).

NCATE: National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education "is the professional accrediting organization for schools, colleges, and departments of education in the United States. It is a coalition of over 30 organizations representing teachers, teacher educators, policymakers, and the public" (NCATE, 2008, p. 1).

P-12: Includes schools with children from preschool through twelfth grade.

Part-time Faculty: "Employees of a higher education institution who have less than a full-time assignment in the professional education unit. Some part-time faculty are

full-time employees of the college or university with a portion of their assignments in the professional education unit. Other part-time faculty are not full-time employees of the institution and are commonly considered adjunct faculty" (NCATE, 2008, p. 9).

Preservice teachers: Individuals who are in a program of study to prepare them to become teachers.

Professional Community: "Full- and part-time faculty (including clinical faculty) in the professional education unit, faculty in other units of the college/university, P–12 practitioners, candidates, and others involved in professional education" (NCATE, 2008, p. 10).

Professional Development Schools: "Specially structured schools in which the P–12 school and higher education faculty collaborate to (1) provide practicum, student teaching, and internship experiences; (2) support and enable the professional development of school and higher education faculty; (3) support and enable inquiry directed at the improvement of practice; and (4) support and enhance student achievement. PDSs require the institutional commitment of colleges and universities, school districts, and teachers' organizations" (NCATE, 2008, p. 11).

Professional Standards: "Candidate knowledge, skills, and dispositions set by the specialized professional associations (SPA program standards) and adopted by NCATE for use in its accreditation review. Professional standards also refer to standards set by other recognized national organizations/accrediting agencies that evaluate professional education programs" (NCATE, 2008, p. 11).

Proficiencies: "Required knowledge, skills, and dispositions identified in the professional, state, or institutional standards" (NCATE, 2008, p. 11).

School Faculty: “Licensed practitioners in P–12 schools who provide instruction, supervision, and direction for candidates during field-based assignments” (NCATE, 2008, p. 11).

School Partners: “P–12 schools that collaborate with the higher education institution in designing, developing, and implementing field experiences, clinical practice, delivery of instruction, and research” (NCATE, 2008, p. 12).

State Standards: “The standards adopted by state agencies responsible for the approval of programs that prepare teachers and other school personnel. State standards may include candidate knowledge, skills, and dispositions” (NCATE, 2008, p. 12).

Students: “Children and youth attending P–12 schools as distinguished from teacher candidates” (NCATE, 2008, p. 13).

Student Teacher: is one who is student teaching.

Student Teaching: “Preservice clinical practice for candidates preparing to teach” (NCATE, 2008, p. 13).

Teacher socialization: The process of formally preparing to become a teacher (Ginsburg, 1988, p.1)

University supervisor: “The University supervisor carries a primary responsibility for establishing, coordinating, and maintaining open lines of communication among everyone involved: 1)intern/student teacher, 2) principal, 3) cooperating teacher, and 4) OU personnel” (University of Oklahoma, 2007, p. 6). This individual makes five visits to the student teacher’s assigned school, the first of which is to set up times for four scheduled classroom observations of the student teacher at which time the university

supervisor will complete evaluation forms to be discussed during three-way conferences with the cooperating teacher and student teacher.

Summary

Field experiences comprise a predominant focus in all teacher-education programs and the culminating experience is student teaching. This study sought to investigate from whom, how and how often student teachers sought help regarding the various problems that arose during their internship. Consequently, this research could provide insight and benefit for teacher preparation program organizers, student teachers, and future P-12 students. As part of this study, potential limitations were time, accuracy of self-reporting, sample size, and interview format. I addressed these limitations and provided definitional terms for key terms in this chapter. Chapter Two reviews the literature related to the research topic, and Chapter Three discusses the methodology for the study. The findings of the study are in Chapter Four and conclusions along with implications for further study are in Chapter Five.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

Introduction

This literature review was developed as a continuing process before, during, and at the conclusion of the research study. As the study developed, I was led in several directions to search for previous research related to this topic. What follows incorporates the following sections: history and standards; sociocultural theory and learning; and related research. I broke down the related research section into the following subsections: colleagues and peers; reflections; supervision; an alternative model of student teaching; exemplary teacher education programs; action research as a teacher preparation; connecting university to school sites; professional development schools; and technology. What is presented below is the summary of this journey through the research literature and a conclusion that summarizes some commonalities of the research.

To understand how and why student teachers seek help regarding the various problems that arise during their internship, this literature review begins with a brief discussion of the value of student teaching, the definition of the triad, and a description of an ideal student teaching placement supported by educational theorists. The historical background of student teaching as it developed in the United States is followed by a review of research regarding the support of student teachers as they learn to teach – who they go to for help and how. A summary of some research about student teachers and how they are supported by their peers, journaling and reflection, partnership plans, university faculty and supervisors, and classroom teachers ensues. A description of an exemplary teacher education program precedes reports of research designed to address

the gap between theory and practice commonly reported by student teachers and university faculty. I describe an alternative model of supervision involving teamwork and collaboration of all three members of the triad in addition to descriptions of some student teachers' encounters with successful professional development schools. Descriptions of technology and collaboration among student teachers, university faculty, and experienced teachers present some interesting new ideas for supporting student teachers in their endeavors to learn how to teach while challenging diverse students.

History and Standards Regarding Student Teaching

Student teaching is a critical aspect of preservice teacher education (Zeichner, 2002). "It has been the capstone experience in teacher preparation for more than 75 years" (Veal & Rikard, 1998). The triad consisting of the university-based supervisor, the school-based cooperating teacher, and the student teacher has remained intact for many years. Zeichner (2002) reported cooperating teachers are key participants in determining the quality of learning for student teachers, but being a good cooperating teacher is not the same as being a good teacher. He goes on to say being a good cooperating teacher involves active mentoring which is a "complex and demanding process" (p. 59). When making a good student teaching placement, Zeichner emphasized a safe and supportive environment where student teachers will take risks and explore options. They can seek help from others with confidence knowing that they are a part of a learning community where everyone is a learner. This type of learning environment is supported by theorists such as Bruner (1996), Freire (1998), and Vygotsky (as cited in Kozulin, Gindis, Ageyev, & Miller, 2003).

The history of teacher education and the development of student teaching in the United States during the last two centuries may be divided into three periods: (1) Normal School Period (1825 – 1900); (2) Teacher College Period (1900 – 1948); and (3) Field-Based Period post World War II (Hughs, 1982). For the purpose of this literature review, I will analyze some of the major events that helped shape this post World War II era.

During the first period, normal schools emerged as a formalized system for preparing teachers to teach in the public schools. These institutions were to provide democratic teachers for all children and many established demonstration or laboratory schools on their campuses to provide the experiential part of curriculum for teachers (Null, 2007). The laboratory schools provided an environment for teacher learning to take place, where student teachers could reflect upon teaching and learning, and where expert teachers working and learning alongside student teachers implemented research in the classroom. They provided a place where student teachers could seek help regarding problems that arose during their student teaching.

In 1896 John Dewey founded the Laboratory School at the University of Chicago where pre-service teachers could practice teaching and observe master teachers (NALS, 2008). It was finely attuned to the College of Education as well as to the student-centered social and experiential methods advocated by Dewey. Soon laboratory schools across the United States provided opportunities for prospective teachers to observe master teachers implement teaching methods in tune with the affiliated colleges and to practice teaching in a reflective context. The laboratory schools also provided, and in many cases still provide, a collaborative, dynamic setting for research, experimentation,

curriculum development and staff development thus bridging educational theory to classroom practice.

During the teachers college period, normal schools were transformed into teacher's colleges and liberal arts universities. There was an increase in the professionalism of teacher educators as well as the development of public school teacher and preparation institution cooperation (Hughes, 1982). Student teaching was professionalized through legislation and professional organizations were established for teacher educators. By 1915, most teacher preparation curriculum required that prospective teachers complete at least some student teaching (Null, 2007). There was a new emphasis on standards of teacher preparation in 1917 with the organization of the American Association of Teachers Colleges. On February 20, 1926, in Washington D.C., the following standard was adopted by the Association:

> Each teachers college shall maintain a training school under its own control as a part of its organization, as a laboratory school, for purposes of observation, demonstration, and supervised teaching on the part of students. (as cited in Wen-Ju, 2008, p. 3)

Reporting on compliance with the above standard, a committee of the Association reported in 1927 that replies had been received from 113 of 150 member institutions. They concluded that, "Every institution with one or two exceptions affirms the maintenance of a training school or of affiliated urban or rural schools for student teaching purposes" (p. 4). As the Association increased in membership and influence, student teaching became a universally recognized requirement to help aspiring teachers learn to teach in a supportive and collegial environment.

Following World War II, the field-based period expanded opportunities and ideas about student teaching. The most effective type of student teaching experience became a matter of great concern, as did the roles and responsibilities of the university supervisor and the cooperating teacher (Hughes, 1982). In the 1950s and 1960s at least three laboratory schools were closed; the others significantly changed their mission to meet budget cuts (Wen-Ju, 2008). Laboratory schools became perceived as unrealistic environments for public school teachers' preparation. There was an increased interest in conducting experimentation and teacher preparation in the public schools. The budget cuts, along with research and publishing becoming a priority for schools and colleges of education, doomed the success of many laboratory schools thus taking away a collegial support system for student teachers.

The report, *A Nation at Risk*, issued by the U.S. Department of Education in 1983 began a period of education reform that continues today. It called for the development of rigorous national standards of teacher preparation. It recognized that teaching was now more challenging in the United States due to more diverse student populations and more complex educational technologies that would necessitate additional preparation for teachers. The report, combined with an expected scarcity of teachers in some fields in the late 1900s, increased national awareness of the need to attract large numbers of high-quality teacher candidates and to improve their preparation (Brickman, 2007). As a result, many colleges of education and educational organizations developed standards for academic preparation, including the provision for supportive student teaching experiences.

In 1987, the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), an organization attuned to promoting high-quality teacher preparation, adopted a set of standards requiring participating institutions to explicate a model and knowledge base supporting the purpose, processes, and outcomes of their teacher education program (McIntyre, Byrd, & Foxx, 1996). Integrating theory and practice, the model and knowledge base were to unify all components of a program, including campus courses and field and laboratory experiences. Farber, Wilson, and Holm (1989) supported this framework for teacher education. They contended that teachers must be sensitized to the complete range of social-political and personal consequences of student teaching by examining the moral and professional ambiguities in the process of schooling, and critically examining the consequences of standard practice. This set of standards was to support the development of future teachers in a diverse high tech democratic society.

The focus on reform efforts culminated in the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation of 2002 (Rothstein, 2008). NCLB was a federal law (Act of Congress) that reauthorized federal programs aimed to improve the performance of primary and secondary schools in the United States by increasing the standards of accountability for states, school districts, and schools (NCLB, 2001). It did not mandate a national achievement standard, but required individual states to set standards to improve student performance or not receive federal funding. In Section 1111, NCLB specified that teachers would all be "highly qualified" as defined in the law by the end of the 2006-07 school year in order for the school to receive federal funding.

A highly qualified teacher was defined in Title IX, Section 9109 (23) of NCLB, as one who had fulfilled the state's certification and licensing requirements, obtained at least

a bachelor's degree, and demonstrated subject matter expertise. In December 2006, the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE), an association of nearly 800 schools, colleges, and departments of teacher education across the United States, made recommendations for improving the definition of a "Highly Qualified Teacher" (HQT) and the Department of Education's (ED) interpretation of an HQT in the NCLB Act of 2001 (Title IX, Section 9109[23]). The third of eight recommendations addressed "supervised clinical experience" (AACTE, 2006). It read as follows:

> Mandate extensive, supervised clinical experience. Most states require teacher candidates to undertake some form of practice teaching. However, considerable variation exists in the extent and rigor of these experiences from state to state. Recent data show that about three-quarters of the states require clinical experience, which may range from five to 20 weeks (McCabe, 2006). Research indicates that the lack of clinical skills and experience feeds high levels of teacher burnout and attrition (NCATE, 2003). Candidates who have had student teaching are twice as likely to stay past the first year of teaching than those who have not. (National Center for Education Statistics, 1994-1995). Prospective teachers should exhibit consistent success through a substantial pre-service clinical experience involving a variety of challenging situations, and supervised by both university- and school-based faculty. The Professional Development School (PDS) model, when practiced according to the PDS Standards (NCATE, 2001) is the most evidence-based exemplar of high quality, effective, clinical experience.

> The HQT definition should thus mandate for each teacher candidate a minimum number of hours of closely monitored and supervised classroom experience. We suggest at least 15 weeks at 30 hours per week, or a total of 450 hours. This requirement should pertain to both traditional and alternative route candidates. (as cited in AACTE, 2006, p. 1)

This suggested mandate would encourage teacher preparation departments to support student teachers by providing a collaborative environment for learning how to teach. Student teachers, P-12 school staff, and university faculty could form learning communities where shared knowledge would benefit everyone involved. Incidentally, there has been no change in the definition of HQT to date. Information in a letter dated July 23, 2007 from the United States Secretary of Education, Margaret Spellings, revealed no state had achieved 100% compliance regarding HQT in every classroom. She said there would be no penalty to a State "solely because they have not reached 100% HQT" (Spellings, 2007, p. 2).

NCATE, in 2008, published six standards for preparing educators to work in P-12 schools. In 2200 words, standard three addressed field experiences and clinical practice. It reflected the philosophy of development of the whole person through experiential education. This learning by doing, and emphasis on the social aspect of learning has been advocated by Dewey (1916), as well as Friere (1998), Vygotsky (as cited in Kozulin et al., 2003), and Bruner (1996).

Standard three's (NCATE, 2008) objective stipulated that the design, implementation, and evaluation of field experiences and clinical practice were to demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions necessary to help all

students learn. There was an emphasis on collaboration between the unit (the university) and the school partners (P-12 faculty) to support the student teacher. Student teachers were to reflect on their own practice and the practices of master teachers they observed. Student teaching was recognized as the culminating experience for teacher candidates and necessary to prepare perspective teachers to interact with students' families and communities to support learning for the diverse students in today's schools.

Sociocultural Theory and Learning

In the past decade, there has been much research on teacher development (Bullough, 2008) and the sociocultural theory as opposed to early cognitive theories that assumed a core of knowledge and skills existed in the individual's mind, independent of context and intention (Alfred, 2002). These early cognitive theories framed learning as acquisition of concepts and skills that could be learned independently of outside influence. Deci and Ryan's study (as cited in Alfred, 2002) explained how learning was made possible by breaking a complex task into parts to be taught and learned in isolation by the learner. Beliefs about efficacy or self-competency, personal attitudes, and the personal values associated with a task determined the learner's engagement in the task and how much they learned. This perspective was a static view of learning that did not account for how the adult learner's position in life influenced learning in the classroom or in student teaching. For example, it did not explain how the experiences of generation Xers, baby boomers, and veterans influence their worldviews, their learning, and their performance in the workplace (Alfred, 2002). The individual perspective did not consider affects of experiences of socioeconomic influences or disability factors on the learner. It did not consider the social or cultural parts of living as a factor in learning

how to teach or how student teachers may go about seeking help with problems associated with student teaching.

Presently, "researchers and practitioners have come to believe that learning is a much more complex activity than the individual engagement it was once thought to be," (Alfred, 2002, p. 4). Adult education researchers (Caffarella & Clark, 1999: Fenwick, 2001; Guy, 1999; Hansman, 2001) who were not satisfied with individualistic learning frameworks have made a case for the importance of social cultural contexts in influencing what and how people know and learn. Bullough (2008) found support to add to this recent research by analyzing a large-scale reform effort in teacher education sponsored by the commission on Teacher Education of The American Council of Education in 1939 through 1942.

The eight volumes published by the Commission gave insights into educational practice and reform that were buried by cold war politics of post-World War II America along with the problems of building and staffing the nation's schools (Bullough, 2008). Through much discourse and collaboration, the Commission concluded with 13 principles that were a basis for education reform and teacher education reform. The principles advocated a shared conception of democracy involving collaboration, self and small group study, consideration of social conditions in learning, focus on children, clarity of aims and philosophies, and recognition that school structures needed changing if reform was to take place in the classroom. The thirteenth principle spoke to the social aspect considered in the help-seeking habits of student teachers:

> Successful reform efforts in university-based teacher education programs supported the value of maximum participation of interested parties,

> including students, and required changes that enhanced the kind and quality of interactions students had with teachers, professors, and the communities within which they lived and worked. (as cited in Bullough, 2008, p. 48)

The present-day sociocultural view drawn from Vygotsky (as cited in Kozulin et al., 2003), Dewey (1916), Bruner (1996), Freire (1998), Gee (2004), and others emphasizes that learning occurs within a social context, much as is implied in the above quote from the 1944 study. The context of learning during student teaching includes student teacher interactions with culture, context, and community. The environment of student teachers is not limited to university methods courses, classroom professors, cooperating teachers, and university supervisors. Student teachers' learning is influenced by professors, peers, colleagues, friends, family, pre-college and college schooling, etc. Student teacher learning is enhanced when they are included in planning their goals and involved in their own supervision (Veal & Rikard, 1998).

Speaking of sociocultural perspective, Gee (2004) says learning is embedded within discourse. The discourse of student teachers that affects their learning and attitudes about teaching is not limited to the physical setting of a classroom – that is only one element. Constructed knowledge, skills, and strategies are more than the acquisition of concepts and skills learned independently of outside influence. To Gee (2004), concepts and skills grow from participation in a large learning system or sociopolitical community. The family, community, institutions including the school(s) and workplace, and society as a whole are all considered part of the environment in which learning takes place and so it is important to examine how these parts of the environment affect learning

how to teach. This environment is also the source of help to student teachers and should be investigated as such.

Colleagues and peers.

McNally, Cope, and Inglis (1997) did an analysis of interviews with 22 secondary student teachers who had completed their ten week internship in a teacher preparation program in Great Britain. They focused on the nature of the support student teachers received during the transition from student to teacher and found the success of the transition to "depend on experiencing a number of relational conditions, which are largely determined by others, but which serve as a crucial context for individual development" (p. 485). The student teachers in the study appreciated explicit feedback from their cooperating teacher rather than general support such as "you did fine."

When student teachers had a problem, they sought help from others as well as their cooperating teachers. In fact, McNally and Inglis found the support of colleagues, rather than the cooperating teacher was "perhaps the largest part of that experience" (p. 488). Colleagues consisted of teachers who taught in the same department as the student teacher, other student teachers in the school, and non-teaching staff in the school. Some student teachers reported their family and friends who were willing to listen and serve as an emotional outlet for their frustrations were most helpful. Within the school, the researchers found that the staffroom or teacher's lounge was the most popular place for student teachers to gather with others for support. They also indicated that it made them feel more like they were a part of the school. Most student teachers valued in-service days as an opportunity to meet others to strike up a rapport, rather than to learn something about teaching or get help with a problem from the content of the presentation.

Those student teachers who did not have good relationships with their cooperating teachers, but felt valued by colleagues still reported a good student teaching experience. The researchers suggested that those student teachers who did not experience support from either source would have likely reported a bad student teaching experience and would have felt they had not learned anything. It appeared from this study that relational conditions in the environment of student teaching were influential in learning how to teach and resolving problems as they occurred.

In order to investigate support for student teachers at a university in Taiwan, Hsu (2005) developed a questionnaire to sample the help-seeking behavior of 40 secondary student teachers during the last three months of their year-long student teaching. The student teachers were assigned a supervising teacher from the university and a cooperating teacher at a P-12 school. They were required to attend monthly meetings at the university where the questionnaire was administered. Student teachers specified their most critical problem, how they had attempted to solve it, and whom they had contacted for help as well as how they had contacted their helper.

Hsu (2005) found ten categories of problems from his analysis. They included classroom discipline and management, dealing with problems of individual students, motivating students, dealing with individual differences, lesson planning and teaching, lack of spare time, administration and policy problems, conflict with cooperating teachers, evaluation and job preparation, and health and life style. He found 2% of the 935 requests for help were directed to supervising teachers, 41% were to peer student teachers, approximately 33% were to cooperating teachers and other teachers at the P-12 school and 25% were to family and friends. About 90% of the requests for help were

face-to-face contacts, 9% were by phone and 1% was by email. Hence, peers were most helpful and face-to-face contacts were most desired for support during their student teaching.

Hsu (2005) observed some trends between problems and helpers. For example when dealing with problems of individual students, 22% of the requests for help were to cooperating teachers, 25% of the requests were to other teachers at the P-12 school, and 32% of the requests for help were to other student teachers. For lesson planning and teaching, 45% of the requests for help were to peer student teachers and 30% were to cooperating teachers. For problems related to evaluation and job preparation, student teachers requested help from their peers the most often – 43% of the time. Family, friends, and student teacher peers were contacted for help 75% of the time for personal issues such as health and life style. Overall the greatest number of requests for help was from peer student teachers in every problem area. Hence, it seems that the whole environment of the student teachers affected learning how to teach and peers were sought out most frequently for help with problems during student teaching. Since most requests for help were face-to-face contacts, this research supported the importance of personal contact in lieu of indirect contacts such as phone or email, when student teachers seek help.

Reflection.

Thinking about the importance of reflection for teachers is not a new concept. Reflection can be defined as making sense of what is going on or thinking about what one has learned, or even thinking about how one thinks (Bruner, 1996). John Dewey (1933 & 1965) documented the importance of reflection in the teaching profession. More recent

researchers have documented positive outcomes related to reflection while student teaching (Gipe & Richards, 1992; Silva, 2000). Dewey (1965) considered reflective thinking a tool for professional growth. He believed educators should learn how to think about their teaching so they could engage learners in the process of learning. Helterbran (2008) declared that teachers who reflect "try new things, work at what is not working well, and generally think through problems" (p. 125). Reflective student teachers have been able to solve problems on their own or with the help of reflective peers, expert others, or friends and family members who act as sounding boards. Reflective practice has provided student teachers with a deeper understanding of the complexities of the teaching process as well as more knowledge.

Gipe and Richards (1992) studied reflective journals of 23 female elementary preservice teachers who were responsible for preparing and teaching four separate 50 minute reading/language arts lessons per week to small groups over the course of one semester. While cooperating teachers informally observed the preservice teachers, the program supervisor made formal observations. The preservice teachers wrote in their non-graded journals weekly for 15 weeks. Each week the program supervisor read the journals and wrote comments designed to encourage the preservice teachers to reflect in their journals by asking questions such as "What could you have done differently?" (Gipe & Richards, 1992)

Sixteen classroom teachers and the program supervisor independently rated the preservice teachers at the end of the first month of observations and again at the conclusion of the semester, according to agreed upon criteria about abilities to prepare and present lessons. Additionally, two university supervisors independently rated the

participants' journals, scoring the journal entries by the number of reflective statements. Reflective statements were defined as those demonstrating the participants were attempting to make sense of their teaching experiences or to consider and question the impact of broader concerns on classroom teachers' practices.

The six preservice teachers who were rated as improving the most in ability to prepare and present appropriate lessons wrote the largest number of reflective journal statements, and the eleven who were rated as least improved wrote the fewest reflective journal statements. The six who were rated at the beginning and end of the semester as "always prepares and presents appropriate lessons" (Gipe & Richards, 1992) wrote a midrange number of reflective journal statements.

The significance of Gipe and Richards' (1992) research rested on the demonstration of a possible correlation between increased reflective thinking and improvement in teaching during the preservice experience. An interesting sidebar to this study illustrated that reading preservice reflections helped the supervisors become more aware of conditions in the classrooms that would possibly hinder or help other student teachers, indicating an additional benefit of reflective journaling with regard to the preservice teachers seeking help for various problems. The research indicated that field experiences without any challenges may not nurture reflective thinking, thereby not providing opportunities for growth and development of the student teacher. On the other hand, too many conflicts or problems during internship were shown to possibly squelch growth and confidence as well. Journaling provided a venue for requesting help with problems encountered during student teaching and provided multiple perspectives of expert others as they had written discourse about teaching and learning. All participants

were learners and the journaling seemed to promote collaborative growth as well as personal growth for all involved.

Silva (2000) conducted descriptive case studies of two groups of elementary student teachers over a two year period of time during which she explored the use of triad journaling as a tool for enhancing their respective internship experiences by reflections. Field notes, two open-ended interviews with individual members of the triads which were recorded and transcribed, and triad journals were used to develop the case studies. The student teachers made journal entries approximately three times each week focusing on ideas, questions, or actions centered on teaching and the classroom. Then, the student teacher would pass the journal to the university supervisor, who then passed it to the cooperating teacher who would pass it back to the student teacher. Each person would add reflective comments, responses, and thoughts about the topics written in the journal. The journals were used to share insights about collaborative projects, to ask questions, and /or to respond to questions. This practice was designed to encourage reflective thinking.

Over the course of the study, Silva (2000) found there was an increase in communication in nine of the ten triads. Although the supervisors and the cooperating teachers seemed to have posed more questions than the student teachers, there were increasingly more questions in the journals by each member of the triads. Furthermore, the journal became useful as a springboard for collaborative conversations among the triad. Some of the student teachers reported feeling as though they were better able to ask questions in the journal than face to face because of time constraints or because they were simply too shy. The one instance in which the triad did not show increased

communication included a cooperating teacher who would not participate regularly; therefore her student teacher did not have the opportunity to benefit from the journal. This study demonstrated how reflections in journals provided an opportunity for excellent communication between all of the participating triad members; the journals enabled each member to pose questions that could increase the collective knowledge of the student teachers and student teacher s who were not very vocal felt less inhibited to share their feelings and questions.

Supervision.

Studies have shown that supervision is not a high priority among teacher education programs (Goodlad, 1991; Slick, 1998; Zeichner, 2002). Professors and full-time faculty teacher educators are not encouraged or given substantial credit for supervision assignments. According to Zeichner, mentoring student teachers is not often valued as an important activity either in schools or universities. He refers to a lack of preparation and support for those who mentor the student teachers, the insignificant status of the university supervisors, and the lack of incentives and rewards for doing a good job. He goes on to report that the student teaching and practicum supervision is often carried out by temporary staff such as retired teachers and graduate students who have "little connection to or authority in the rest of the teacher education program" (p. 60).

Slick (1998) confirmed a lack of preparation and support for the university supervisor in her study. Carrie was a university supervisor who was also a graduate student. She had taught drama and speech in a public school for one year and had taught education classes while supervising student teachers at a college for four years. She had supervised over 80 elementary education undergraduate majors and a few secondary

student teachers who were drama and speech majors. During the semester of Slick's (1998) study, Carrie was supervising five secondary social studies teachers. Although Carrie wanted to help her student teachers, she did not have adequate support from the university or information about her role as supervisor to provide the type of help her student teachers needed. Carrie complained that there was "little collaboration among members of the School of Education and that she felt she could have gained valuable insights about supervision had she had the opportunity for professional dialogue with faculty members and other supervisors" (p. 826).

Slick (1998) noted that Carrie lacked the confidence and knowledge to help her student teachers at required seminars when they asked for help to bridge ideas of theory to practice in their field of study. With regard to seminars Carrie planned for the student teachers, she did not receive guidance from the department and did not have an explanation of goals or purposes of the seminars; hence as Slick noted, "Carrie was left to struggle with the benefits and setting an agenda that would support the student teachers" (p. 828).

An over-arching problem of university supervisors mentioned by Slick (1997, 1998) is the conflict of roles most supervisors feel as they strive to be "coach and evaluator" to the student teacher (1997, p. 724). Other studies also show supervisors place high priority on supporting the student teacher and on avoiding conflict at the same time (Borko & Mayfield, 1995; Dunne & Dunne, 1993; Zimpher, de Voss, & Nott, 1980). Slick (1998) suggested that the title supervisor may need to be changed to reflect a more collaborative role or a co-partnership. She mentions the irony of the word supervisor which implies status, but at the university as well as at the school the university

supervisor "frequently assumes a position of low status" (p. 821). In studies of Professional Development Schools, renaming and redefining roles have provided a foundation for change in the lives of teachers and schools (Slick, 1998). Perhaps, a change in the supervisor's title would result in the development of a more informed and thus better helper for student teachers.

Slick (1998) concludes her study with an ultimatum for teacher educators to encourage "collegial relationships among the faculty members in the education departments, among the members of the student teaching triad, between teacher educators in the field and those of faculty campuses, and between schools of education and schools where student teachers teach" (p. 833). Slick (1997, 1998) and Zeichner (2002) encourage educators to visualize the P-12 school as a whole community for learning to teach – where the environment promotes learning for student teachers, cooperating teachers, supervisors, and students. They see promise for reform in the supportive atmosphere of professional development schools where collaboration is the norm, not the exception and everyone involved shares in learning and problem-solving.

In a study of cooperating teachers' perspectives on the student teaching triad, Veal and Rikard (1998) found a hierarchical relationship among the triad members, with the cooperating teacher being most powerful and influential over the student teacher. Glickman and Bey (1990) noticed hierarchal characteristics in their study as well, finding that cooperating teachers were excluded from many decisions regarding the student teachers. Some characteristics were the cooperating teachers were not included in the choice of student teacher placements, the duration of student teaching, the requirement of

planning and written work, or the final grading. Nonetheless, research has shown a major helper in the student teacher experience is the cooperating teacher.

Studies about dyads and triads have shown adding a third party to a relationship frequently caused conflict and jealousy among the members (Caplow, 1968; Mills, 1953; Simmel, 1950). Veal and Rikard (1998) found two triads at work during student teaching, the functional triad and the institutional triad. The functional triad consisted of the student teacher, the cooperating teacher, and the students; the institutional triad included the student teacher, the cooperating teacher, and the university supervisor. Veal and Rikard concluded that because the cooperating teacher and student teacher were present in both triads, there were stronger ties to that relationship and hence there were more opportunities for helpfulness and support from the cooperating teacher.

Research by Veal and Rikard (1998) showed cooperating teachers' perceptions of university supervisors and the university itself included stories of "intimidation, power plays, and an attitude that university professors know it all" (p. 116). Only one cooperating teacher of the 23 interviewed by Veal and Rikard mentioned collaboratively working with a university supervisor. The lack of collaborative work was consistent with other studies (Cope, 1973; Kauffman, 1992; Yee, 1969). If the triad is to continue, Veal and Rikard (1998) proposed there needs to be shared supervision and learning among all the members of the triad. They argued that all three members of the triad have the potential to be helpers to the development of the student teacher, but there has to be a collaborative effort. Veal and Rikard suggested student teachers should assist in their own learning experience by putting their action plans into effect; cooperating teachers could learn from the student teacher and the university supervisor. It would be possible

for the university supervisor to contribute information regarding research on effective teaching and learning, whereas the cooperating teacher could share her knowledge about more effective practice in the classroom. Discourse during meetings could be more equally divided among the triad members. Everyone would become more valuable as a helper if each triad member contributed to the learning community.

Zeichner (1990, 2002, & 2006) claimed that inconsistency in supervision was a weakness of the student teaching experience, Palonsky and Jacobson (as cited in Wilson, 2006) found when there are conflicting ideas between the cooperating teacher and the supervisor, the knowledge of the university supervisor is often supplanted by that of the cooperating teacher. When student teachers needed help, they frequently relied upon the experience of the cooperating teacher more than the theoretical knowledge the supervisor may have shared.

An alternative model of student teaching.

Bullough, Young, Erickson, Birrell, Clark, Egan, et al., (2002) studied partnership preservice teaching versus single-placement preservice teaching in a professional development school (PDS). They wanted to know if preservice teachers placed in a partnership with a mentor teacher would encourage a collaborative conception of teacher development for the beginning teachers. They also wanted to know if patterns of interaction between mentors and preservice teachers in single and partnership placements would differ and how the preservice student teachers would relate to their mentors. Research has shown that the quality of student teaching is dependent on the quality of the relationships between student teachers and mentor teachers (McNally & Inglis, 1997). In Elliott's study (1991), the kind and quality of relationships greatly influenced teacher

learning. During conferences, mentoring teachers tended to dominate the discourse giving directions, telling stories, and offering suggestions (Bullough et al, 2002), oftentimes based upon their experiences and intuition rather than research. Johnston (as cited in Bullough et al., 2002) contended that "experience alone is not enough [to become a teacher]… it was the thought and subsequent action associated with the experience that would determine its value in the learning process" (p. 69).

In the Bullough et al (2002) study, 12 preservice teachers were in partner-placements and nine were in single placements. Using interviews, time logs, and transcripts of planning sessions, they found the preservice teachers in partner-placements "felt better supported and were able to engage in greater instructional risks within the classroom. Children in classrooms where partners were placed were reportedly better served" (p. 68). Mentors in partnership placements allowed more input from the preservice teachers during planning than those in a single placement setting and there seemed to be more trust in the relationships. The researchers concluded that "partnership placement holds promise for providing richer, more interesting, and more educative early field experience for elementary preservice teachers than traditional practice allows" (p. 68). The social context was shown to influence the preservice teacher learning; more discourse and collaboration resulted in an overall more pleasant experience as the preservice teachers sought after help from their peers and their mentors. More learning seemed to take place as preservice teachers were allowed to participate and experiment with their ideas during the planning sessions and the classroom activities. The preservice teachers had opportunities for reflection as they spoke with their equals about classroom activities in a risk free environment.

One quote in the Bullough et al (2002) study that summed up the sort of feelings a preservice teacher had about the partnership placement is below:

> I get to observe not only an experienced teacher, but another student on my level who's going through the same experiences of being a new…teacher. Seeing how those kids respond to him, [I] learn…Sometimes I get involved in my lesson and I don't realize what's going on with my students, and when I'm not teaching I get to see exactly what is going on with the students. It's interesting… [My partner and I] talk. Did you know I was having a bad day? We get to express our concerns about what's going on. (p. 78)

In contrast to the paired placements, the preservice teachers in single placements in the study were more interested in fitting into the established curriculum and there was little evidence of team work (p. 72). The single-placed teachers "felt they were alone and somewhat unsupported by their mentors, whom they recognized as extraordinarily busy people" (p. 74). Single-placed preservice teachers were more concerned about discipline and management than those in partnerships placements. Those in partnership placements were interested and invested in each other's successes. They bailed one another out if something did not go right. They helped each other solve problems.

Exemplary teacher education programs.

> Preparing teachers as classroom researchers and expert collaborators who can learn from one another is essential when the range of knowledge for teaching has grown so expansive that it cannot be mastered by any individual and when students' infinitely diverse ways of learning are

recognized as requiring continual adaptations in teaching. (Darling-Hammond, 2006, p. 305)

In Darling-Hammond's article, Constructing 21st-Century Teacher Education (2006), she studied "seven exemplary teacher education programs that produce graduates who are extraordinarily well prepared from their first days in the classroom" (p. 305). She addressed obstacles to the creation of powerful education programs such as what Dan Lortie (1975) called "the apprenticeship of observation" - that is the learning that took place while being a student for 12 or more years in traditional classroom settings, "the problem of enactment" (Kennedy, 1999) - where student teachers must learn to do a variety of things simultaneously, and the problem of bringing student teachers to understand and deal with 'the problem of complexity' that is made more intense by the constantly changing nature of teaching and learning in groups" (Darling-Hammond, 2006, p. 305). Citing three critical components of strong, effective teacher education programs that helped to overcome student teacher obstacles stated above, she listed:

1. Tight coherence and integration among courses and between coursework and clinical work in schools.
2. Extensive and intensely supervised clinical work integrated with course work using pedagogies that link theory and practice.
3. Closer, proactive relationships with schools that serve diverse learners effectively and develop and model good teaching. (p. 300)

All three components were dependent upon the pre-service and student teaching experience. Student teachers had to collaborate with expert others, colleagues, peers, and students as they sought help for various problems in the school context. Key in the

success of these programs was the relationship between the universities and schools in which the students taught. They were partnerships where student teachers learned in an atmosphere of community learning where professors, teachers, student teachers, and students collaborate and learned together. The schools were designed in such a way as to provide time for their faculty to collaborate, conduct action research, reflect, and teach diverse students. University faculty was present much of the time, if not all the time, interacting with school faculty, administration, student teachers, and P-12 students.

Action research as a teacher preparation tool.

Action research is systematic and intentional research usually preceded by reflections about a problem and followed by planning, more reflecting, acting, observing, and so on until one arrives at an answer to the problem or more questions with regard to its complexity (Crocco, Faithfull, & Schwartz, 2003; Levin & Rock, 2003). Action research during internship is frequently undergone in collaboration with knowledgeable others such as university faculty, cooperating teachers, and/or other student teachers or teachers (Crocco et al., 2003; Levine & Rock, 2003).

Levin and Rock (2003) studied five pairs of student teachers and their cooperating teachers who collaboratively planned, implemented, and evaluated action research projects. Student teachers and their cooperating teachers were individually interviewed several times during the semester and planning sessions and evaluation sessions were audio-taped. Additionally, written action research plans and reflections were collected and analyzed. Levin and Rock (2003) found the student teachers developed a better understanding of themselves as teachers and of their students as a result of collaborative efforts. The student teachers began focusing their attention on their students and gained

insights into their students' perspectives as well as an increased awareness of their needs. Three of the five student teachers showed additional understanding about their roles as teacher researcher and identified reflective practice as a critical responsibility of teachers. The student teachers also recognized that professional growth and development is a personal responsibility. In four of the five cases, both the student teachers and the cooperating teachers indicated that the action research project helped them develop meaningful and collaborative mentor-mentee relationships.

This research by Levin and Rock (2003) revealed some of the advantages of student teachers being involved in action research. Participation in action research nurtured reflective practices, collaboration, and a deeper understanding of teaching, all of which are beneficial to student teachers. This research is important because it shows that doing action research can clarify an student teacher's self image as teacher and can help student teachers focus on students' needs. It can help solve perceived problems of student teachers as they research the problem and collaborate with expert others.

Price and Valli (2005) studied three elementary student teachers and one secondary student teacher involved in conducting action research. Two of the student teachers were conducting classroom research and two were conducting institutional action research. The student teachers collected and analyzed data from class meetings, surveys, teacher-researcher journals, student journals and assignments, e-mail correspondence, informal interviews, video- and audiotapes, policy documents, and research meetings. Student interviews, classroom presentations, and discussions were audio taped and transcribed.

Price and Valli (2005) documented increased understanding of teaching by all four student teachers through researcher journals, student teacher journals, and individual interviews of the student teachers. The student teachers began to focus more on students and they began to have a better understanding of their role as teacher and agent of change in the school. The secondary student teacher's opinion of herself as a teacher went from one who viewed teaching as explaining material, giving homework, and making tests to one who said, "I strive to connect math I teach with the everyday world" (Price & Valli, 2005). Another student teacher reported a better understanding of classroom structure and acknowledged a better understanding of the complexity of teaching. A third student teacher who was conducting institutional research was able to successfully implement change in a school program and provide a way of evaluating the change as well; she felt she had a better understanding of the complexity of effecting change in an institution. This student teacher had been a volunteer parent at the school for three years and was familiar with the staff and administration before she began the research, which allowed her a distinct advantage in pursuing the institutional action research. The fourth student teacher's action research project did not result in any change at the school because the school administration did not want to consider change at this time. She shared her collected data and described the problems she encountered with the administration and faculty to her peers and professor, and in so doing, she, her peers and her professor felt they all gained an increased understanding of the complexity of institutional change. Participating in action research, collaboratively solving problems in their environment, and becoming change agents in schools or classrooms, student teachers came to a better

understanding of the complexity of teaching while gaining and sharing knowledge about teaching and learning.

Connecting the university to the school site.

Anagnostopoulos, Smith, and Basmadjian (2007) researched "Bridging the University-School Divide" by examining the crossing of boundaries in expertise between university faculty and school faculty while they created a rubric for student teachers. Anagnostopoulos et al. noted, "As preservice teachers enter teaching, they gravitate toward conventional P-12 practices, dismissing those endorsed by the university as impractical" (p. 138). Differences in values, identities, and tools present in universities and P-12 schools created problems for student teachers and beginning teachers (Smagorinsky, Cook, & Jackson, 2004; Smagorinsky, Cook, & Johnson, 2003). Studies of professional development and instructional reform have shown the prominence of boundary crossing to teacher learning thus documenting learning that occurs through teachers' interactions with colleagues in formal and informal groups (Borko, 2004).

Anagnostopoulos et al. (2007) employed an activity theory perspective based upon research by Vygotsky (as cited in Roth & Lee, 2007). Anagnostopoulos et al. (2007) used the concept of horizontal expertise described by Engestrom (2003) to illustrate how the co-creation of a rubric assisted university and P-12 faculties in seeing themselves as partners rather than competitors. When individuals collaborated and interacted with their environment in the creation of exterior tools, the individuals' mental processes became more accessible to others and the tools became useful for social interaction. The co-creation of a rubric facilitated communication and built connections between university instructors and P-12 teachers.

One of the problems encountered in the Anagnostopoulos et al. (2007) study was the student teachers were resistant to the rubric. They had not been involved in the collaboration of the rubric design. The researchers recognized that future studies of this sort should involve the student teachers in the creation of boundary objects. As student teachers seek helpers, providing opportunities for boundary crossing between cooperating teachers, university supervisors, student teachers, and other helpers in the student teacher context contributed significantly to student teacher's learning and dispositions.

Wilson (2006) examined the differences between a traditional triad and an alternative model of supervision where the university supervisor was a liaison between the university and the school responsible for collaborating. The university faculty met regularly with an on-site team of teachers (CMTs) to make suggestions and mentor the student teachers, but did not observe the student teachers or participate in assessment. There were 20 elementary and secondary student teachers who were placed in a traditional triad for eight weeks and placed with a team of CMTs for eight weeks. Wilson found the student teachers felt they were helped better and supported better by the team of CMTs than the triad. The CMTs preferred the CMT model to their experiences of working in the triad and the university supervisors also preferred the CMT model.

Findings of Beck and Kosnik (2002) were similar; they attributed the positive outcomes of the CMT model as compared to the traditional triad to collegial relationships formed with the CMTs. All participants felt that the collaboration and mutual support offered by the CMT model was more helpful and supportive. One concern expressed by the liaisons in the Wilson (2006) study was whether or not the CMTs supported the philosophies of the university. In response to this concern, Wilson suggested more

collaboration between liaisons and CMTs as well as between the liaisons and the student teachers. She also suggested some classroom observations by the liaison may ameliorate this concern. Wilson advocated university-based faculty and school-based faculty developing a collegial relationship in order to work together to mentor and support student teachers.

Professional development schools.

Although partnerships between university teacher preparation programs and public schools are costly and complex, they can add to the internship experience while providing benefits for the university and the public school's teachers and students (Crocco et al., 2003; Castle, Fox, & Souder, 2006). The mission of Professional Development Schools (PDSs) is "professional preparation of candidates [preservice teachers], faculty development, inquiry directed at the improvement of practice, and enhanced student learning" (NCATE, 2001). PDSs are usually in challenging settings and often have been restructured to meet the needs of the very complex mission of partnering with a university or college. Collaborative problem solving between faculty, university, and student teachers are expected in these schools (NCAE, 2001).

PDSs have some distinct characteristics, which when considered in the context of internships offer some excellent opportunities for collaboration, reflective thinking and action research experiences for student teachers. PDSs are focused on meeting a culturally diverse set of children's needs. Their vision of teaching and learning is increasing practitioner knowledge through research, and partners in PDSs are accountable to one another as well as to the public for maintaining high standards for their students, preservice teachers, and faculty. PDSs are dedicated to providing learning opportunities

to candidates, a diverse student body, and staff (NCATE, 2001). Student teachers placed in strong PDSs usually have the benefit of a university faculty member on campus and cooperating teachers who teach using methods and philosophies aligned with those of the university. Internship usually takes place for one year, is frequently in the same school as the other preservice experiences, and there are usually several student teachers in the school at the same time, thereby providing opportunities for collaboration between peers and opportunities for problem solving in a social context.

Castle et al. (2006) studied 60 PDS and 31 non-PDS student teachers in a post baccalaureate elementary licensure program at George Mason University. The research began after one of their partner schools began paying first year PDS students the wages of second year teachers at that school. The administration said they paid them more because the first year teachers in the PDS program had more experience than most first year teachers and taught more like experienced teachers.

In addition, Castle et al. (2006) compared the student teacher evaluation forms and the portfolio presentations which were completed at the end of the internships of the PDS and non-PDS student teachers. Evaluation forms and portfolios were prepared using forty-six items from the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) standards. Those standards were divided into four sections: planning and preparation, instruction and management, assessment, and personal and professional development.

Of the 46 items on the evaluation form, ten showed statistically significant differences between the PDS and non-PDS student teachers, all of which favored PDS teacher student teachers. In the planning and preparation section, PDS student teachers

showed significantly higher scores on "Gathers, creates, and organizes materials and equipment in advance" (Castle et al., 2006, p. 69). In the instruction and management section, PDS student teachers did significantly better in the following items; presents content accurately and instructions clearly, encouraged more critical thinking and problem solving, created an orderly and supportive environment using routines, demonstrated the ability to manage two or more class activities at the same time giving attention to each, and handled behavior problems effectively. In the assessment of students section, the PDS student teachers scored significantly higher in four out of eight items.

During the portfolio presentations, PDS student teachers seemed to voice more ownership of the class and the learning therein, using the present tense when speaking about their teaching, whereas the non-PDS student teachers typically used the future tense when referring to their teaching. PDS candidates referred to "my" or "our" class or students, non-PDS candidates used "his" or "her" when speaking of class or students.

Other differences in PDS student teachers' portfolio presentations were the increased amount of discussion about management, classroom communication, and school community; the more sophisticated discussion and integration of standards involving development, diversity, instructional strategies, planning, assessment, and reflection; and the depth with which they described their teaching by including how and why they made their instructional decisions (Castle et al., 2006). Additionally PDS student teachers focused on students and student learning while non-PDS student teachers focused more on themselves.

This research is important because it showed that at least in these cases, PDS student teachers demonstrated more competence than non-PDS student teachers in several very important aspects of teaching. PDS student teachers completed considerably longer internships than non-PDS student teachers and it could be that having a longer internship period might have been the reason for the difference rather than their status as part of the PDS. The non-PDS student teachers did not have the advantage of a university faculty member on site, which may have contributed to a significant difference in support. However, the PDS partnerships had characteristics that nurtured areas of development facilitating experiences highly regarded in teaching such as collaboration and inquiry. PDSs presented opportunities for student teachers to voice their problems and receive input from expert others as well as their peers and colleagues.

Crocco et al. (2003) did case studies to investigate the effect of a university and a PDS partnership on eight student teachers in the 1998-1999 school year and four student teachers in the 1997-1998 term. The student teachers were master's students in secondary education programs at Teachers College (TC), Columbia University doing their internships at Beacon High School in New York City. The student teachers conducted action research to provide the State's Education Department with evidence to support the continuation of portfolios to access their graduates in lieu of Regent's Exams. A grant funded a tuition rebate for student teachers, a TC liaison that would facilitate weekly seminars for the student teachers coordinate projects, a Beacon teacher liaison, and compensation for three PDS coordinators.

The student teachers individually interviewed teachers, parents, and students, took field notes, and videotaped portfolio presentations to discover possible problems in the

process and assessment of portfolios. The following year the student teachers continued with the portfolio research and added an action research project to investigate interdisciplinary curriculum. This investigation revealed some problem areas in curriculum.

In this study, the internships were phased-in processes that led the student teachers to total assumption of curriculum planning and instructional responsibilities in the classroom, involvement in extracurricular activities, participation in faculty meetings, involvement in a community service program, and attendance at weekly seminars for student teachers. Crocco et al. (2003) used interviews with university faculty, school staff, and student teachers as well as student teachers' written reports to conclude that all of the student teachers agreed that their student teacher experiences were beneficial and worth the time and effort they had expended. Furthermore testimonials from the student teachers demonstrated growth in their development as teachers and change agents in the PDS. Increased time at the school and support from the liaisons as well as other staff provided support for the student teachers' growth and successes.

This study is important because it showed some potential benefits for student teachers in a PDS. Because of the time and financial limitations, the learning experiences of the student teachers described in this research were not likely to be representative of the average learning experiences for student teachers at all PDSs. Additional funding was necessary to provide the tremendous support system for the student teachers and their projects. This may not always be available at other PDSs; however, the study does document how PDS internships were a very positive learning experience for future teachers as they collaboratively solved problems.

Technology.

Jacobsen, Friesen, and Clifford (2004) studied student teacher support through the use of inquiry and technology. They reported on a collaborative inquiry conducted by an elementary school staff, a cadre of student teachers, and a university faculty member in a professional development school to address the mentorship of the student teachers. They intentionally created a culture of inquiry in the context of media and technology. They combined face-to-face and online support systems to research teacher professional development and student teacher preparation. Claiming that field placements usually do not provide expert modeling of practice in teaching because of the teacher transition to post-industrial practices of teaching and learning, these researchers suggested student teachers and experienced teachers should work together in learning communities.

In the Jacobsen et al. (2004) study, they identified the first step in student teaching as posing problems, identifying discrepancies between theories and practices, challenging common routines, drawing on the work of others for generative frameworks, and attempting to make visible much of that which is taken for granted about teaching and learning. Second, student teachers and experienced teachers should explore ways to use technology and in so doing put everyone into a place of genuine inquiry about school reform. Third, Jacobsen et al. advocated field supervision of student teachers being scholarly work where "everyone is a learner, a researcher, a seeker of new insights, and a poser of questions for which no one in the group already has the answers" (Cochrane-Smith & Lytle, 2001, p. 23 as cited in Jacobsen et al, 2004, p. 2).

The cadre of student teachers and a university faculty advisor in the Jacobsen and Friesen (2004) study spent two days a week at the PDS working closely with the school

staff to create a learning community of inquiry supported by Information and Communication Technology (ICT). The intent was to break down the "conventional isolation of the classroom teacher in order to permit experienced teachers to work more effectively together; student and experienced teachers function as teams; and the school to regard the cadre of students assigned to them as the responsibility of the school as a whole" (p. 309). The PDS provided a room where the student teachers and faculty advisor could meet weekly to talk about their experiences, pose questions, and support each other in their endeavors. School faculty was invited to share and or attend also.

The school faculty and student teachers worked in an online environment, IO (Intelligence Online). It was developed by Galileo Educational Network and Axia NetMedia. IO, "a fully mentored online professional learning environment for student and experienced teachers" (Jacobsen & Friesen, 2004, p. 312), connected student teachers with each other, with the education faculty, and with professional colleagues who shared an interest in inquiry. The researchers established an online mentoring environment for the student teachers to help them resist the urge to "teach the way they were taught" (p. 313). The student teachers were required to create a cross-curricular inquiry project for the children by employing media and technology. IO supported the student teachers in their design tasks, preparing essential questions, designing inquiry tasks, and developing performance and assessment rubrics.

Key findings in the research were that IO "did support mentors and student teachers in sustaining meaningful professional dialogue throughout the semester and the online design tools enabled student teachers to develop inquiry-based, technology enhanced projects for children" (Jacobsen & Friesen, 2004, p. 314). The student teachers

participated frequently in community discussion spaces that supported and sustained professional dialogue. A key in this research that must not be overlooked in the success of the technology projects was the face-to-face ongoing support provided by the university faculty, the students in the student teaching cadre, and the PDS faculty itself as they had discourse regularly in the weekly meetings, at lunch, in the staff break rooms, and in a special work room available to the student teachers during the week. Without funding for this sort of environment and support from the university, I do not believe the supportive online discussion groups would have been so successful.

Molesworth (2004) studied 60 campus-based, final-year marketing undergraduates who used computer-mediated communication to support traditional lecture and seminar approaches. He found the students had mixed attitudes to the computer-mediated communication with some finding it very beneficial and others "much less so" (p. 79). Most of his students did not find the virtual seminars useful, but many found the downloadable lecture notes and frequently asked questions facility for assignments useful thus providing evidence of student reflection and collaboration. An application of the Molesworth findings for the benefit of student teachers seeking help was downloading notes and questions from a concurrent method's class during student teaching may encourage reflection and collaboration during class as well as after class by peers and colleagues.

Hallman (2007) explored the use of electronic teaching portfolios with preservice English teachers and concluded that the preservice teachers developed dissonance in their teacher identity during their portfolio preparations. The preservice teachers talked about choosing what was important to be included in their portfolios; they realized some

artifacts would be preferable for their university professor whereas other artifacts would be preferable for their prospective employers. Hallman claimed that the e-portfolio could be used as a tool instead of a showcase for good work by engaging students in conversations about e-portfolios. Teacher educators could encourage thinking about teaching practice and teacher identity and as such the e-portfolio could be a support mechanism for student teachers as they strive for a balance between being a knowledgeable teacher and an inquisitive student. Furthermore, Hallman said "teacher educators can help beginning teachers recognize that the dissonance they feel in the effort of constructing their identity as beginning teachers should be viewed as constructive" (p.485).

The dissonance referred to in the Hallman (2007) study was a problem for the student teachers. Using the construction of the e-portfolios as a springboard for collaboration, student teachers, their peers, and knowledgeable professors benefited from discourse related to problem-solving. It encouraged constructivist teaching and learning in the college classroom, thus possibly promoting more sustained learning for the student teachers while examining the complexity of teaching and the solving of problems.

Gee (2004) noted the advantages of students creating multiple portfolios because of the dynamic work market in the world today. He referred to affinity spaces and technology that provided opportunities for the sharing of extensive knowledge as people create shared affinity spaces. Jacobsen and Friesen (2004), Molesworth (2004), and Hallman's (2007) studies recognized and gave support to Gee's perspective of using identities, language, situated cognition, and meaningful learning opportunities to support today's diverse learners particularly student teachers.

Summary

I explored from whom, how and how often student teachers sought help regarding the various problems that arose during their internship by focusing on the history of student teaching, mandates and standards that have dealt with providing help to student teachers as they learn how to be teachers, and sociocultural views of learning by Dewey, Vygotsky, Bruner, Freire, and Gee. I took into account research concerning different ways to enhance the student teaching experience such as peer and colleague support, reflective journaling, supervision, an alternative model for student teaching, exemplary teacher education programs, action research as a teacher preparation tool, connecting the university to the school site, professional development schools, and technology. As Darling-Hammond (2006) said, constructing 21st-century teacher education will require collaboration because teaching "has grown so expansive that it cannot be mastered by any individual" (p. 305). Collaboration was a common component to positive outcomes related to student teaching research. This was supported by the theorists mentioned above and substantiated by summarized research.

After reviewing the literature and realizing the influence of others outside the university in the education of teachers, I became aware that another study was needed to explore from whom, how, and how often student teachers seek help with problems during their classroom internship here in the United States. Traditional support systems for student teachers such as the triad may or may not supply the help they needed. New support systems may need to be developed. Before new systems could be developed it would be important to know who is presently helping the student teachers, how, and how often.

Hsu (2005) studied the help-seeking behaviors of student teachers in Taiwan by using a survey; however I found no such studies conducted in the United States. Furthermore, in his discussion of the results of his study he suggested that other data sources were needed "to obtain a fuller picture of the student teacher support at an institution" (p. 316). I decided to use his survey to explore student teachers in the United States as they sought help and follow up with a qualitative study incorporating data gained from interviews of student teachers. This would get inside the student teacher's head to find out from whom they are seeking help, as well as how and how often they are seeking help. To further explore the dynamics of student teachers and their helpers, I interviewed university supervisors and cooperating teachers. This not only allowed for triangulation of data from different sources but also presented a richer more detailed picture of the student teachers' help-seeking habits. It seemed more appropriate than a quantitative study alone. Chapter three discusses the methodology for this dissertation.

Chapter Three

Methodology

This section discusses the following: the rationale for using a mixed-methods approach and a description of the application of grounded theory techniques as a strategy for the research; the pilot study; the selection of the sample with descriptions of the samples, the university where the research study was conducted, the triad at the university, the student teacher participants, the university supervisor participants, the cooperating teacher participants, and the primary investigator; data collection; instrumentation; research study procedures; and data analysis procedures.

Rationale for Using the Mixed-Methods Approach

The main goal of this study was to better understand what kinds of problems student teachers have in the classroom and from whom they most frequently sought help. This study was conducted in the context of the traditional triad and investigated the support provided to student teachers by the cooperating teachers, university supervisors, and others who may emerge as helpers. The over-riding concern prompting the study was the desire to provide support for student teachers in implementing researched constructivist lessons learned at the university. In order to provide more support to student teachers it is important to know problems they have as well as how they attempt to solve their problems and to whom they go for help.

The purpose of this two-phase, sequential mixed methods study was to gather statistical, quantitative results from a sample of student teachers enrolled in a teacher education program and then follow up with a few individuals to probe and explore those results in more depth by conducting personal interviews. The first phase involved

assessing student teachers' most critical problems and their attempts to find help by using a self-reporting survey developed by Hsu (2005). Hsu conducted his research in Taiwan with a group of 40 secondary student teachers at a university in Taipei. Validity for this instrument was established in previous research (Hsu, 2005).

In the second phase, qualitative interviews with some of the student teachers probed the survey results by exploring details about their critical problems, clarifying their written responses to the survey, and gaining a holistic description of the processes they used when seeking help. To further explore the dynamics of the help-seeking behavior of student teachers, I interviewed cooperating teachers and university supervisors about their perspectives of problems encountered by student teachers and how they perceived student teachers sought help.

This study was conducted from a pragmatist philosophical perspective. Pragmatism "opens the door to multiple methods, different worldviews, and different assumptions, as well as to different forms of data collection and analysis in the mixed methods study" (Creswell, 2003, p. 12). The strategy of inquiry for this research was a mixed methods design with integration of quantitative and qualitative collection of data (Creswell, 2003). The data collected in the survey included responses to open-ended questions based upon the student teachers' actual classroom experiences and responses to closed-ended questions referring to whom they went to for help, how they contacted the person, and how many times they contacted the person. The information garnered from the surveys revealed what kinds of problems student teachers perceived they had and how often they went to whom for help. The interviews with student teachers, cooperating teachers and university supervisors provided additional insight into how student teachers

sought help. Having multiple perspectives on the help-seeking behaviors of student teachers provided opportunities for triangulation of data by confirming, cross-validating, and corroborating the findings of the survey (Greene, Caracelli, & Graham, 1989; Morgan, 1998; Steckler, McLeroy, Goodman, Bird, & McCormick, 1992).

The purpose of the survey was to generalize from a sample to a population so that inferences about student teachers' help-seeking behavior could be made (Babbie, 1990). The case studies provided by the interviews were able to "flesh out" (Punch, 1998, p. 156) the picture of student teaching in a way that was more helpful to understanding the complexity of how student teachers seek help than the survey alone could have been (Babbie, 1990; Fowler, 2002).

Giving the student teachers a list of possible problems and asking them if they did or did not have those kinds of problems could have biased student teachers from mentioning problems not on the list. Using Hsu's (2005) survey with open - ended questions provided the opportunity for student teachers to bring up previously unrecognized problems they may have had. Keeping the interview questions open - ended allowed student teachers to explain their specific problems and solutions which provided an opportunity for new sources of help to emerge during the study.

Application of Grounded theory techniques.

Grounded theory is a research strategy to generate theory from data. "Grounded" signifies that the theory will be generated from or grounded in the data and "theory" denotes that the objective of collecting and analyzing the data is to generate theory (Punch, 1998, p. 163). The main idea in grounded theory is that the theory is developed

inductively from the data. Grounded theory analysis is a way of analyzing data by systematically and consistently coding while comparing data.

Whereas quantitative studies usually verify theory, grounded theory's purpose is to generate theory from data. The research in grounded theory does not begin with a deduced theory that is verified through the testing of a hypothesis, but rather it begins with "an open mind aiming to end up with a theory" (Punch, 1998, p. 166). Although grounded theory is an inductive technique, it also uses deduction in the development of theory analysis. Grounded theory was developed as a method for studying complex social behavior and as such is a pragmatic way to study the help seeking habits of student teachers in the complex context of student teaching. "Grounded theory studies often set out to discover and model the patterns which emerge in the processes people use for dealing with their main problems in particular situations" (Punch, 1998, p. 220). Hence it is an appropriate method for the study of student teachers' seeking help during their internship. They are in the process of dealing with problems occurring during the particular situation of student teaching.

For the purpose of my research study I simply used the tools related to grounded theory to analyze my data rather than trying to develop a theory derived from an analysis of the data. I investigated chunks of information, used open coding, axial coding, and selective coding to find conceptual categories in the data, relationships between the conceptual categories, and core categories. I noted categories as they emerged from the data and to further saturate the categories I collected information from selected participants' interviews.

Pilot Study

The research question for the pilot study asked from whom, how and how often did student teachers seek help regarding the various problems that arise during their internship? In order to obtain a homogenous sample, the participants were limited to student teachers enrolled in a teacher education program at a large southwestern university in the United States. The participants were full-time student teachers in P-12 assigned to public school classrooms with a cooperating teacher and a university supervisor. They were concurrently enrolled in a research class that met once a week; social studies student teachers were in a social studies research class and the other student teachers were in a combined English major and early childhood research class. Those whose major concentration was early childhood had completed one eight-week student teaching assignment and were in the middle of their last eight-week assignment at the time of this study. Those student teachers in secondary education were in the last three to four weeks of their 16 week assignment.

All participants responded to survey questions designed by Hsu (2007) to reveal their most critical problem, to find out how they tried to solve the problem and to see if the problem was solved; if it was not solved the survey asked how they would like to solve the problem? The survey asked participants to complete a table showing who they contacted for help regarding their critical problem, if they used face to face, phone, or email contacts, and how many times helpers had been contacted. In order to get more details about student teachers' problems and their helpers, I interviewed two early childhood majors, two social studies majors, and one English major from the 24 participants who had completed the survey. I used an audio recorder and an interview

guide (Appendix D) following up with clarifying and probing questions adapted to each interview.

The number of requests for help recorded on the surveys ranged from 2 to 46, with an average of 11 requests per problem. Among the requests for help (n=272), only 13% were directed to the university supervisors. The student teachers asked for help from the cooperating teacher 35% of the time, and 39% of the time they asked their peers, friends, or family members for help. The other 13% of requests were made to teachers in the school other than the cooperating teacher. About 86% of the communication was face to face, 7% by phone and 7% by email. Generally speaking, the largest number of requests (67%) dealt with classroom management problems with 42% being about problems involving individual students and 25% being about problems involving whole classes of students. The second and third problems mentioned were class preparation (25%) and problems with a cooperating teacher (8%).

The results of the interviews supported the results of the surveys revealing that nearly all help was sought via face to face contacts. Approximately 30% of the references to helpers in the interviews were to cooperating teachers, 30% to peers, family and one's self, 20% to others at the school, and less than 5% mentioned the Internet as a source of help. The Internet was always referred to as help for lesson plans or preparation. Regarding the various problems that arose during their internship, three of the interviewees' surveys noted most critical problems as classroom management and two as preparation problems; however, when asked if they had any advice for future student teachers the two who listed preparation problems as critical gave advice regarding classroom management – not preparation. Hence it seemed that all five of the student

teachers I interviewed were very concerned with classroom management issues. I considered references to problems with individual students or whole classes as classroom management issues. I also considered requests for advice regarding rules about classroom behavior and receiving late work as classroom management issues.

The student teachers in the pilot study provided a wealth of information that caused me to develop this full-blown research study. A more in-depth study could illuminate ways to better utilize peer knowledge and support groups in the process of educating our future teachers. I decided to narrow my focus to include secondary student teachers only and to expand the qualitative part of my study by adding interviews with cooperating teachers and university supervisors.

Selection of the study sample

In the grounded theory approach, Creswell (1998) says the site and individuals chosen for the study should consist of a homogenous sample consisting of "multiple individuals who have responded to action or participated in a process about a central phenomenon" (p. 112). He defines theoretical sampling in the grounded theory approach as the process of selecting participants based on their ability to "help the researcher best form the theory" (p. 57). Punch (1998) recognizes that grounded theory's approach to data collection is different from some other approaches in that some approaches have a separate stage in the research for collecting data followed by the data analysis. In grounded theory, the researcher is guided by initial research questions, collects the first set of data, analyzes the data, and then collects a second set of data guided by emerging directions in the first analysis. This is the principle of theoretical sampling and it continues cyclically throughout the study until new data are not showing new theoretical

elements, but are confirming what has already been found. Although different from some traditional research, grounded theory is similar to what we usually do in life when we come across a perplexing situation; it replicates the way humans learn (Punch, 1998). It is in this way that grounded theory is true to its philosophical roots in pragmatism (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

For the research study, the homogenous sample was limited to only full-time student teachers enrolled in a secondary education program at the same large southwestern university as the pilot study. Their majors were in the social studies, English, mathematics, or special education. The student teachers were enrolled in one of two research classes that met once a week. They were in the last three to four weeks of their 16 week assignment in a public school working with a cooperating teacher and a university supervisor. Additionally, I selected several university supervisors and cooperating teachers to participate in interviews to provide more insight into the help-seeking behavior of student teachers.

The university supervisors and cooperating teachers were chosen because they were willing to participate in this study, they had mentored secondary student teachers for at least one semester, and they had taught in a P-12 school for a minimum of three years. The university supervisor participants were from the same southwestern university as the student teachers; however they had not necessarily been supervisors over the student teachers in the study.

Description of the samples.

This study included 27 secondary student teachers, 11 of whom volunteered to participate in an interview. In order to triangulate data and to obtain a richer description

of the help seeking behaviors of student teachers during the follow-up study, I interviewed eight experienced cooperating teachers and five experienced university supervisors thus providing for multiple perspectives involving the whole student teaching experience. All samples selection was made as a matter of convenience.

Description of the university.

This large southwestern university has approximately 26,500 students. It is situated in a suburban town with a population of 102,826 according to the 2006 consensus and is located about 20 miles from a metropolitan area of approximately 500,000. The university's college of education has ten program areas that support the preparation of teachers: Early Childhood Education, Elementary Education, English Education, Mathematics Education, Science Education, Social Studies Education, Reading Specialist, Secondary Education, Special Education, and Instructional Leadership and Academic Curriculum. The college of education is accredited and approved by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, the State Department of Education, and the American Psychological Association as well as other professional associations for specific subject areas.

Description of the triad at the southwestern university.

Indicative of the complexity of the student teaching internship is the number of people and policies with whom and with which student teachers must intimately work. The following description of the workings of the triad includes some of the responsibilities of the university supervisor, the cooperating teacher, and the student teacher. It alludes to the influence of administrative policies as well as expectations from state and national organizations, all of which greatly influence student teachers

(Grossman & Thompson, 2004). Student teachers are required to meet with their university supervisors at least five times during the semester of internship. The first meeting is usually when the three members of the triad meet to get acquainted, review the procedures to be followed, exchange contact information, and answer questions that may be directed to or from anyone at the meeting. The triad members set up four future meeting times, two of which will be informal observations of the student teacher by the university supervisor and two of which will be formal evaluations with required evaluation forms. Student teachers must turn in a lesson plan to the university supervisor prior to each observation and afterwards they visit about the observed class. After each of the formal observations the student teacher, university supervisor, and cooperating teacher are required to have a conference to discuss the students' progress in certain goals of the college of education based upon general competencies for licensure and certification in this state and certain criteria utilized during the state's residency program for new teachers.

The evaluation form addresses eight criteria. One of the criteria on the evaluation form has to do with planning learning experiences based on an understanding of students' growth and development as well as the learning process, addressing the needs of individuals and the group. The other criteria include understanding content being taught and using pedagogy to make it meaningful to students, providing a dynamic, engaging learning environment for all students that promote problem-solving, critical inquiry and collaboration, and implementing classroom management strategies which help students become responsible for managing their own behavior. Engaging in critical reflection, using appropriate and varied assessment measures to guide decisions about teaching and

learning, communicating professionally, and exhibiting professionalism in demeanor, scholarship, advocacy, and collegiality are also on the evaluation form.

The cooperating teacher and university supervisor assess the student teacher's progress in meeting the aforementioned criteria using a Likert scale and/or brief narrative comments. The student teacher is also to complete an evaluation form assessing how they are progressing in each of the eight categories. Following the completion of the forms by all three participants and discussion of the student's progress in the goals and criteria set forth on the evaluation form, the university supervisor summarizes the discussion on a document with a place for the student teacher, cooperating teacher, and university supervisor to sign. The final evaluation and signed summary of conference is given to the student's advisor who is required to file the record for mandates related to the college, the state, and accreditation organizations.

Description of the student teachers participants in the research study.

I received permission from two professors of required research classes taken concurrently with student teaching to personally invite their students to participate in this study. One class was a high school English teacher majors' research class with 25 students and the other research class included 12 social studies, mathematics, and special education teacher majors. The students received IRB consent forms explaining the nature of the research, and a survey exactly like the pilot group. They asked a few questions about the format of the survey, the research, and the interview. Of the 27 student teachers who completed and returned the surveys, there were seven female and one male English majors; five female and five male social studies majors; eight female mathematics majors; and one female special education major. I interviewed three

female and three male social studies student teachers, three female and one male English student teacher, and one female mathematics teacher.

The two research professors allowed their students to talk about their student teaching experiences with their peers for the first 30 minutes to an hour of each class period and were available for those who wanted input from them regarding various problems or situations relative to their student teaching. All of the student teacher participants were very busy in this spring semester. They had a full-time student teaching assignment, three hours per week research class, research papers, and portfolios due the last day of class and a few of the participants had paying jobs. The student teaching assignment for all participants was within a 30 mile radius of the university. Most assignments were in predominantly middle class neighborhoods although there were a few schools where more than 50 percent of the students qualified for free lunches.

Description of the interviewed university supervisors in the research study.

Each of the participants in this homogenous group was from the large southwestern university, was very familiar with the required documents they would complete, and was female. Although two of the participants were from the social studies department, two were from the English department and one was from the elementary education department, the documents were the same. The participants did not necessarily supervise student teachers who were included in this study.

I recruited university supervisors for the purposes of this study by issuing a personal invitation in person, by phone, or with an email. During the invitation, I gave them a brief summary of the study along with its significance for student teachers and educators of student teachers. I explained to them I would prefer to do have the interview

in person at a location and time of their choice, but if they preferred we could talk over the phone, or by email. Two of the participants met me at the university, in a lobby area of the education building; one preferred talking over lunch; one met me at her house; and one preferred talking over the phone. I had previously met three of the supervisors while attending class at the southwestern university.

The average time spent talking about student teacher problems and their help seeking requests was 30 minutes. After allowing the university supervisors to give me some background information about their experiences in education, I initially asked them to tell me about some of their experiences with student teachers.

Description of the cooperating teachers in the research study.

This homogenous group consisted of teachers who had taught English or social studies in seventh through twelfth grade within 30 miles of the southwestern university for three years or longer. They had worked with at least one student teacher from the large southwestern university within the past year, and several had hosted student teachers from other colleges as well.

I invited the cooperating teachers to participate in this study in person, by phone calls and emails. Two female English teachers and 6 social studies teachers, half of whom were female, participated in this study. Each of the cooperating teachers met with me for about 20 minutes during their planning period or immediately after school. Although they were congenial and spoke candidly with me about their experiences with student teachers, I sensed they were a little hurried; all of them alluded to upcoming tests and the end of the school year.

Description of the primary investigator.

I am a doctoral student at the southwestern university. Formerly I was an adjunct professor at a community college, a principal, and a secondary classroom teacher. While in my doctoral program, I have supervised student teachers for five semesters and am currently working part-time as an editorial assistant for a national professional journal at the university.

My interest in this topic began when I was a university supervisor observing social studies student teachers. Having observed a required social studies methods class every week for one semester, I knew they had all studied researched methods of instruction in a constructivist college classroom, but during student teaching quite a few seemed to plan and conduct lessons in the classroom that were much more traditional and direct than what they had been taught. I began to wonder if there may be a better way to support our student teachers as they try to use the researched university methods of instruction in their classes. The first logical step seemed be to find out where our student teachers were going most often for help.

During a research class, I began the mixed methods study to investigate who student teachers sought out for help regarding problems that arose during their internship. Using Hsu's (2005) survey for student teachers and following up with student teacher interviews, I did the pilot study. I did not interview any of the student teachers I had supervised or observed in any university classes. Some of the five student teachers I interviewed during the pilot study knew each other from their methods classes, but they were not student teaching in the same school. During the follow-up study, I interviewed one student teacher and one cooperating teacher who were members of a triad in which I

was the university supervisor. I also was well acquainted with one university supervisor participant in the follow-up study.

Data Collection

In grounded theory, the researcher is guided by an initial research question or questions followed by a collection of a preferably small set of data (Punch, 1998). A second set of data guided by the analysis of the first set of data will be collected after the first data is analyzed. The cycle of alternation between collection and analysis will continue until theoretical saturation is accomplished. Saturation is the act of locating information to add to a specific category until new information does not afford additional insight into the category (Creswell, 1998). A category is "a unit of information composed of events, happenings, and instances" (Creswell, 1998, p. 56). The constant comparative method of data analysis in grounded theory is taking information from the data collection and comparing it to emerging categories (Creswell, 1998). In this study the research question guiding the study was from whom, how and how often do student teachers seek help regarding the various problems that arise during their internship? Data was collected from surveys and interviews.

Surveys.

The purpose of the survey was to generalize from a sample to a population in order that inferences could be made about attitudes and behaviors of a population (Babbie, 1990). I collected data from the survey to determine what critical problems student teachers perceived they had, who they contacted for help with their problem, how many times they contacted each person, and how the contact was made. The surveys were given to every student teacher participant at one point in time during the last three to

four weeks of their internship. The surveys provided qualitative data by asking the participants to describe their critical problems and quantitative data by asking participants to designate how many times they contacted different people for help.

I used data from the surveys to triangulate data from the interviews and vice versa (Punch, 1998). The quantitative data provided in the surveys helped with the choice of subjects for the interviews (Punch, 1998) and the survey was efficient at addressing the structural problems of student teachers. This provided a basis for internal reliability and validity.

Interviews.

The purpose of the student teacher interviews was to saturate categories (Creswell, 1998) and to better understand student teachers' constructions of reality during their internship (Punch, 1998). The interviews allowed the student teachers to use their own terms to tell about their problems and their attempts to get help. It provided depth to the knowledge I gleaned from the survey because it allowed the student teachers to describe the rich context that was the substance of their meanings (Jones, 1985). The student teacher interviews took place within the last three to four weeks of the semester.

University supervisor and cooperating teacher interviews provided a way to triangulate data by comparing the findings derived from student teachers with those of the university supervisors and the cooperating teachers, hence enhancing the validity and reliability of the findings. The interviews provided background information on the context of student teaching which helped to theorize about whom student teachers sought out for help regarding various problems that arose during their internship.

I used an "interview guide approach" (Patton, 1990, p. 288) for all interviews. I had a list of questions and comments to be explored during the interview. This approach ensured that the same kind of information was obtained from each participant in less than 30 minutes and yet I was free to explore, probe, and ask questions that would shed light on the help seeking habits of student teachers (Patton, 1990). I interviewed all participants during the last three to four weeks of the semester. This allowed student teachers to be acclimated to the workings of their cooperating teachers, university supervisors, and the school in which they were assigned. Having the university supervisor and cooperating teacher interviews take place during the same time period in the semester as the student teachers helped to provide timely contextual background for the research. I used an audio tape recorder during all interviews and referred to the participants in the dissertation via pseudonyms. Interviews followed the procedures outlined in the IRB consent forms (Appendices A & B).

The research study.

I decided to focus this research on secondary student teachers in the southwestern university. While reviewing literature regarding student teaching, I noticed there seemed to be less research on secondary education programs than on elementary or early childhood programs. Furthermore, my past experiences as a teacher and university supervisor were primarily in secondary education; therefore, I was very familiar with those programs. I selected student teachers whose majors were social studies, English, mathematics, or special education out of convenience. My doctoral committee chair was a social studies teacher and I was acquainted with some graduate students in the other departments.

I collected the first set of data during the research study from 27 surveys completed by ten social studies, eight English, eight mathematics and one secondary special education student teachers. Guided by the emerging directions of this survey analysis, I selected 11 participants to interview who represented each emergent category of critical problems. The participants had sought help different numbers of times from various sources and in diverse ways. To check the accuracy of my findings and to provide more contextual information to my study, I interviewed five university supervisors and eight cooperating teachers.

Instrumentation

Name of the test instrument.

On the "Student Teaching Support Survey" (Appendix C), the student participants answered questions about their perceived most critical problem during student teaching and how they attempted to solve it as well as if they believed it had been solved or not and why. They also completed a chart indicating whom they had sought out for help regarding the critical problem, how the contact with the helper had been made, and how many times during the week of the critical problem they had contacted this person. I conducted personal interviews with some of the student teachers who had completed a survey. Using an interview guide (Appendix D), I asked the student teachers questions having to do with their feelings about the contents of the survey and their understanding of the survey. They responded to follow-up questions meant to clarify their written responses as well as to probe their feelings about sought after helpers and problems associated with student teaching. During interviews with the university supervisors and cooperating teachers, I used an interview guide (Appendix E) and follow-up questions to

ask them about some of their experiences with student teachers. Since they knew the topic of my research, our interviews gravitated toward conversations about problems of student teachers and how they attempted to solve them.

Content of the test instrument.

The "Student Teaching Support Survey" asked for a written explanation of the student teacher's most critical problem during the week prior to the survey. It also asked how they had tried to solve the problem, if the problem was solved at the end of the week, and if the problem was not solved how they would like to solve the problem. Additionally, there was a chart for each student teacher to complete. The chart specified eight potential helpers and one block entitled "Other." The specified potential helpers were supervising teacher, coop teacher, other teachers in the school, other staff in the school, student teachers from the southwestern university, and family members. There were blocks on the chart where the number of face to face contacts, phone contacts, or email contacts to each potential helper should be specified.

I developed two interview guides (Patton, 1990); one was for the student teachers' interviews (Appendix D) and the other was for the university supervisors or the cooperating teachers (Appendix E). To clarify comments made during the interview, all interviewed participants responded to follow-up questions such as, "Can you explain that?" or "I'm not sure what you meant; explain it again." I did not feel that these questions had any adverse results on the outcomes of the study.

Procedures

For the research study, I narrowed the focus of the study to include only secondary student teachers. I selected 27 participants to complete the "Student Teaching

Support Survey", out of which I selected 11 student teachers to interview. I expanded the number of perspectives represented in this study by interviewing five university supervisors and eight cooperating teachers. The university supervisors and cooperating teachers had taught in a classroom at least three years and all but one had been involved with student teachers at least two semesters prior to the study.

To ensure accuracy with quotes, I used an audio-recorder during all interviews and transcribed the data. I used interview guides to help increase the comprehensiveness of the data while staying on the research topic for the limited 15 to 30 minutes and to make the data collection somewhat systematic for each participant (Patton, 1990). The interviewed participants responded to follow-up questions to clarify responses and to help develop insight on student teacher problems and whom they sought for help. To maintain uniformity of time as much as possible in this two year study, all surveys and interviews took place during the last three to four weeks of the semester.

Data Analysis Procedures.

After transcribing the interviews and reading over the material I obtained a general sense of the information. Using the tools of grounded theory to analyze the data from the surveys and interviews, I identified the descriptive codes of the data by organizing the data into "chunks" of common information (Rossman & Rallis, 1998, p. 171). I labeled those categories with "*in vivo"* terms (Creswell, 2003, p. 192) that is terms based in the participant's language. Closely examining and comparing the data, another graduate student and I used open coding to find conceptual categories in the data. The other analyst helped to prevent me from missing some theoretical possibilities in the data and to remind me that categories needed to be grounded in the data (Punch, 1998).

Open coding involved using the data to generate abstract conceptual categories (Punch, 1998, p. 211). I then used axial coding to find relationships between the conceptual categories. These relationships or theoretical codes became propositions or hypotheses about the data (Punch, p. 215). By constantly comparing conceptual categories, a core category emerged that appeared to be the central theme of the study. It was present from the beginning of the analysis and a central phenomenon to the participants in this study.

Summary

Chapter three discussed the methodology that I used in the study. This discussion included my rationale for using the mixed methods approach, a description of the application of grounded theory techniques as a strategy for research, selection and descriptions of the samples, descriptions of the university and the triad at the university, and a description of the primary investigator. I discussed data collection including a description of the survey and interview procedures along with an account of their use in the research study. A report of the instrumentation used for the research study including the name of the test instrument and its contents, an account of the procedures, and data analysis procedures followed. Chapter four describes the findings of the study, and chapter five focuses on a discussion of the study's findings.

Chapter 4

Findings

Introduction

The goal of this study was to investigate from whom, how and how often student teachers sought help regarding the various problems that arose during their internship? I used a survey to find out what problems student teachers perceived to be most critical, whom they sought out for help, how and how often they sought help. To provide rich detail, this study obtained additional information via interviews with student teachers, cooperating teachers, and university supervisors. This section discusses the results of the surveys and interviews in relation to the research question.

Quantitative Results

Survey results.

When student teacher participants encountered a problem they did not know how to solve, in all but one case they sought assistance. The results showed that 27 student teachers requested help for their critical problems 373 times during one week (see Table 1). A frequency count was used to determine the total number of requests of help. The numbers of requests for help directed toward each category of people were added across all the participants. On six of the surveys, the number of times a person was consulted was denoted as numerous, daily, a lot, 7, 100+, or 50+. I coded those as five times, assuming that the person was consulted as frequently as once a day for the five-day work week. In one case, the participant denoted a few times in which case I coded three times. All percentages were rounded to whole numbers.

The number of requests for help made by the student teachers ranged from 0 to 41, with an average of 14 requests per student identified problem. Among the requests for help (n=373), 6% were to university supervisors, 3% were to professors, 27% were to cooperating teachers, and 46% were peers, friends, or family members. The other 18% of the requests were made to school faculty other than the cooperating teacher. The student teachers used various means to ask for help. Most of the time, the student teachers communicated their requests for help in face to face conversations (79%), 16% of the time they used the telephone or cell phone, and 5% of the time they used email.

I examined the participants' responses to the open-ended questions on the surveys in order to explore the nature of various reported problems by using the problem categories and procedures Hsu (2005) used when analyzing his data. A total of four categories of problems emerged from the analysis. They were problems having to do with general classroom management, individual classroom management, cooperating teachers, and preparation. I considered problems about whole classes such as the "8th grade was horrible" and "students' use of profane and derogatory comments" as general classroom management problems. I also included general statements such as "getting students to do their homework" and complaints about students' "attention spans" in the general classroom management category. Descriptions of specific student problems such as "a confrontation with a student who was disobedient and used foul language" or "two problems with student behavior" were classified as individual classroom management problems. When combining general and individual classroom management problems, I used the term classroom management problems. Creating a fun lesson, preparing for a test, or finding resources for activities were categorized as preparation problems. If the

cooperating teacher was mentioned as part of the problem, I classified it as a cooperating teacher problem. In one case the student teacher's most critical problem was "being talked about by other teachers about being too friendly with the students." I classified this as a problem with the cooperating teacher because it seemed to be a colleague conflict.

The largest number of requests for help dealt with problems of general classroom management (62%). The second largest problem category was individual classroom management (20%). The third and fourth problem categories were conflict with cooperating teachers (12%) and preparation (6%). The one student teacher who did not report any requests for help had a problem with her cooperating teacher.

Qualitative Results

Student teacher interviews.

I selected 11 of the 27 student teachers who had completed surveys to interview. They represented each of the reported critical problem categories. Seven interviewed participants said their critical problem for the week was related to general classroom management, two cited individual classroom management problems, two had cooperating teacher issues, and two were concerned with preparation. For ease of reporting the results of the interviews I used pseudonyms.

Natasha was the only interviewee to mention the university supervisor as a helper. She was concerned that her cooperating teacher "had issues with handing over her algebra class….she really didn't want to." Despite feeling like the university expected her to plan her own lessons for the algebra class, Natasha told her coop to just tell her "what to do" and she would do it along with "all the grading." On the day of the

interview, her coop had an activity planned that she really wanted to do herself so Natasha told her to go ahead and teach it, but the next day her supervisor was coming so she really needed to teach on that day. Natasha was frustrated because it was hard putting "schedules together" and to further complicate the matter, her coop was frequently called out of class to take care of matters related to being the head of the math department. Although Natasha did not bring up her university supervisor on her own, when I asked who was her university supervisor, she told me her name explaining that although she felt "comfortable enough to talk to her", she did not usually go to her for help because "she's really busy." Natasha continued on saying she had sent her university supervisor an email at the first of the semester when she and her cooperating teacher did not "get along well." She said her supervisor came to see her and they talked about a situation that she did not feel comfortable talking about with her cooperating teacher.

Natasha said she would go to her coop for help with lesson planning, but she did not "always feel comfortable going to her." Her husband did some training of service people in the air force and she said, "he's good with lessons...he has lesson plan ideas...he tries to fit them to what I teach." When I asked her if she talked to her peers much, she said she does not see them except once a week, but sometimes talks to them about problems regarding her teaching. Speaking about her peers, she said, "We gripe about things to each other." When asked where she would go to get ideas for lessons after she became a teacher, she said she would rely on the text book and "things my peers have presented during methods' classes." She said she would also "Google and see what kinds of lessons there are."

Sophie mentioned her cooperating teacher, her husband, her concurrent professor, and her peers as helpers. She was a graduate student who decided to become a teacher after graduating with an English degree. She had been substituting for a year and a half in the district where she now was student teaching. Her most critical problem was she felt like she "was observing way longer than anyone in [her] class - it was boring and frustrating." She said, "I didn't think I was getting to interact very much with the students." It was during the last three weeks of her internship and she had just starting teaching all day in the past week. Her cooperating teacher was now on maternity leave and Sophie would be teaching the class while a substitute teacher was in the class for the remainder of the semester. During the one week she was teaching before her cooperating teacher took off on maternity leave, Sophie said her coop had told her all the poems, tests, quizzes, and worksheets to do while she was gone. For the next two weeks Sophie was supposed to design and teach her own unit, but her coop had also instructed her which materials to use. Sophie said now that her coop was gone, she would do the designated assignments and schedules on three days a week - the other two days she would do it her own way with her own quizzes.

Sophie said, "I want to make it clear - my cooperating teacher was very helpful, she gave me feedback when I asked her...and discipline things, that was what I needed the most help with - a lot of her advice was very good." Sophie referred to an idea she had recently implemented in the classroom that came from her concurrent class professor. She talked about using ideas from her classmates and she said hearing practicing teachers in her graduate classes talk about "all the good things they were doing" was most encouraging to her.

Jerry, whose most critical problem for the week was creating new lessons that would be "different from his cooperating teacher's", said his "three biggest helpers are my cooperating teacher, my friend who is an assistant principal, and [my advisor and method's teacher]." He searched the Internet for help with creating lessons for his state history class, but complained that there was not much information on that subject online. Recently he had asked his advisor and former method's teacher about Forget's research because he felt "the need to stay current." Jerry said, "My cooperating teacher and I have a great connection because of this student teaching and us both wrestling." He said they talk all the time and his coop is "the biggest day to day help. Some of the advice he's given me has been most helpful. For example with classroom management, he's been most helpful." Speaking about his friend, Jerry said "We email each other daily...I talked to him about grading two days ago."

Cheri said although she "really did not have any problems", her most critical problem for the week was creating lessons." At her school, she had received help at weekly team meetings where the geography teachers planned lessons. Cheri talked about getting ideas at a conference she had attended with her cooperating teacher. She said when she becomes a teacher, she will use ideas about rules and procedures from a book she read during her concurrent class. She said the most helpful part of her concurrent class was hearing other students talk about their student teaching experiences. She mentioned her method's class as helpful saying it "was amazing - every day we learned something new and I still have all my notes." Cheri believed she would have had a better student teaching experience if she would have had a classroom management class at the university that was applicable to the real classroom.

Carol talked about a student who was defiant. She said there were others in the class who were disrespectful when her cooperating teacher left the room, but this "one is more obnoxious than the others - she just pushes my button...she makes fun of other students...and will just blow a gum bubble in my face when I ask her to do something." Although during the interview Carol alleged she did not have a problem with classroom management, she said "Yesterday, they (the students) were out of control - I really don't know how to rein them back in that well...." Carol said she had received help from her cooperating teacher, other teachers, and her concurrent class professor. Her professor had recently advised her to talk to the principal about a particular problem; Carol contacted him, but she said he did not help. She then talked with a peer who had a similar problem, but she said he did not get the problem resolved either and he "just gave up." When I asked her who she thought had been the most helpful during her internship, she said her Mom who is a teacher. They communicated every day. She also talked about her peers in her concurrent class as being helpful. She said, "We call each other every day...it's kind of like a support group...we don't really like try to fix the problem - just tell stories - sometimes go out to eat." Carol said her cooperating teacher had helped her a lot by telling her to "be more proactive not reactive...to prevent the problem." She also mentioned eating lunch with two other teachers who have helped her somewhat. She wished she would have had a class at the university that taught "strategies for misbehavior."

Zane described a confrontational girl who continually "refuses to do her work." He asked his cooperating teacher for help several times, but the problem persisted. He

spoke often with his Mom, his peers, and some with other teachers in the school about the problem to no avail.

Amber listed her most critical problem for the week as "the eighth grade students are consistently horrible." When I asked her who helped the most regarding discipline problems, she replied "the teachers in the team - we would all talk about it [discipline] and try to come up with plans - they probably helped the most." She said she would also "brainstorm" with her cooperating teacher about discipline problems. Regarding her concurrent class, Amber said, "It was really helpful to discuss other student teachers' problems...I learned a lot from listening to my friends and classmates." She said she talked to her friend who is in her concurrent class about "what I want to do and how I want to run my classroom." She suggested that future student teachers could benefit from classroom discussions at the university "about discipline problems, like what do you do if a fight breaks out?"

Trey described his most critical problem for the week as his "third hour - we've got all seniors...two guys that are friends...just stare at each other, giggle when you are trying to teach, and do stupid things." He said he talked with his cooperating teacher, but he usually asked for help from his peers. He mentioned three student teachers in particular saying, "They are the people I talk to about that kind of thing [discipline problems] because we talk to each other about...issues we have at school." He said if he was going to talk to someone else he thought it would be a teacher down the hall.

Zach was the only interviewee who did not mention peers, friends, or family members as helpers. His most critical problem was "maintaining class order when heated comments were exchanged in class." He said he talked to his coop one time about the

problem and he suggested that he needed to be "moving around...standing around kids that are more prone to shout things out." Zach was student teaching in a current events high school class and thought his student teaching experience would have been better if he was in a class "more applicable to what [he] would be teaching or doing in the future...." He did not think the class was "good practice for what [he was] going to do."

Paige had "students who would not stop talking when [she] was teaching." She said she frequently talked to her Mom, who taught 20 years ago, over the phone about the problem. The second person she said she would go to for help would be her classmate who student teaches at the same school. Paige said, "I talk to her often because she understands the same stuff and I see her often - at meetings and at class." She said she does not really talk to her cooperating teacher a lot because "she is busy, she teaches in a way I don't respect...I don't agree with her." Paige mentioned that she asked her concurrent class professor a "couple of questions, but more to... classmates." Paige said she got some ideas about lessons from her cooperating teacher. Speaking about future student teachers, she said her advice would be to "not take anything personally... it took me a while to realize that the kid would not remember something that they may get upset about today - they will forget it tomorrow."

Claudia, who described her cooperating teacher as an "extremely skilled teacher" said she goes to her coop first about ideas regarding activities and classroom management. She said they "talk a lot." Her most critical problem was her fifth hour class. She said there were "attending problems and classroom management is a real issue." She frequently went to her husband who is a teacher for help. About her concurrent class she said, "I got a lot out of the class - just having the time to debrief and

unwind and apply what we have been talking about was great." She said student teachers should to "be open-minded and try new ideas."

Cooperating teacher interviews.

Mr. Mathis, a high school social studies teacher observed the biggest problem for his student teacher was classroom management. He said the student came in "very strict - kids weren't supposed to talk - if someone said what about this, he said it was disrespectful." Mr. Mathis said his student teacher came to him "all the time", even in the evenings and they talked after every class about what went well, what did not, and why. He mentioned that his student teacher's fiancée was a teacher and Josh went to her frequently for help.

Ms. Ballard taught social studies in a middle school. She said her student teachers' biggest problems were "completely individual." Some were not organized enough, others were not willing to "self-assess all the time." She focused on classroom management by trying to "teach them [student teachers] to get an authoritative presence." Ms. Ballard thought her students come to her most frequently for help. She also noticed they frequently mentioned their concurrent class as a source of help. She said the students compared notes with their peers about what they did and what happened during their class activities. She did not think the professors were really "in the picture" as a helper unless the student happened to have a close relationship with them. She felt the professors were "mainly facilitators."

Mr. Eccles taught social studies at a middle school and mentioned class control as a problem with at least one of his student teachers in the past three years. Another problem he observed was that student teachers were intimidated by him because he was

so much older and more experienced than they were. He wished the students would ask him and other teachers in the school more questions. He mentioned that his student teachers knew how to make plans, but when there were last minute changes in the school schedule they had difficulty with flexibility. He said, "Classroom management was the hardest thing." When I asked him if he had noticed his students going to their peers for help, he said no. Mr. Eccles never shared with me where he thought the student teachers went for help. It seemed to me that he really did not know where the students were going for help if they went anywhere.

Ms. Washington taught English in a middle school. She said that classroom management is "one area they [student teachers] do ask for help on." They ask such questions as "how to make kids do what they are supposed to do or how to make a problem child do what they are supposed to do and quit doing what they are doing." She noticed her student teachers came to her for help when they wanted to be sure the lessons were appropriate to the class. Her most recent student would come to her after every class and ask her how she did or "How do you think that went?." This same student frequently asked the special education teacher for help with lesson planning. She said her students frequently mentioned their concurrent class and "loved it." They told her they shared with their peers "a lot with stories and thoughts and questions." She thought her students asked their concurrent class professor more "questions about interviews and interview skills" than they asked her. Ms. Washington and her student teachers ate lunch every day with other teachers in their "sub team" and she felt that they frequently asked for help from those teachers.

A cooperating teacher at a middle school who taught social studies, Ms. James, said her student teachers came to her for help when they had discipline problems with individual students or the whole class. They also came to her with questions like, "This is what I want to do tomorrow, do you think it will work?" They would ask her how certain activities she had planned were going to work. She said her student teachers asked her questions every day. Ms. James said once a week she and her student teacher would meet with the school counselor to discuss "child concerns" and her student teacher would always have "input" too. One of her most recent student teachers talked with another student teacher at the school every morning before school. Ms. James was not sure what they talked about, but "they talked a lot." She felt her student teachers may have "got an idea from the [concurrent class] or talking to their friends." She believed they went to the Internet for lessons plan ideas.

Mr. McCoy taught social studies at the middle school level. He said he saw student teachers have problems incorporating technology into their lessons. He said they came to him for help and by the end of the semester they were doing better than he did. He noted that student teachers often have classroom management problems, but he did not say they came to him for help. Referring to their concurrent class, he said it was "common for them [student teachers] to share what other student teachers are doing and are experiencing. In fact I think they connect their class with what we are doing here. They talk about the experiences they are sharing with others."

A middle school English teacher, Ms. Sellers, said her student teachers ask her for help by sharing an idea with her and then asking, "What do you think?" or "Do you think it'll work? " She said they question "better and more in sub-team meetings." They ask,

"How do you teach that?", "Can I do a group activity?" or "Do you think this will fly?" Ms. Sellers noticed student teachers frequently mentioned using plans they got from other student teachers. She said, "They'll say someone used this lesson...can I use it?" Regarding their concurrent class, Ms. Sellers said, "They love their class...I think it's their vent time..they bring back ideas from the class." She was the only cooperating teacher who mentioned a student going to her university supervisor for help. The student teacher had told some "off-color jokes" to students and made some presumptuous comments to parents. Ms. Sellers reprimanded her and later the university supervisor contacted her regarding the incidents.

Ms. Thompson, a high school social studies teacher, reported that her student teachers ask a lot of questions about "how you set up the classroom, how you do things every time the same way, how you turn in stuff to the baskets, etc.." They also asked some curriculum questions. She thought they "network quite a bit...and get more out of what another has experienced." Some of her student teachers who were "comfortable" with her admitted they were weak in some subject areas and asked her what they could do about that. She said her most recent student teacher "had a question just about every day and that was very unusual." She asserted, "I never have seen a student teacher seek outside teachers' help." She noted that the "good" student teachers are "very willing to go to the Internet" for help.

University supervisor interviews.

Ms. Bell thought her student teachers went to their cooperating teacher first when they had any problems, then they would talk to her if necessary. She said she knew several students who had talked to their concurrent professor about some problems. In

their two weeks of independent teaching, students who seemed to be having some problem with classroom management had asked her how to get "their teacher voice." She defined teacher voice as an "I mean business...very matter of fact" voice. Ms. Bell had her students keep reflective journals and email them to her weekly. She said they would frequently write about how they had problems with classroom discipline and some noted they had received help from their cooperating teacher.

In an interview over the phone, Ms. Riley shared her experiences as a university supervisor. Her student teachers usually emailed and/or phoned her when there was a problem or a question for help. She mentioned that she "made it part of [her] business to probe and try to find out how it really was going" when she made scheduled observations instead of listening to "It's fine, fine." She said, "Most of the questions were about what I would expect to see as plans when I'm not teaching." Sometimes they came to her with questions about classroom management or ideas about lesson plans and she said they would "certainly" come to her if "there was any problem with a cooperating teacher."

Ms. Bruce said she usually received questions for help before or at the end of a conference after an observation or via email. She would get questions such as, "I can't get this kid to do anything, he talks out of turn, do you have any methods or ideas that would help?" She said student teachers would frequently come to her for help "with minimal problems" but in the case of one student teacher who was having serious problems with classroom management, the student did not come to her for help because she did not have the "wherewithal" to know she had a problem.

One university supervisor who tried to be more available to her student teachers than was required went to their concurrent class every week for the first half of the

semester. Ms. Price said, "I wanted them to know I was on their side and I was available. I emailed them as a group two or three times so they [would] know that they could email me about any problem at all." She believed they talked to each other before they talk to anybody else about their problems. She said a lot of times student teachers admitted to her that they felt uncomfortable talking with their cooperating teacher, but they would ask each other or her for help. Two of her most recent student teachers emailed her saying, "My cooperating teacher is not letting me do what I am supposed to do. I am afraid to talk to her about it...Can I say something without make [her] mad?" She also said she had a couple of students who "struggled all semester and [she] didn't find out until the last of the semester" that there was a problem. In another case, the cooperating teacher told Ms. Price she did not think her student teacher was going to make it. Ms. Price waited two weeks for the student teacher to approach her about it, but she never did.

When I interviewed Ms. Sims about the problems and helpers of student teachers, she said, "I am not probably the best person to ask. I think the coop would be the best." Ms. Sims said she knew some student teachers who went to a book they had read in their concurrent class to find strategies for the classroom. Speaking of problems student teachers had brought to her attention, she stated, "I've only had one situation and I don't feel comfortable talking about it that much where the student teacher wasn't comfortable with the cooperating teacher. The student...talked to the principal...and the principal changed his cooperating teacher before I could take care of it."

Summary

The research question investigated from whom, how and how often student teachers sought help regarding various problems that arose during their internship. A survey revealed 27 student teachers requested help 373 times during one week. Most requests were to peers, friends, or family members and occurred in face to face communications. Various problems included those involving general classroom management, individual classroom management, preparation of lessons, and cooperating teacher problems.

Interviews from student teachers focused on diverse problems related specifically to classroom management and preparation of classroom activities. Some student teachers mentioned problems related to cooperating teachers. They reported communicating their requests for help to their cooperating teachers, professors, family members, peers, other teachers or principals, and in one case to their university supervisor. They offered advice to future student teachers and talked about how they believed their student teaching experience may have been better.

When interviewed, cooperating teachers recognized classroom management was a big issue for many student teachers and some students asked questions while others did not. Other common questions student teachers asked their cooperating teachers involved how to set up a classroom, the curriculum, and what activities will work best in the classroom. One cooperating teacher noted student teachers were frequently intimidated by his experience and wished they would ask him and other teachers at the school more questions. In one instance, incorporating technology into lessons was sometimes a problem at the beginning of student teaching, but the cooperating teacher was an effective source of help. Most cooperating teachers believed they were a primary source of help

to their student teachers, but they observed their student teachers frequently going to peers and family members for help as well. There was some mention of student teachers looking in university books and on the Internet for help when planning lessons, but most requests for help were in face to face communications.

Some university supervisor interviewees believed student teachers went to their cooperating teachers most often for help, while others reported them going to their peers first. All the supervisors mentioned talking to their student teachers after observations about various problems, but rarely did the student initiate questions. One supervisor said she had to probe the student teacher to find out how things were going while another said she had only been contacted about a problem one time and the problem was solved before she had time to take care of it. Student teachers used email and the telephone to communicate questions about the expectations a supervisor had regarding a lesson to be observed. Student teachers sometimes told their university supervisors about problems concerning their cooperating teacher. One supervisor reported that several student teachers admitted to her they were intimidated by their cooperating teachers and they would ask questions to their peers or her instead of asking their cooperating teacher.

Chapter 5

Conclusions

Introduction

Student teachers in this study reported at least one critical problem for the week they completed the survey and all but one sought help from multiple helpers. Students, cooperating teachers, and university supervisors agreed that problems during internships were usually discussed via face to face encounters and general classroom management problems were the most common issues that were discussed. Problems associated with preparation of lessons were mentioned the least. Regarding preparation, two student teachers and two cooperating teachers reported the Internet as a potential resource. This convenient helper could explain why preparation was not a major problem for the students in this study. Cooperating teachers were the single most frequently reported helpers with an average of four requests for help per week from each student teacher. This finding was corroborated in interviews with most participants. Every student teacher spoke of their cooperating teachers as being helpful in some area. The cooperating teachers for the most part thought they were the main source of help even though several expressed concern that their student teachers did not ask enough questions, and four of the five university supervisors believed the cooperating teacher was the predominate helper. Some examples of statements that demonstrate that claim are below.

Natasha, a student teacher whose problem involved her cooperating teacher said she would go to her cooperating teacher for help with lesson planning even though she did not "always feel comfortable going to her." Sophie had a problem with her

cooperating teacher, but she said, "my cooperating teacher was very helpful...a lot of her advice was very good." Jerry said one of his "biggest helpers" was his cooperating teacher. Other student teachers expressed similar feelings about their cooperating teacher.

Mr. Mathis, a high school cooperating teacher, said his student teacher came to him for help and advice "all the time," including in the evenings. After each class, they talked about what went right or wrong and how to make it better. When I asked Ms. Ballard who she thought her student teachers went to for help, she replied without hesitation, "Me." Ms. Washington listed several questions her student teachers asked her such as, "How do you think that went?" or How [do you] make a problem child do what they are supposed to do?" Ms. James said her student teachers would ask her questions like, "Do you think it will work?" Other comments from cooperating teachers included similar reports.

University supervisor, Ms. Bell, said some of her students had written in their journals how they had gone to their cooperating teachers for help. When I asked Ms. Sims to tell me about problems and helpers of student teachers, she said, "I think the coop would be the best" person with which to speak. Another supervisor, Ms. Price who believed her student teachers frequently went to their peers for advice before asking any question from her or the cooperating teacher, said one of her students recently wanted advice about how would be the best way to ask her cooperating teacher a question.

Interestingly, when requests for help recorded on the survey from family members and friends were totaled, they outnumbered the requests for help from the cooperating teachers by five percent. Peers comprised another 13% of the requests for help, making

the category of helpers outside the triad and university personnel responsible for 46% of the requests for help. This observation was substantiated by the participant interviews. Easy access to potential helpers such as family and friends via cell phones and the Internet may have encouraged students to communicate with others outside the traditional triad when problems arose during their internship. This source could have provided a safe environment for somewhat insecure student teachers to receive advice and encouragement.

Natasha, who went to her husband for help with ideas for lesson plans said she also relied on the text book and "things [her] peers have presented during methods' classes" for lesson ideas. Sophie mentioned her husband as a helper and referred to ideas for activities she had learned from her classmates. Jerry mentioned his friend as a helper several times during his interview and said they emailed each other daily about teaching. Carol referred to her Mom as most helpful during her internship and about her peers she said, "We call each other every day." Zane also spoke about his Mom and his peers as helpers. Only one student teacher did not mention peers, friends, and/or family members as helpers.

All but one cooperating teacher mentioned their student teachers got ideas and support from peers and/or family members. Mr. Mathis mentioned his student teacher frequently went to his fiancée who was a teacher for help, Ms. Ballard said her students compared notes with their peers about what had happened during class activities, Ms. Washington said her student teachers shared with their peers "a lot of stories and thoughts and questions." Ms. James spoke of her most recent student teacher talking with another student teacher every morning before school started, Ms. Sellers noted her students

oftentimes mentioned using plans they got from other student teachers, and Ms. Thompson thought the student teachers "network quite a bit...and get more out of what another has experienced."

University supervisors cited peers as helpers. Ms. Bell said, "They (student teachers) talked to each other...they share ideas." Ms. Riley observed that students get ideas from each other and they "talk about the situations they are facing" as well as "share strategies that they... found to be successful." Speaking about her students, Ms. Price said, "I think they talk to each other before they talk to anybody else." It seemed to her that student teachers frequently feel "uncomfortable" with their cooperating teacher, they feel "intimidated." She had two students this semester who emailed her and wrote, "My coop is not letting me do what I'm supposed to do. I am afraid to talk to her...it might make her mad." Ms. Sims also mentioned that sometimes her students would get ideas from their peers.

Almost two thirds of the student teacher participants mentioned team teachers or other teachers at the school as helpers. When these helpers were combined with the cooperating teacher helpers, they received almost as many requests for help as the peers, family, and friends group. Three of the interviewed student teachers mentioned they taught in teams. In their interviews, each of these students made more references to requests for help to other teachers in their team than they made to their cooperating teacher.

Cheri said she received help creating lessons from team teachers at weekly meetings and from the media person. Carol cited a math teacher and a social studies teacher in her "section" at the school as helpers. She said they ate lunch together and

talked about "who might do better if they sat next to whom." Another student teacher, Amber reported "the teachers in the team...helped the most."

Surveys and interviews revealed university personnel, that is the university supervisor and professors, were contacted least often for help. Only 10% of the requests for help were directed to university personnel. One interviewed student teacher who felt her cooperating teacher did not want to "hand over her algebra class" cited her university supervisor as a helper after I asked her who her supervisor was. A cooperating teacher, Ms. Sellers said one of her student teachers went to her supervisor when Ms. Sellers reprimanded her for inappropriate conduct. Ms. Bell who was a university supervisor said she believed when her students had problems, they would go to their cooperating teacher first, then her. Another supervisor, Ms. Riley said she had received some questions about "management... ideas about lessons...and certainly if there was any problem with a coop they would contact [her]." Alluding to the tendency for students not to ask many questions, she said, "I made it part of my business to probe and try to find out how it really was going." Ms. Bruce related a story about a difficult situation involving an student teacher and her cooperating teacher. She said the student did not come to her, but the cooperating teacher did. Ms. Sims only had one situation where the student had come to her with a problem. She said the student took care of the problem by speaking with the principal before she "could take care of it."

The students in this research collaborated with many helpers while seeking help with their problems and as such the results supported the notion advocated by researchers and practitioners that learning is complex and social cultural contexts influence what and how people know and learn (Bruner, 1996: Bullough, 2008: Caffarella & Clark, 1999:

Fenwick, 2001; Freire, 1998: Guy, 1999; Hansman, 2001). Gee (2004) referred to learning embedded in discourse. As the students in this research attempted to solve problems, much discourse ensued wherein they discussed concepts and skills involved in teaching. Their families, community, and institutions affected their learning as they sought help from diverse people.

The results of this study and other studies (Hsu, 2005: McNally et al., 1997) have shown that student teachers seek others for help with sundry problems during their internship. The triad alone did not suffice for support of student teachers. Student teachers in this study did not feel "comfortable" or willing to ask many questions to knowledgeable others such as the university supervisors or the cooperating teachers. These results garner support for the sociocultural theory as opposed to early cognitive theories that held an individual could learn independently of outside influence (Alfred, 2002). Therefore, future research needs to explore in more depth the issue of student teachers seeking from peers and family members.

One of the questions on the survey student teachers answered in this study was, "At the end of the week, was the problem solved?" Only three student teachers reported, “yes.” Most were a resounding, “no.” And so I propose that these student teachers were seeking help from anyone who would listen if they felt comfortable in admitting there was a problem. A question is how might the experience of expert others be better shared with these student teachers? This is not a new question, but a look at the history of teacher education in the United States may shed some light on possible answers to the question.

The normal schools in the 1800s, the laboratory schools of the 1900s, the post World War II field-based schools, and the period of education reform that continues today recognized the need for providing future teachers with opportunities to connect educational theory to classroom practice through student teaching. In 1917 with the organization of the American Association of Teachers College, a standard for supervised teaching was adopted stressing the importance of providing support for future teachers. In 1942, the commission on Teacher Education of The American Council of Education concluded that successful reform efforts in teacher education programs consisted of "maximum participation of interested parties including students, and required changes that enhanced the kind and quality of interactions students had with teachers, professors, and the communities within which they lived and worked" (as cited in Bullough, 2008, p. 48). What would enhance the kind and quality of interactions students have with knowledgeable others?

Reflective practice has provided student teachers with an understanding of the complexities of teaching and more knowledge (Dewey, 1933 & 1965; Gipe & Richards, 1992; Silva, 2000). Shared journaling between members of the triad increased communication and provided a springboard for collaboration in the Silva (2000) study. Some student teachers who were too shy to ask questions face to face or others who did not ask questions because of time constraints would ask questions in their shared journals. Studies by Goodlad (1991), Slick (1998), Zeichner (2002) and others have shown supervision is not a high priority among teacher education programs. There is a general lack of preparation and support for mentors of student teachers. These researchers encouraged educators to visualize the P-12 school as a community for

learning where all participants learn. As in the 1942 commission, they saw promise for reform in an atmosphere where collaboration is the norm and everyone shares in learning and problem-solving. As in my study and others (Cope, 1973; Kauffman, 1992; Yee, 1969), Veal and Rikard (1998) showed cooperating teachers rarely mentioned collaboratively working with a university supervisor. Arguing that all three members of the triad have the potential to be helpers to student teachers, they proposed there needs to be shared supervision and learning among all the members of the triad in a collaborative environment. Discourse during meetings should be equally divided among the triad. The PDSs and partnership placements are two ways that could enhance the kind and quality of interactions student teachers have with knowledgeable others (Bullough et al., 2002; Crocco et al., 2003; Darling-Hammond, 2006; Levin & Rock, 2003).

Potential limitations are a part of every research project. Having surveys and interviews with open-ended questions encouraged participants to describe their own experiences in their own words and rich detail. However, interviewing participants from only one southwestern university limited my ability to generalize the results on a national scale. I tried to create an atmosphere during the interviews that encouraged truthfulness. The rich detail that came from the interview format was balanced by the knowledge that some participants may lie or give socially desirable answers and multiple perspectives as well as mixed methods were used to verify results. This study involved primarily Caucasian participants thus promoting a homogenous sample, but this was counterbalanced by the knowledge that participants of other races or cultures may use different or additional strategies for solving internship related problems. Future research might sample participants of different races or cultures to explore their problem solving

habits. This additional knowledge could be used to benefit students of all races and cultures. Replicating the study at different times during the internship at this school as well as other schools across the United States would provide more insights into help seeking behaviors of student teachers and make the results more generalizable. Following up with individual case studies where student teachers are interviewed and observed throughout several days would provide a fuller picture of the student teachers' attempts to solve problems during their internship. Furthermore, interviewing professors who teach the concurrent class would provide another perspective and give more information about the kinds of problems student teachers have, from whom they are seeking help, and how often.

Professional development schools (PDSs) are designed to provide time to faculty and student teachers to collaborate, conduct action research, reflect, and teach diverse students (Crocco et al., 2003; Castel, Fox & Souder, 2006; NCATE 2001). Partnership placements provide opportunities for student teachers to learn together thus helping promote broader perspectives, very important in today's society as well as in the standards advocating appropriate teacher dispositions for teachers in the United States. Together the apprenticeship of observation and problems of enactment (Darling-Hammond, 2006; Lortie, 1975) can be addressed and minimized while problems with classroom discipline for whole groups and individuals, cooperating teacher conflicts, and classroom preparation are solved as well. As members of the triad and others learn together, share tools, and co-create answers to problems, hierarchal relationships wane and shared knowledge becomes more accessible to everyone involved (Anagnostopoulos et al., 2007; Engestrom, 2003; Smagorinsky et al., 2004; Smagorinsky et al., 2003). As a

result student teachers are more apt to focus on student learning (Levin & Rock, 2003; Price & Valli, 2005) and after all that should be the primary purpose for being a teacher. Exploring from whom, how and how often student teachers sought help regarding the various problems that arose during their internship demonstrated the importance of considering social context when teaching students how to become dynamic teachers. Collaboration and discourse with knowledgeable others during internships should be encouraged whenever possible and better use of the knowledge within the triad would be profitable to the university, future teachers, and the P-12 students of the United States.

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Table

Table 1. People whose help was sought by student teachers

Helpers	Pilot (n= 272)	Study (n= 373)
University Supervisor	36	24
Cooperating teacher	95	99
Other staff in the school	35	67
Other student teachers	38	49
Family members	39	62
Friends	29	59
Professors	0	13

Note: n = number of requests for help

Appendix A

University of Oklahoma

Institutional Review Board

Informed Consent to Participate in a Research Study

Project Title:	Student Teaching and Seeking Support
Principal Investigator:	Marla Houck
Department:	College of Education/Instructional Leadership and Academic Curriculum

You are being asked to volunteer for this research study. This study is being conducted at the University of Oklahoma. You were selected as a possible participant because you are a student teacher.

Please read this form and ask any questions that you may have before agreeing to take part in this study.

Purpose of the Research Study
The purpose of this study is to investigate how student teachers request support and from whom do they request it.

Number of Participants
About 100 people will take part in this study.

Procedures
If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to do the following things: Sign this informed consent form, complete the enclosed survey that should take fifteen to twenty minutes, and return this informed consent form and the completed survey in the envelope provided. Your participation will also involve a follow-up interview either on the telephone or at O.U. prior to or after your Thursday evening class that will be audio-taped. It should only take about 15 minutes of your time. Your involvement in the study is voluntary, and you may choose not to participate or to stop at any time. The results of the research study may be published, but your name will not be used. In fact, the published results will be presented in summary form only. Your identity will not be associated with your responses in any published format.

Length of Participation

15 to 30 minutes

This study has the following risks:
This study has no risks.

Benefits of being in the study are:

The findings from this project will provide information on how student teachers may be supported more effectively during the student teaching experience with no cost to you other than the time it takes for the interview and survey.

Confidentiality
In published reports, there will be no information included that will make it possible to identify you without your permission. Research records will be stored securely and only approved researchers will have access to the records.

There are organizations that may inspect and/or copy your research records for quality assurance and data analysis. These organizations include the Dr. Courtney Vaughn and the OU Institutional Review Board.

Compensation
You will not be reimbursed for you time and participation in this study.

Voluntary Nature of the Study
Participation in this study is voluntary. If you withdraw or decline participation, you will not be penalized or lose benefits or services unrelated to the study. If you decide to participate, you may decline to answer any question and may choose to withdraw at any time.

Audio Recording of Study Activities

To assist with accurate recording of participant responses, interviews may be recorded on an audio recording device. You have the right to refuse to allow such recording without penalty. Please select one of the following options.

I consent to audio recording. ___ Yes ___ No.

Contacts and Questions

If you have concerns or complaints about the research, the researcher(s) conducting this study can be contacted at Marla.M.Houck-1@ou.edu (phone 405-659-9056) or Dr. Courtney Vaughn, cavaughn@ou.edu (phone 405-325-1518).

Contact the researcher(s) if you have questions or if you have experienced a research-related injury.

If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, concerns, or complaints about the research and wish to talk to someone other than individuals on the research team or if you cannot reach the research team, you may contact the University of Oklahoma – Norman Campus Institutional Review Board (OU-NC IRB) at 405-325-8110 or irb@ou.edu.

You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records. If you are not given a copy of this consent form, please request one.

Statement of Consent

I have read the above information. I have asked questions and have received satisfactory answers. I consent to participate in the study.

Signature Date

Appendix B

University of Oklahoma

Institutional Review Board

Informed Consent to Participate in a Research Study

Project Title:	Student Teaching and Seeking Support
Principal Investigator:	Marla Houck
Department:	College of Education/Instructional Leadership and Academic Curriculum

You are being asked to volunteer for this research study. This study is being conducted at the University of Oklahoma. You were selected as a possible participant because you are or have been a university supervisor or a cooperating teacher.

Please read this form and ask any questions that you may have before agreeing to take part in this study.

Purpose of the Research Study
The purpose of this study is to investigate how student teachers request support and from whom do they request it.:

Number of Participants
About 100 people will take part in this study.

Procedures
If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to do the following: Sign this informed consent form and complete a face to face interview, an interview via e-mail, or an interview over the telephone. The subject of the interview will be your experiences with student teachers. The interview should take about 15-30 minutes. Your involvement in the study is voluntary and you may choose not to participate or to stop at any time. The results of the research study may be published, but neither your name nor the name of any one discussed in the interview will be used.

Length of Participation
15-30 minutes

This study has no risks.

Benefits of being in the study are: The findings from this project will provide information on how student teachers may be supported more effectively during the student teaching experience with no cost to you other than the time it takes to complete the interview.

Confidentiality

In published reports, there will be no information included that will make it possible to identify you without your permission. Research records will be stored securely and only approved researchers will have access to the records.

There are organizations that may inspect and/or copy your research records for quality assurance and data analysis. These organizations include Dr. Courtney Vaughn and the OU Institutional Review Board.

Compensation

You not be reimbursed for you time and participation in this study.

Voluntary Nature of the Study

Participation in this study is voluntary. If you withdraw or decline participation, you will not be penalized or lose benefits or services unrelated to the study. If you decide to participate, you may decline to answer any question and may choose to withdraw at any time.

Audio Recording of Study Activities

To assist with accurate recording of participant responses, interviews may be recorded on an audio recording device. You have the right to refuse to allow such recording without penalty. Please select one of the following options.

I consent to audio recording. ___ Yes ___ No.

Contacts and Questions

If you have concerns or complaints about the research, the researcher(s) conducting this study can be contacted at Marla.M.Houck-1@ou.edu (phone 405-659-9056) or Dr. Courtney Vaughn, cavaughn@ou.edu (phone 405-325-1518).

Contact the researcher(s) if you have questions or if you have experienced a research-related injury.

If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, concerns, or complaints about the research and wish to talk to someone other than individuals on the research team or if you cannot reach the research team, you may contact the University of Oklahoma – Norman Campus Institutional Review Board (OU-NC IRB) at 405-325-8110 or irb@ou.edu.

You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records. If you are not given a copy of this consent form, please request one.

Statement of Consent

I have read the above information. I have asked questions and have received satisfactory answers. I consent to participate in the study.

Signature Date

Appendix C

STUDENT TEACHING SUPPORT SURVEY

Please complete the following survey for 1 week of student teaching experience.

The dates of the week are from ___/___/___ To ___/___/___ .

Name _____ Today's date is ___/___/___.

1. What is the most critical problem you have experienced during the week? This could be preparing
a lesson or exam, technical difficulty, stopping a student fight, etc.

_____

_____

_____

2. How did you try to solve the problem?

_____

_____

3. At the end of the week was the problem solved? If not, how would you like to solve the problem?

_____

4. Who have you talked to or consulted to solve the problem described above?

_____

_____

Please fill out the table below indicating who you contacted, how the contact was made, and how many times they were contacted. (ST – Student teacher, FTF – Face to face, # - number of times they were
contacted.)

	FTF	#	Phone	#	Email	#
Supervising teacher						
Coop Teacher						
Other teachers in the school						
Other staff in the school						
ST from OU						
ST from another university						
Family member						
Friend						
Other (please specify)						

Appendix D

Interview Guide for Student Teacher Interviews

1. How do you feel about the survey? Did you understand the survey?

2. Do you have any questions about it or would you like to explain something about it you think I may not understand?

3. Please comment on your student teaching experience and include anything that you think would be helpful to other student teachers in the future?

4. Thank you for taking the time to help me with this research study.

Appendix E

Interview Guide for Cooperating Teachers' and University Supervisors' Interviews

Would you please tell me about some of your experiences with student teachers? You do not need to give me specific names.