

THE IMPACT OF NEW TEACHER INDUCTION PROGRAMS ON FEELINGS OF
BURNOUT OF SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS

by

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B.S., Kansas State University, 1988
M.S., Kansas State University, 1989

AN ABSTRACT OF A DISSERTATION

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Abstract

This study investigated the effects of new teacher induction programs on feelings of burnout of 69 newly hired special education teachers from two Midwestern, metropolitan school districts. The central research question was whether there was a significant difference in feelings of burnout between new teachers in a district that uses a special education instructional resource teacher as a key feature of their induction program and teachers in a district that uses a more traditional induction model. Participants' scores on the Maslach Burnout Inventory – Educators Survey provided the dependent measures. There were, on average, no statistically significant differences ($p < .05$) in feelings of burnout of newly hired special education teachers in the two school districts. There were, on average, no statistically significant differences between the two groups. These findings suggest that, at least in these districts, special education teachers are staying in the field longer than originally expected, newly hired special education teachers are coming to the job better prepared, and deliberate and responsive induction programs did not influence feelings of burnout. The influence of participant demographic characteristics, particularly the amount of experience and licensure status, is discussed. Implications of these findings for special education teacher induction programs are suggested. Among these are the examination of supports from various sources, the availability of resources, and the structure of the induction program itself to meet the needs of more experienced teachers.

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TEACHERS ON FEELINGS OF BURNOUT OF SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS

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CHAPTER 1 - Introduction

As the number of students enrolled in the public school system continues to grow, so does the need for highly qualified staff. The impact of feelings of burnout on attrition and retention of special education teachers is an issue school districts must address if they wish to maintain a high-quality teaching force. Studies consistently show that the attrition rate for special education teachers is higher than that of general education peers (Boe, Bobbit, & Cook, 1997; Boyer & Gillespie, 2000; Council of Exceptional Children, 2000). When investigating initiatives that target the goal of retaining a qualified special education staff, the exploration must include the critical areas of attrition, burnout, and retention (see Appendix A for acceptable definitions of terminology used in this study).

Attrition rates are influenced by many factors including burnout, family changes, career changes to jobs that are outside of education, career changes to a different role in education, and retirement (Boe et al., 1997; Boyer & Gillespie, 2000; Center & Callaway, 1999; Council of Exceptional Children, 2000; Menlove, Garnes, & Salzberg, 2004; Miller, Brownell, & Smith, 1999; Nichols & Sosnowsky, 2002; Platt & Olson, 1990; Stempien & Loeb, 2002; Whitaker, 2000a, 2000b, 2003; Wisniewski & Gargiulo, 1997; Zabel & Zabel, 1982, 2001). As districts continue to strive to meet the needs of students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment, the demand placed upon special education teachers also continues to rise. The many facets of the service delivery model play a significant role in increased demands. Moving away from small group instruction in a special education setting, the need for equal access to the general education curriculum has pushed services back into the general education classroom (Council of Exceptional Children, 2002). In addition, age, job-related stress, student discipline, student progress, diverse student needs, professional preparation, administrative support, and a sense of disillusionment are all cited as variables that impact attrition (Boyer & Gillespie, 2000; Center & Callaway, 1999; Council of Exceptional Children, 2000; Gersten et al., 2001; Menlove et al., 2004; Miller et al., 1999; Nichols & Sosnowsky, 2002; Platt & Olson, 1990; Stempien & Loeb, 2002; Whitaker, 2000a, 2000b, 2003; Wisniewski & Gargiulo, 1997).

It is widely acknowledged in the literature that burnout is a major contributor to attrition (e.g., Allinder, 2001; Brownwell & Smith, 1992; Center & Callaway, 1999; Embich, 2001; Fore

et al., 2002; Gersten et al., 2001; McKnab, 2002; Nichols & Sosnowsky, 2002; Platt & Olson, 1990; Stempien & Loeb, 2002; Wisniewski & Gargiulo, 1997; Zabel & Zabel, 1982, 1983, 2002). Studies suggest that a teacher's age, gender, experience, size of caseload, education level, students' category of disability, number of different disabilities served by the teacher, and the number of students identified as having emotional disabilities who are served by the teacher are all important factors when it comes to feelings of burnout (Nichols & Sosnowsky, 2002; Platt & Olson, 1990; Zabel & Zabel, 1982). The literature also consistently cites teacher perceived stress and organizational factors such as role dissonance, perceived support, and the support network in the school building and/or district as additional factors that impact burnout.

While research suggests there are many factors that contribute to attrition and burnout, it is difficult to select just one factor to focus on for increasing retention (Boe et al., 1997). A recurring theme in the literature on retention is that the more successful strategies use a multi-faceted approach to address aspects of the job that are amendable (Billingsley et al., 2004; Council for Exceptional Children, 2000; Fore et al., 2002; Gersten et al., 2001; Nichols & Sosnowsky, 2002; Wisniewski & Gargiulo, 1997; Zabel & Zabel, 1983). Among the suggestions are: providing technical support, providing mentors, and providing methodical and responsive induction programs.

Increasingly, the literature is beginning to highlight the impact of induction programs that are flexible enough to address the individual needs of new teachers while still following a structured format that covers specific content for the district (Billingsley et al., 2004; Brownell & Smith, 1992; Boyer & Gillespie, 2000; Fore et al., 2002; McGlamery et al., 2002; Stempien & Loeb, 2002; Taylor, 2002; Whitaker, 2000a, 2003); however, the literature offers little evidence of effectiveness of such induction programs, especially those that are specific to special education teachers (Billingsley et al., 2004; Brownell & Smith, 1992). More importantly for this research, there is little, if any, evidence of the impact of induction programs on feelings of burnout among special education teachers.

Research Questions

The following research will investigate how participation of special education instructional resource teachers in new teacher induction programs affects burnout for special education teachers. The general question addressed by this research is:

“Do induction programs that include special education instructional resource teachers decrease the feelings of burnout for new special education teachers?”

Specifically, this research will address the following three questions:

1. Do induction programs that include special education instructional resource teachers decrease feelings of *emotional exhaustion* for new special education teachers as compared to new special education teachers who participate in traditional induction programs?
2. Do induction programs that include special education instructional resource teachers decrease feelings of *depersonalization* for new special education teachers as compared to new special education teachers who participate in traditional induction programs?
3. Do induction programs that include special education instructional resource teachers increase feelings of *personal accomplishment* for new special education teachers as compared to new special education teachers who participate in traditional induction programs?

Research Design

This study was considered quasi-experimental (Gersten et al., 2005). Participants of this study were new special education teachers from two school districts in a Midwestern metropolitan area. Due to the specific criteria of subject eligibility, a true random sampling was not possible; participants were already in existing groups. The two school districts identified as Districts A and B were demographically comparable in regards to the number of certified staff, number of special education staff members, and number of special education staff vacancies not filled for the 2005-2006 school year. A difference of 4,164 students was noted between the two districts with District A having the larger enrollment. For district recruiting purposes, these two districts typically hire from the same pool of applicants in that potential employees usually apply and interview in both districts.

District A, which uses an emerging model of induction for new special education teachers provided the experimental condition. This district utilizes special education instructional resource teachers (SPED-IRT) as a key feature in the new teacher induction program. The special education instructional resource teacher served as the independent variable. There were 51 eligible participants in the experimental group (District A) and 47 eligible participants in the comparison group (Districts B).

Measures

Data was collected using two separate tools: a demographic survey and the Maslach Burnout Inventory – Educators Survey (MBI-ES) (Maslach et al., 1996). The demographic survey asked for information from nine areas. This information was used to produce a more accurate picture of the new educators and their teaching backgrounds and helped detect any emerging patterns that may have led to further analysis or further research. The districts and categories from the demographic survey served as the independent variables for statistical analyses.

The MBI-ES provided the dependent measures for this study. This instrument is widely recognized as a valid and reliable measure of teacher burnout and provides three separate measures for burnout: *emotional exhaustion*, *depersonalization*, and *personal accomplishment*. Mean scores, medians, standard deviations and ranges from the experimental and control group were compared on each measure of burnout as outlined in the MBI-ES. For each dimension of burnout, a series of ANOVA was performed to determine if there was a significant difference between sample groups ($p < .05$). Additional analyses were conducted using five categories from the demographic survey. These ANOVA used collapsed data for each of the independent variables and a more conservative critical value ($p < .01$) was used to protect against an inflated alpha score which could result in sampling error due to the number of times the data was manipulated.

CHAPTER 2 - Literature Review

Introduction

This review attempts to sort through the literature on attrition, burnout, retention, and induction programs. These topics are not clear-cut and discreet resulting in an overlap of the literature. While each area is discussed in isolation, all are interwoven into one issue – special education teachers are leaving the classroom in larger numbers than their general education peers. Attrition, burnout, retention, and induction programs all relate to the following question: what can be done to increase the retention rate of special education teachers? The first section will discuss factors that lead to attrition, including burnout, and the current attrition rates for the state of Kansas. This will be followed by a review of literature regarding burnout which will discuss specific areas of concern for beginning teachers. After examining attrition and burnout, the focus will turn to retention and amendable aspects that districts can address to increase the rate of retention. Finally, three separate mentoring and induction programs will be highlighted to identify the different levels of support and the common components of the programs.

Attrition

Turnover in personnel is something every industry must deal with. The reasons for attrition in education are numerous and can be attributed to family changes, career changes to a job outside of education, career changes to a different role in education, or retirement. While the literature recognizes that special education teachers are leaving the classroom, the research and empirical data are not clear as to where the teachers are going. The impact of attrition in the field of special education is far reaching, starting with the time and money needed to recruit and place entering teachers. In addition, it takes time for a new teacher to become a fully contributing member to the building and district system. The ultimate effect, however, is on the students who need special services. It is not uncommon to have new teachers who are not as qualified replace the teacher who is leaving (Boe et al., 1997). By examining attrition rates and the reasons why teachers leave the field of special education, school and district administrators can attend to the attrition issues that are in their control. By addressing attrition issues that are

preventable such as perceived school climate and acceptable certification, districts may increase their chances of keeping the qualified, experienced professionals in their classrooms (Menlove et al., 2004).

Family changes, career changes, and retirement are among the reasons for attrition in general education teachers. Whitaker (2000b) notes that teachers in general have a difficult time transitioning to the professional work place. She suggests that this is due, in part, because new teachers must make the adjustment from being responsible for only their own learning to being responsible for the learning of others. The Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) notes that an added stressor for general education teachers is the expectation that they teach an increasingly complex curriculum to a higher level of mastery. In working with such high stakes there is little room for weak teaching strategies that waste valuable instruction time; it is imperative that effective instructional approaches and strategies are selected. A natural side effect is that this expectation increases the pressure of the general education teacher to quickly attain high levels of skill and competence (Council of Exceptional Children, 2000).

There have also been changes in the roles of special education teachers. The most dramatic change is in the amount of time special education teachers spend in intensive small group settings providing direct instruction. As district and building level teams continue to strive for the least restrictive environment mandated by the federal law, there has been a shift to a more collaborative model which provides increased access to general education peers and a greater exposure to the grade level curriculum. One outcome of the collaborative model is that students spend less time receiving direct instruction in special education classrooms. According to a study by the CEC (2002) 68% of the special education teachers reported that the time spent in individual instruction with each student is less than two hours a week. While special education teachers support the collaborative model, they report that it could be more effective if there was adequate time to plan and work with the general education teachers. The CEC (2000) report states that special education teachers spend less than one hour a week collaborating with their colleagues.

The Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) has recognized the impact of attrition and the importance of addressing this critical issue. A Presidential Commission on the Conditions of Special Education and Learning was appointed by the CEC in April of 1998. Realizing that a great number of the most skilled and competent special education teachers were leaving the field,

the first directive given to this Commission was to identify the roadblocks that impede high-quality special education. Second, they were asked to develop an action plan based on their findings that would challenge districts to provide high-quality special education teachers, optimal professional conditions, and suitable settings in which to serve students with special needs (Council of Exceptional Children, 2000). According to their findings, reported in *BRIGHT FUTURES for Exceptional Learners*, an identified roadblock to quality special education is professional growth opportunities. Both general and special education teachers noted the lack of professional development relating to teaching students with special needs. Special education teachers also noted the importance of membership in professional organizations but indicated that there were few chances for participation in such organizations. In addition, special educators reported that too often it appeared that district-level professional development for special education teachers was arranged as an afterthought. Miller et al. (1999) reported similar findings in their study that suggested that too few professional growth opportunities were a factor in the attrition of special education teachers.

The Presidential Commission also examined the preparedness of administrators. Their *Bright Futures* report identified the lack of special education coursework during the administrative coursework for licensure as a variable that impacts attrition. Their report stated this lack of coursework makes administrators less effective in that they fail to fully understand special education as it relates to the building climate, the unique needs of students with special needs, and varying types of support needed by special education teachers (Council of Exceptional Children, 2000).

The rates of attrition of special education teachers are alarming when compared to general education teachers. In a national study, Boe et al. (1997) found that annually on average 5.8% of general education teachers left the field of teaching compared to 7.9% of special education teachers. Results also showed that while only 7% of general education teachers transferred to a different teaching position, the rate was at 13% for special education teachers. In combination, attrition and transfer amounted to a turnover rate of 12% for general education teachers and 20% for special education teachers. In the report filed by the CEC Presidential Commission just three years later, it was estimated that 40% of special education teachers leave before their fifth year of teaching (Council of Exceptional Children, 2000). With so many special education teachers leaving the field, local education agencies have had to turn to teachers

who do not have full or appropriate licensure to fill the vacant positions. The CEC (2000) reported that over 30,000 teachers with inadequate licensure were filling many of these vacancies. New special education teachers are especially feeling these effects. Whitaker (2001) noted that 25-30% of beginning special education teachers are filling positions that require them to work with students for whom they are not properly certified to teach. Boyer and Gillespie (2000) also reported that special education teachers are leaving the field because of “insufficient certification.” The fallout is that students who are the most difficult to teach suffer because the more experienced and accomplished special education teachers are not available to mentor the inexperienced and unqualified teachers (Council of Exceptional Children, 2000). At the time of their report, the CEC estimated that on an annual basis approximately 17,000 new special education teachers with appropriate licensure join the teaching ranks. Although this seems like a large infusion of qualified staff, it fills only about half of the annual special education vacancies (Council of Exceptional Children, 2000). The problem of appropriate certification is compounded by inconsistent licensure from state to state. A teacher who is fully certified with several years of experience in one state can fall short of licensure requirements in another state (Council of Exceptional Children, 2000).

In the state of Kansas, attrition rates have been tracked since the implementation of PL 94-142 (McKnab, 2006). The average attrition rates over this 29 year span were 10.8%. The attrition rate for special education teachers reached a high in the 1978-79 school year at 17.5%. The state saw single digit attrition rates for the twelve consecutive years from 1987-88 to 1998-99 with a low of 7.6% in the 1996-97 school year. Attrition rates returned to double digits for the four school years from 1999-2000 to 2002-2003 with a high of 11.1% for the 2000-2001 school year. Although these figures returned to single digits in 2003-2004, they have again climbed, reaching 11.0% in 2004-2005 with a total of 844 special education personnel not returning for the next school year (McKnab, 2006). The past three years have seen a 30% increase in the number of substitute teachers or teachers on waivers needed to fill special education positions. Currently in the state of Kansas, there are more than 8,000 teaching positions requiring special education endorsement and approximately 11,000 teachers have the appropriate certification needed to fill these positions. It is anticipated that for the 2005-2006 school year, more than 300 of these current special education teaching positions will remain filled with teachers who are not fully qualified according to state standards. Substitute teachers

fill approximately 28% of these positions and approximately 72% are filled through waivers (Kansas State Department of Education, 2006).

When examining the reasons behind attrition, many variables come in to play. Boe et al. (1997) conclude that gender, race/ethnicity, region of nation, type of community, size of school, and level of highest degree earned are *not* relevant variables that impact attrition. Variables that do appear to impact attrition include age, perceptions of job related stress, student discipline, student progress, diverse student needs, professional preparation, administrative support, and a sense of disillusionment (Boyer & Gillespie, 2000; Center & Callaway, 1999; Council of Exceptional Children, 2000; Gersten et al., 2001; Menlove et al., 2004; Miller et al., 1999; Nichols & Sosnowsky, 2002; Platt & Olson, 1990; Stempien & Loeb, 2002; Whitaker, 2000a, 2000b, 2003; Wisniewski & Gargiulo, 1997). Boyer and Gillespie, (2000) also noted the stress of working with students with disabilities, and the frustration with school climate.

Those at greatest risk for attrition are young teachers who have less than five years of experience (Nichols & Sosnowsky, 2002; Whitaker, 2000b). In a study by Stempien and Loeb (2002), lower levels of satisfaction were reported by the less experienced, younger teachers. This same group is reported as the most likely to leave their special education teaching positions.

Teacher perceived stress is a recurring theme in research on burnout; it is also a frequently cited factor for attrition. Job related stress can be broken down into many areas including paperwork, student discipline, school politics, and increased academic accountability. Research has consistently shown that the excessive amount of paperwork required by special education teachers continues to rank as one of the top reasons cited by special education teachers for leaving the field (e.g. Center & Callaway, 1999; Council of Exceptional Children, 2000; Menlove et al., 2004; Platt & Olson, 1990). Other job related stress factors identified by Nichols and Sosnowsky (2002) include student attitudes, level of physical and emotional exhaustion, building level support, and type of delivery model. In their study, teachers who served students in a self-contained model were at greatest risk for leaving. While students in a self-contained model would have greater needs than students in less restrictive environments, the model also runs the risk of increased isolation for the special education teacher. The CEC (2000) has identified these increased feelings of teacher isolation as a significant issue underlying attrition.

The level of teacher preparation appears to be another variable that impacts retention. One aspect of this variable is seen in a study by Wisniewski and Gargiulo (1997) which showed

that teachers who scored higher on the National Teacher Exam are leaving the classroom at a higher rate than their peers who scored lower on this exam. Additional results of this same study indicated that teachers with undergraduate degrees were more highly committed to staying in the field of special education than teachers who had graduate degrees. A different aspect of this variable is reported by Miller et al. (1999). Their study suggests a relationship between a teacher's perception of preparedness and their decision to stay in the classroom; teachers who perceive themselves as ill-prepared were more likely to leave the field of special education.

Many special education teachers experience a sense of disillusionment resulting in feelings of lower self-efficacy which impact attrition (Gersten et al., 2001). Research suggests these feelings stem from failed expectations and frustration from poor job design (e.g., Gersten et al., 2001; Wisniewski & Gargiulo, 1997). As an additional hypothesis, Stempien and Loeb (2002) suggest many special educators leave the field because they experience feelings of guilt from not being able to live up to the "superhuman qualities" ascribed to them by society.

Leaving the field for non-special education positions also impacts the problem of attrition. In the Center and Callaway study (1999), results showed a relationship between the frequency of teacher-reported stressors by E/BD teachers and the willingness to accept a different position. Many special education teachers also note that special education positions are accepted as a way to get into a district/system. Teachers stay in these roles until they can secure a job as a general education teacher (Council of Exceptional Children, 2000; Wisniewski & Gargiulo, 1997).

On the national average, special educators are leaving the field of education faster than their general education peers. Exiting special educators cite burnout and teacher stress as factors that led them to take non-special education assignments or leave the field of education all together.

Burnout

Since the inception of special education services in public schools, researchers have examined attrition and burnout among special education instructors. Soon after the implementation of the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (PL 94-142) which federally mandated special education services, researchers began a lengthy exploration of factors that contribute to burnout for special education teachers (e.g. Allinder, 2001; Brownwell & Smith,

1992; Center & Callaway, 1999; Embich, 2001; Fore et al., 2002; Gersten et al, 2001; McKnab, 2002; Nichols & Sosnowsky, 2002; Platt & Olson, 1990; Stempien & Loeb, 2002; Wisniewski & Gargiulo, 1997; Zabel & Zabel, 1982, 1983, 2002). While a review of the literature shows a variety of definitions for burnout, it is more commonly described by looking at the manifestation of symptoms.

In early studies Zabel and Zabel (1982) examined burnout of special education teachers as measured by the three factors of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and lack of professional accomplishment using the Maslach Burnout Inventory. Their analysis identified frequent absences, emotional distress, physical ailments, diminished job performance, and job attrition as symptoms of stress experienced by individuals in the human services occupations.

In later research, Platt and Olson (1990) used less formal terminology when they defined burnout as a syndrome with emotional exhaustion and cynicism as key symptoms. Their findings also noted that burnout is frequently seen in the human services occupations.

Wisniewski and Gargiulo (1997) took the approach of combining earlier descriptions of burnout. They recognized that the term “burnout” had become a catchall phrase used to describe what they, too, referred to as a syndrome. Emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and lack of professional accomplishment were also seen as key features when identifying burnout. More recently, Embich (2001) has concurred with the description offered by Wisniewski and Gargiulo (1997) by recognizing burnout as a psychological syndrome prevalent among those employed in human services occupations. This study also recognized that burnout has the three dimensions of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and a lower sense of personal accomplishment.

While a variety of tools have been used to measure burnout, the most commonly used tool identified in the literature is the Maslach Burnout Inventory which points to the three factors of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment. According to Christina Maslach (1986, 1996), key features of *emotional exhaustion* include an emotional and psychological depletion to the extent that a teacher feels they no longer have anything to give to others. *Depersonalization* refers to an indifference or negative attitude towards students or other co-workers. This detachment is extensive enough to disrupt one’s personal and professional life. For example, studies have shown that as degrees of depersonalization become statistically significant, teachers express dissatisfaction with their social support network which can manifest itself as social isolation and the lack of an established support system (Nichols &

Sosnowsky, 2002). Reduced *personal accomplishment* involves feeling incompetent at one's job and feeling ineffective in working with students and other stakeholders (Embich, 2001; Wisniewski & Gargiulo, 1997). As noted by Nichols and Sosnowsky (2002), teachers reported minimal intrinsic rewards as a result of minimal student progress after perceived teacher initiatives and efforts. This is supported by Stempien and Loeb (2002) whose study indicates that special education teachers report fewer rewards on the job as compared to general education teachers. Wisniewski and Gargiulo (1997) suggest that it is the frequency and intensity of these feelings that lead teachers to feel their situation is impossible and irreversible which, in turn, leads to greater feelings of burnout.

In the initial Zabel and Zabel study (1982), findings suggested that teachers' age may be an important factor when it comes to feelings of burnout. It appeared that older teachers demonstrated lower levels of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization and a greater sense of personal accomplishment. Results from a follow-up study 20 years later suggested that, while the average age of practicing special education teachers and the amount of professional teacher preparation have increased in the last 20 years, age is still an important factor in that younger teachers with less training, less higher education, and less experience appear to be the most vulnerable to burnout (Zabel & Zabel, 2001); however, it should be noted that this same follow-up study indicated that age, experience, certification status, and preparation do not appear to have the same impact on professional burnout as they did 20 years ago. In a subsequent analysis of the 1982 study, Zabel and Zabel (1983) identified additional factors such as position responsibilities, length of work week, types of clients, and on-the-job assistance as impacting feelings of burnout.

Other characteristics whose impact on burnout have been studied include: the number of students on a teacher's caseload, education level of the teacher, experience level of the teacher, age of the students, gender of the teacher, the students' category of disability, the number of heterogeneous disabilities served by the teacher, and the number of students with emotional disabilities served by the teacher (Nichols & Sosnowsky, 2002; Platt & Olson, 1990). In a study involving special education teachers who worked primarily with students in the category of emotionally disturbed, Nichols and Sosnowsky (2002) noted these specific special education teachers felt that classroom management was difficult with the varying degrees of emotional disturbance and the wide range of ability levels and learning styles which made it difficult to

adequately deliver curricular instruction. These results led Nichols and Sosnowsky to conclude that burnout was not impacted by either the number of heterogeneous disabilities on a teacher's caseload or the number of students on an individual's caseload; however, based on the Maslach Burnout Inventory, their findings did suggest that as the number of emotionally disabled students on a teacher's caseload increased, so did the feelings of depersonalization.

A recurring theme in the research on burnout is teacher perceived stress (Fore et al., 2002; Gersten et al., 2001; Nichols & Sosnowsky, 2002; Wisniewski & Gargiulo, 1997). Variables that have been identified as contributors to stress levels include student caseloads, extent of professional training, job structure, interpersonal interactions, student motivation, amount of direct service required by caseload, student conduct, range of diversity in ability levels, intensity of acting out behaviors in self-contained classes, documentation and paperwork, availability of materials, parent involvement, general education teaching experience, and certification status (Center & Callaway, 1999; Nichols & Sosnowsky, 2002; Wisniewski & Gargiulo, 1997; Zabel & Zabel, 2001).

In addition, organizational factors that contribute to professional stress have been identified. They include limited professional development opportunities, role dissonance, perceived support from general and/or special education administrators, perceived workload, satisfaction with pre-professional training and preparation, and the support network in the school building and/or district (Embich, 2001; Nichols & Sosnowsky, 2002). Referring to the extent that job expectations do not match actual job requirements, Gersten et al. suggests that role dissonance serves as a strong predictor of stress which can be intensified by a perceived lack of support and a perceived lack of professional growth opportunities. They also reported that negative working conditions can adversely affect a teacher's level of effort, quality of work, and morale. Wisniewski and Gargiulo (1997) also recognized the impact of role dissonance. Their study suggested that a teacher's effectiveness and personal well-being were related to perceptions of role conflict and perceptions of support based on their current delivery model.

The teacher stress and burnout model created by Zabel, Boomer, and King (1984) helps demonstrate the impact that school experiences, feelings, behavior, and others' reactions have on the expectations of the teacher. Rather than viewing each variable independently, the model demonstrates the dynamics each variable has upon the others. According to this model, a teacher's experience in relation to each variable are neither absolutely positive nor negative but

can be placed upon a continuum from one extreme to the other allowing job-related stress and burnout to be viewed as matters of degree. This model allows for the influence of individual response patterns as they relate to the nature of the stressful event itself. Wisniewski and Gargiulo (1997) point out that the teacher stress and burnout model created by Zabel, Boomer, and King demonstrates role dissonance by explaining how the mismatch between teacher expectations and professional experiences set in motion a “cycle of unsatisfying professional experiences, unpleasant feelings, and behavioral symptoms.” The fallout of this continuous cycle is varying degrees of burnout. Such a model supports the idea that burnout does not necessarily result from prolonged experiences (Zabel & Zabel, 1983).

The original 1982 study by Zabel and Zabel also pointed to perceptions of external support as having the same impact; that is, teachers who felt they had external support also reported lower levels of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization and a greater sense of personal accomplishment. In a follow-up study 20 years later (Zabel & Zabel, 2002), support systems and the effect they have on burnout were re-examined. Specifically, they analyzed the relationship between burnout and perceptions of support from others as it relates to the school locale, service delivery model, and the co-workers. Although this research does not confirm a cause-effect relationship between support and burnout, it does suggest that current teachers in special education feel they have more support as compared to their colleagues 20 years ago. However, Zabel and Zabel (2002) are cautious to point out that even though the number of teachers reporting lack of support is low (20% or less), there is still concern surrounding the possible correlation between perceived lack of support and teacher burnout.

Teacher perceptions of preparedness also impact burnout. Zabel and Zabel (2001) noted the possible role of general education teaching experience on burnout, pointing out that nearly half of the special education teachers in their study had no general education teaching experience. This appears to be supported by results on the Maslach Burnout Inventory that showed general education teachers scoring higher on feelings of personal accomplishment than their special education counterparts. This study also suggests that teachers who have graduate degrees experience a higher level of personal accomplishment in teaching than those who have not pursued degrees beyond the basic requirements for licensure. In addition, Stempien and Loeb (2002) report that teachers new to special education report frequent feelings of being inadequately prepared suggesting increased feelings of burnout due to higher levels of stress. As

shown through the Maslach Burnout Inventory, Embich (2001) indicates that teachers experience more emotional exhaustion as their level of preparedness declines. Many special education teachers face numerous obstacles in overcoming feelings of being inadequately prepared based upon perceived expectations of others. Wisniewski and Gargiulo (1997) reported that many special education teachers feel they lack the necessary resources and institutional support even though they are expected to implement current best practices. In addition, Nichols and Sosnowsky (2002) note that many stakeholders view special education teachers as the experts in various curriculums for which they have never received formal instruction or training.

While many teachers who are experiencing burnout may chose to leave the field for what they perceive to be better opportunities in the business world, others remain and become at-risk for “retiring on the job.” This negative response to increased depersonalization is manifested through a reduction in the overall involvement and effort of the teacher and lowered student expectations (Center & Callaway, 1999; Gersten et al., 2001). Stempien and Loeb (2002) suggest that the result of this is increased guilt on the part of the special education teachers when they fail to live up to the superhuman expectations they perceive as being placed on them by the current culture. They further suggest that it is acute adjustment issues and not job dissatisfaction over time that leads to burnout. Wisniewski and Gargiulo (1997) speculate that the failure to live up to these expectations perpetuates the cycle of interpersonal conflict leading to higher levels of burnout.

Retention

Although many factors can be singled out as contributors to attrition, it is difficult to select just one factor to focus on for increasing retention. Boe et al. (1997) concluded in their study that working on a single factor in isolation does not appear to have a dramatic impact; however, the potential for improvement in retention is “substantial” when variables are addressed in combination.

Initial positive teaching experiences increase the likelihood that new special education teachers will remain in the classroom, thus increasing the retention rate for this group of educators. Although empirical evidence is limited, the literature reveals several implications drawn from the research. By focusing on those aspects of the job that are amendable, districts can favorably impact a teacher’s decision to remain in their chosen career (Wisniewski &

Gargiulo, 1997). Recommendations for ways to increasing retention are numerous (Billingsley et al., 2004; Council for Exceptional Children, 2000; Fore et al., 2002; Gersten et al., 2001; Nichols & Sosnowsky, 2002; Zabel & Zabel, 1983). Among the suggestions are:

- providing technical and clerical assistance for paperwork;
- reducing paperwork;
- limiting class and caseload sizes;
- providing technical support;
- creating time to observe other special education teachers;
- providing professional growth activities on potential stressors and how to deal with these stressors;
- increasing administrative support;
- increasing opportunities for collegial support;
- providing increased opportunities for relevant professional growth activities;
- providing mentors;
- providing methodical and responsive induction programs.

As a result of their research, Gersten et al., (2001) states that teacher morale, effort and work quality are affected by working conditions. They go on to identify the areas of relevant professional development opportunities, assistance in prioritizing and clarifying, and fostering a culture of collegial support as three relatively inexpensive ways to increase support for special education teachers, thus impacting retention. In review of the literature, three themes appear to be consistent: administrative support, collegial support, and professional development and professional growth.

Administrative values and actions are reported to have an impact on a special education teacher's perceived level of support (Gersten et al., 2001; Whitaker, 2003). Miller et al. (1999) noted that "outstanding leadership" would improve the collegiality and student relationships experienced by new educators resulting in lower levels of stress. Lower levels of teacher stress would, in turn, lead to lower levels of frustration and burnout. Fostering opportunities for collegial dialogue is also noted by Gersten et al (2001). They note the importance of principals using their roles to creatively cultivate pertinent communication between general education and special education staff. In addition, the learning opportunities created by administrators that are specific to special education have also been noted as something that administrators can do to

increase retention (Gersten et al., 2001). Gersten et al. (2001) also noted that even when administrators are unable to provide material resources, special educators value the acknowledgement of understanding for the complexity of their role. They went on to state that the level of support felt by special education teachers was also impacted by the overall school climate which is seen as a reflection of the principal and staff values and actions.

Collegial support is another area that is connected to special education teacher retention (e.g. Nichols & Sosnowsky, 2002; Stempien & Loeb, 2002). Teachers report greater job satisfaction and higher levels of commitment when they have the opportunity to share in the decision making processes, especially in regards to instructional programming (Brown & Smith, 1992; Gersten et al., 2001). They also note that teachers report greater satisfaction with their jobs when they were involved in job-related discussions with colleagues on a frequent basis. Furthermore, Gersten et al. (2001) states that teachers who are involved in strong professional communities demonstrate an increased sense of “service ethic” which is described as caring about their students and having higher expectations for student achievement. Decreasing feelings of isolation is another positive implication of collegial support. The relationships fostered with experienced teachers can provide such a support system. By selectively pairing new teachers with an experienced teacher who has similar job responsibilities, new teachers can already have the foundation in place for a strong professional community.

Another area that appears to have an impact on retention is professional growth and professional development opportunities. Special education teachers indicate that even as they progress through their careers, it is important for them to continue to learn on the job (Gersten et al., 2001). Allinder (2001) suggests that professional development opportunities are most effective when they are more tailored to where teachers are in their professional growth. Gersten et al. (2001) also states that teachers tend to categorize their careers based on their expertise and level of experience. They view professional growth as a continuous process that is best when based on individual need. As a result, they suggest the implementation of professional development policies that solicit input from teachers regarding the kind of activities desired but leave the organizing and implementation up to district level personnel. Embich (2001) also suggests providing professional development that targets relieving stress, coping skills, and preventing burnout. Based on the Maslach Burnout Inventory, Nichols and Sosnowsky (2002) report a connection between professional development opportunities and levels of emotional

exhaustion. As the level of dissatisfaction with professional development opportunities increased, so did the level of emotional exhaustion.

When looking at the needs of new special educators, Billingsley et al. (2004) stress that program designs should be flexible enough to address the needs of these new educators as it relates to their individual work environments. For example, a teacher in a collaborative model may have different professional growth needs than a teacher starting his or her career in a self-contained model or day treatment facility. Each setting requires unique academic and behavioral challenges as well as the possibility of different needed materials and resources. As it relates to attrition, Whitaker (2003) also points out the need for flexible professional growth opportunities. She notes that beginning teachers may not have the same needs and concerns as the more experienced teachers who are leaving the field.

For optimal results, Billingsley et al. (2004) point out that it is essential for mentor and induction programs to understand the development of all first year teachers. The initial stage for new educators is one of survival. At the onset of their classroom experience, beginning teachers spend much of their time and energy on gaining classroom control, being valued, and being liked by their students. They point out that new teachers often underestimate the amount of time they must dedicate to lesson planning and other teaching tasks. In addition, they tend to overestimate their skills and abilities and have unrealistic expectations. To further complicate this first year, beginning teachers are often given the most undesirable schedules and most challenging classes. Billingsley et al. assert that in better understanding the first year of teaching, districts can create environments that support and nurture new educators. By doing so, the payoff is that districts can help address the amendable factors that lead to burnout and attrition, thus increasing the retention rate of their beginning teachers.

Mentoring and Induction Programs

The premise for mentoring and induction programs is that regardless of their training and preservice experience, new educators still need support to become skilled at teaching (Billingsley et al., 2004). Such programs can take many different forms including professional growth activities, casual contact with other educators, and observations. Mentor and early induction programs are two structured ways education agencies can meet the needs of new educators while providing them with support.

Formal mentoring programs involve an experienced, skilled person working one-on-one with a new educator in an effort to support and ease the transition into their new profession, new building, and new district. The most effective mentors are able to regularly observe, give constructive feedback, and promote reflective practices with other educators (Whitaker, 2003). An induction program is also planned and provides group learning opportunities throughout the year that address specific topics relevant to new educators. A successful induction program helps new educators generalize information gained from their preservice undergraduate program, and helps increase the retention rate due to the fact that talented and skilled teachers are remaining in the classrooms (Boyer & Gillespie, 2000; Conderman & Stephens, 2000; Whitaker, 2001).

All new teachers must adjust to standard things such as district curriculum, building level policies and procedures, and the school culture. New special education teachers who report that the first year of teaching is harder than anticipated must deal with a multitude of other variables (Billingsley et al., 2004; Boyer & Gillespie, 2000; Conderman & Stephens, 2000; Whitaker, 2000a, 2003). Factors that are unique to special education include the following:

- understanding the federal mandates as outlined in the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA);
- learning the special education paperwork unique to each district (i.e., individual education plans, functional behavior assessments, behavior intervention plans, extended school year documentation);
- learning policies and procedures specific to special education (i.e., identification process, service delivery models, hierarchy for support)
- establishing working relationships with parents, paraeducators, general education teachers, related services providers, and other stakeholders as determined by individual student needs;
- establishing effective routines for data collection;
- addressing the individual academic and social needs of each student including curricular modifications and accommodations;
- establishing communication skills for effective collaborative relationships.

Whitaker (2000b) reports a strong correlation between the perceived levels of support for special education teachers and their decision to remain in the field. Recognizing that experiences

during the first years of teaching set the tone for years to come, Whitaker (2003) notes that directed efforts for supporting new teachers improve job satisfaction which, in turn, impacts feelings of personal and professional satisfaction leading to higher retention rates. Fore, Martin, and Bender (2002) also report that mentoring programs for beginning special education teachers enhance retention by providing many facets of support. Such programs can provide high levels of support through building and district administrators, experienced colleagues, and universities (Brownell & Smith, 1992; Stempien & Loeb, 2002). Stempien and Loeb (2002) specifically note that special education teachers need support that is purposely designed to meet their unique needs.

A unique aspect of mentoring and induction programs is that it provides an established resource for new teachers when seeking help or clarification. Whitaker (2001) recognized that new teachers are reluctant to seek help or ask questions. She noted the need of beginning teachers to appear competent and confident. Because these new educators don't readily seek help, it leads to insufficient support resulting in professional, social, and emotional isolation. Reluctance to offer help is also seen with experienced teachers. Whitaker (2001) states that experienced teachers do not readily offer advice because they are afraid they will appear intrusive. By nature of their structure, mentoring and induction programs provide a safe environment for beginning and experienced teachers to share information and concerns.

New educators have responded positively to high quality mentoring programs. They have reported that such programs provide encouragement and emotional support which ultimately had a positive impact on their decision to remain the field of special education (Fore et al., 2002; Whitaker, 2000b). To get the most benefit from mentoring programs for new special educators, research implications strongly suggest that special education mentors be special education teachers that are in the same building as the new teacher (Fore et al., 2002; Whitaker, 2000, 2003). It also appears that weekly contact with mentors is most beneficial for new special educators (Fore et al., 2002).

Quality mentoring and induction programs must be designed with care. As previously noted, programs that have mentors who are special education teachers are most effective for the new special educators. Whitaker (2000a) stated that the new special education teachers felt this was more important than having a mentor who is in the same building. Unfortunately, she states that between one-half and one-third of new special education teachers have mentors that are not

themselves special education teachers. In addition, programs that are designed to provide structured support, at least throughout the first year, are more successful than programs that simply focus on a beginning of the year welcome.

Boyer and Gillespie (2000) also cite good matches between the mentor and new teacher as a hallmark of quality induction programs. Furthermore, they state that it is best when the mentor has knowledge and experience in serving the same category of disability as the new teacher. According to their study, effective programs also provide content training in developing quality individual education plans, release time to observe experienced special education teachers who serve students with similar needs, regular group meetings with other inductees and experienced staff, and continued training on other pertinent topics. These topics include differentiating instruction, identifying appropriate accommodations and modifications, adapting curriculum, working with paraeducators, interpreting assessment results and aligning appropriate instruction or interventions, and managing behaviors.

Samples of Current Induction Programs

Three examples of mentor and induction programs reflect suggestions from the literature. Each program targets a different group for support: the Career Advancement and Development for Recruits and Experienced Teachers (CADRE) out of Omaha, Nebraska looks at support for general educators, the Hopkins Mentor Project out of Maryland looks at preservice support, and the study of a program in South Carolina focuses on support for beginning special education teachers.

Recognized by the United States Department of Education as an exemplary teacher induction program, the Career Advancement and Development for Recruits and Experienced Teachers (CADRE) program out of Omaha, Nebraska is a collaborative project between seven local school districts and the University of Nebraska at Omaha (McGlamery et al., 2002). In this program, beginning teachers combine their first year of teaching with graduate coursework. During this time they are considered university employees allowing them to receive a stipend and tuition waiver for their coursework. A yearlong teaching assignment is coupled with coursework. Their coursework involves teacher preparation classes, seminars with other inductees for peer support, and completion of their professional growth portfolio which is required for completion of their Master's degree. Seminar topics include assessment, classroom

management, communication with various stakeholders, and long-range planning. After four terms, participants will have earned their Master's degree.

The CADRE's mentors must have a Master's degree, success with previous beginning teachers, and the highest ratings from their district teaching performance assessments. They make a one to three year commitment during which time they receive their full salary from the district. District level duties for mentors include induction support, staff development planning and training, grant writing, curriculum revisions, and assessment related activities.

Approximately one-third of their time is devoted to university responsibilities. At the university level, mentor duties include supervising student teachers, teaching teacher preparation classes, and serving on task forces.

Results from CADRE are positive. When looking at 27 different measures of teacher skills, CADRE participants performed 28% better than peers not participating in the project. After five years of classroom experience, approximately 90% of CADRE teachers were still working in their chosen profession compared to the national average of 50% for this same group. In addition, building principals report they prefer to hire CADRE graduates citing their willingness to become active leaders and their positive role in promoting curricular changes needed to raise student achievement.

The Hopkins Mentor Project out of Johns Hopkins University (Taylor, 2002) is another example of mentoring and induction programs. This program was created in response to teacher shortages in the areas of early intervention, preschool special education, and Head Start Programs. Using two separate cohorts, each consisting of 15 preservice educators, the university fashioned a program that consisted of two separate internships as the final pieces to their program of study at the university. The first internship was with children with disabilities ranging in age from birth to four years old. The second internship was with students with special needs ranging in age from four to eight years old. Students in both cohorts were assigned mentors who remained with them throughout both internships. The mentors provided continuing guidance and support and acted as a professional resource for the prospective new teachers.

Mentoring benefits were noted by both the mentor and the intern. The interns cited the professional networks that were created, especially for those interested in the early childhood special education programs. They also noted an appreciation for the opportunity to exchange ideas and resources with their mentors. An unexpected yet positive outcome was noted by the

mentors. Informally, mentors shared that their involvement allowed them the chance to reflect on professional experiences and sharpen their own professional skills.

Finally, Whitaker (2000a) describes the efforts of one district in South Carolina which has created a program that emphasizes support and assistance for new special education teachers. This program includes a daylong meeting with district level personnel before students return to school. The focus is on special education procedures, policies, and management issues that are discussed and given in writing in the form of a district special education manual. Beginning teachers also learn about ordering materials and supplies and are assigned a mentor who will meet with them throughout the school year. After this first day, district level special education administrators make informal contact in the first weeks of school to welcome the teachers to the district and discuss any current needs.

The assigned mentors are given the directive to frequently initiate contact at the beginning of the year meeting as often as weekly. They are also given the responsibility of coaxing the new staff member to look beyond the mechanics of their job and to focus on issues that impact instruction. Such issues include individual student concerns, curriculum planning, and instructional strategies. New educators are further supported in these areas through a minimum of two district level meetings during the school year for all inductees. The focus is on working with parents, establishing effective lines of communication, working with paraeducators, and assessing student progress. Results of this study found a positive relationship between the perceived effectiveness of the program and the retention rate of the beginning teachers.

When looking at all three programs, some common themes begin to emerge. Each program recognizes the significance of having regular support for early educators whether they are about to enter the field or starting their first year in a new district. In addition, two of the three programs are working collaboratively with universities, thus recognizing that addressing burnout and retention must begin as early in a young educator's career as possible. Finally, all three programs use an intentional structure and "curriculum" that focuses on topics that are key for beginning teachers. Within each program, success is noted in terms of retention, desirability to hire participants, and participant reports of effective support.

Literature Summary and Conclusion

Special education teachers are leaving the classroom in larger numbers than their general education peers. Research points to many variables that impact attrition including family changes, career changes, retirement, and increased feelings of burnout. As shown in the literature related to burnout, sustained high levels of feelings of burnout have a significant impact on attrition. As a result, the rate of retention for special education teachers continues to remain lower than the retention rate of general education teachers.

As stated earlier, many factors can be singled out as contributors to attrition and burnout. It is difficult to select just one factor to focus on for increasing retention (Boe et al., 1997). One approach highlighted in the literature review is the mentoring or induction programs that focus on several areas that are considered to be amendable aspects of attrition and burnout. The following research will investigate how induction programs impact feelings of burnout for new special education teachers.

CHAPTER 3 - Methodology

Introduction

As reported in Chapter 2, the literature review discusses the impact of feelings of burnout on attrition and retention of special education teachers. Personnel shortages continue to be influenced by attrition resulting from burnout. The literature suggests that if the issue of burnout is not addressed, increasing the retention rate of special education teachers will become more and more difficult. One way of addressing burnout in new teachers is through induction programs. In general, induction programs focusing on prevention and amelioration of burnout have been identified as one way districts can address shortages of qualified staff members. While many programs have been highlighted, the literature offers little evidence of effectiveness of such induction programs, especially those that are specific to special education teachers (Billingsley et al., 2004; Brownell & Smith, 1992). More importantly for this research, there is little, if any, evidence of the impact of induction programs on feelings of burnout among special education teachers.

Special education teachers are leaving the profession in larger numbers than their general education peers which contributes to the shortages of highly qualified special education teachers. Induction programs that focus on special education teachers are essential if districts are to effectively address the need for a qualified and committed special education teaching force (Billingsley et al., 2004). The literature consistently shows that the initial years of teaching are the most critical in terms of favorably impacting a special education teacher's desire to remain in this profession. Examination of the influence induction programs have on special educators' experience of burnout may contribute to a better understanding of how induction programs may ultimately contribute to the development of programs that improve retention of special education teachers. The purpose of this research was to examine the influence of teacher induction programs on special education teacher burnout.

The Maslach Burnout Inventory – Educators Survey, Third Edition (Maslach et al., 1996), recognizes that burnout is comprised of three dimensions: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment. According to this instrument, as feelings of

emotional exhaustion and depersonalization increase, feelings of personal accomplishment decrease. High scores for emotional exhaustion and depersonalization along with low scores for personal accomplishment indicate greater feelings of burnout. This tool allows each of the three categories to be examined in isolation as well as in comparison to each other.

The Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) is the most widely used measure of burnout in the helping professions. Reported test-retest reliability coefficients for each dimension of the original Maslach Burnout Inventory were obtained using a sample of 1,316 participants. The time intervals between the test-retest sessions range from eight months to one year. Reported reliability coefficients were as follows: .90 for emotional exhaustion, .79 for depersonalization, and .71 for personal accomplishment. Convergent validity was determined through multiple means: comparing MBI scores with ratings made independently by someone who knew the participant well, correlating MBI scores with the presence of specific job characteristics, and correlating MBI scores with outcome measures that were believed to be related to burnout. Discriminant validity was determined by comparing the results from the MBI with other constructs that would presumably be present with burnout (Maslach et al., 1996).

The Maslach Burnout Inventory – Educators Survey was developed in 1996. Two studies were used to test reliability and validity using a total of 931 participants. The first study reported a reliability of .90 for emotional exhaustion, .76 for depersonalization, and .76 for personal accomplishment. The second study reported a reliability of .88 for emotional exhaustion, .74 for depersonalization, and .72 for personal accomplishment. These reliability data parallel those of the original instrument. In addition, factor analysis was used to establish the validity of the MBI-ES (Zalaquett & Wood, 1997). This analysis supports the three factors of burnout identified by Maslach et al. (1996).

Research Questions

The following research investigated how participation of special education instructional resource teachers in new teacher induction programs affected burnout of special education teachers. The general question addressed by this research was:

“Do induction programs that include special education instructional resource teachers decrease the feelings of burnout for new special education teachers?”

Specifically, this research addressed the following three questions:

1. Do induction programs that include special education instructional resource teachers decrease feelings of emotional exhaustion for new special education teachers as compared to new special education teachers who participate in traditional induction programs?
2. Do induction programs that include special education instructional resource teachers decrease feelings of depersonalization for new special education teachers as compared to new special education teachers who participate in traditional induction programs?
3. Do induction programs that include special education instructional resource teachers increase feelings of personal accomplishment for new special education teachers as compared to new special education teachers who participate in traditional induction programs?

For purposes of this study, a traditional induction program was one that relied heavily on mentors (current educators) to help new teachers adjust to their new positions. Specifically, the traditional model in this study differed in two respects from the IRT model: 1) the traditional model had no matching of special education mentor to special education inductee; and 2) the level of support in the form of consultations and observations was far less than that of the SPED-IRT model. Further similarities and differences between the two programs are highlighted in Appendix B.

As described in Chapter 2, in the traditional induction model a mentor worked one-on-one with new educators to provide support and ease the transition into their new profession, new building, and new district. Mentors often have full class schedules or partial schedules of their own. Recognizing the unique needs of special education teachers and the importance of pairing new special educators with mentors in the same field, some districts are more carefully pairing mentors and new staff members. As reported by Whitaker (2000a), a district in South Carolina has followed this model. After one year, they saw increased retention rates among special education teachers; however, this model used mentors who continue to have their own student caseload responsibilities. In District B, the appointed district-level mentors are referred to as peer assistants. These peer assistants do not have full class schedules or partial schedules of their own. In addition, they do not have a special education background.

As conceptualized in this study, special education instructional resource teachers (SPED-IRT) are certified special education teachers who work directly with special education teachers who are new to the district. In this “coaching” model, the SPED-IRT does not deliver instruction to students with special needs. Instead, their full-time job is to help support and mentor new special education teachers. This model should not be confused with the service delivery model of consulting. In special education, the most basic consulting model has historically referred to a special education teacher helping a general education teacher identify and implement academic or behavioral strategies that will help special education students be successful in a general education setting. In contrast, the SPED-IRT works only with special education teachers as a support person who helps facilitate their initiation into a new profession or new school system. While the ultimate outcome of both models is increased student learning, the key difference is that the SPED-IRT is focused on meeting the unique needs of a new teacher while a special education consultant is focused on meeting the unique needs of a special education student.

The role of the SPED-IRT and inductee are outlined for all participants in Appendix C. In addition to addressing topics that are relevant to all new hires (e.g., district curriculum, policies, and procedures), the SPED-IRT provides additional training and support that is special education specific. This additional support consists of consulting in various areas including: understanding and following paperwork procedures, writing effective individual education plans with supporting data, establishing an effective service delivery model, implementing effective instructional strategies that support the general education curriculum, and understanding the various levels of support available at the building and district level. Responsibilities of the inductee include active participation in professional growth opportunities, actively seeking clarification when needed, and engaging in self-reflection.

Research Design and Participants

The design of this study was quasi-experimental (Gersten et al, 2005). Using purposive sampling, participants of this study were new special educators from two different school districts in the same Midwestern, metropolitan area. Due to the specific criteria of subject eligibility, a true random sampling was not possible because participants were already in existing groups (i.e., school districts). Eligible participants were all new hires for the 2005-2006 school year identified as special education teachers who deliver direct instruction to students with

special needs. Every eligible participant from each of the two districts received a written invitation from the researcher to take part in this study. All eligible participants were solicited to insure an adequate sample size. In each district, a small number of new special educators were not included because of the unique nature of their role and responsibilities. For example, school psychologists were not included because they do not provide direct instruction. In the experimental group (District A), 51 teachers were invited to take part in the study, and in the comparison group (District B) 47 teachers were invited to participate. The SPED-IRT (District A) served as the experimental condition; the more traditional program (District B) served as the comparative condition.

Demographically, the two districts were comparable in regard to the number of certified staff members, the number of special education staff members, and the number of special education staff vacancies not filled for the school year (Appendix D). Using 2005-2006 data provided by the Kansas State Department of Education (2006), District A had 501.1 more professional staff members than District B. The special education staff of District A was also larger by 85.7 positions. The special education vacancies for the 2005-2006 school year were comparable with 2.0 vacancies for District A and no vacancies for District B (Kansas State Department of Education, 2006). In regard to the total number of students enrolled, there was a difference of 4,666 students with District A having the larger enrollment. District B reported a smaller percentage of students eligible for free/reduced lunch (2.2%) than District A (11.6%).

Prior to data collection, the researcher contacted the induction program coordinator to obtain in-depth information regarding their teacher induction programs. They were asked two specific questions:

- 1) What types of support does your district offer new educators?
- 2) What additional or different supports are offered for new special educators?

After examination of the initial information, the researcher continued to ask clarifying questions until complete information was obtained to allow for an appropriate and accurate description of induction programs used by each district for both new general education and special education personnel.

Both districts reported utilizing some type of mentoring program and district level professional growth days throughout the school year. In addition, both districts require all new hires to report for duty a full five days early than returning teachers to participate in the pre-

service conferences for new teacher orientation. Furthermore, both districts utilize building level mentors to help orient new hires to the building expectations, climate, and procedures. In both districts, these mentors maintain their regular classroom duties.

District A

District A provided the experimental condition. This district utilizes special education instructional resource teachers (SPED-IRT) as a key feature in the new teacher induction program. Regardless of prior experience, all new educators in this district work with an instructional resource teacher (IRT) throughout their first year in the district. As mentioned earlier, IRTs are experienced teachers who now serve in this unique role. They do not have classroom assignments, a student caseload or responsibilities to serve students. The primary role of the IRT is to work with educators new to the district and assist in immersing these new hires in the district policies and procedures. In addition, they assist new teachers with learning the curriculum, introducing available resources, and providing support and guidance. At the time of this research, District A had two SPED-IRTs. One SPED-IRT worked with 36 new special education teachers, and the other SPED-IRT worked with 28. Any long-term sub filling a special education vacancy was also assigned a SPED-IRT for support.

The relationship between the IRT (both general education and special education) begins during pre-service training days at the onset of the school year. New teachers report to work approximately five working days before returning staff. During this time, two full days are spent with their assigned IRT. For those in special education, this time is used to introduce the department organizational structure, meet district level special education administrators, review district special education procedures and forms, and learn how to use the internet-based system for writing an individualized education plan (IEP). A compact disk is provided to each new employee which contains this and other information so teachers have a quick reference tool throughout the year.

In addition, District A's induction program includes monthly training for all new hires on topics such as district supported research-based learning strategies, effective communication, classroom management, available technology, and the student intervention process. These monthly training topics are connected to district standards and indicators for certified staff. Participation is not mandatory, but is strongly encouraged. The SPED-IRT also has separate

monthly meetings to cover issues that are specific to special education. Topics for these additional meetings include both technical and content specific components of the individualized education plan, dealing with difficult situations during parent-teacher conferences, data collection for academic progress as it relates to annual goals and assessments, and data collection for behaviors. Separate monthly meetings also are available for all new educators working on the Kansas Performance Assessment process to obtain their state licensure.

Additional professional growth opportunities are also included throughout the school year for all district employees. During each quarter of the school year, the teachers spend up to one and a half days involved in district level learning. The focus of these days is on increasing student learning. Special education teachers are divided into smaller professional learning communities based upon the area of exceptionality they serve in order to participate in activities that are more relevant to their area of need.

In past years, IRTs worked with general educators as well as special educators. In recognition of the unique needs of new special education teachers, District A started using a special education instructional resource teacher (SPED-IRT) at the beginning of the 2002-2003 school year. This different model identifies roles for both the SPED-IRT and the new special education teacher (Appendix C). At a minimum, three observations and 10 consultations between the SPED-IRT and inductee are required. Conference notes and field notes collected by the SPED-IRT are used to document the topics discussed and the number of contacts made by both the SPED-IRT and new teacher. These notes remain confidential between the two parties; however, inductees may share them with their administrators for the purpose of providing additional information to their official evaluator to demonstrate their personal and professional growth and to provide the administrator information from an expert (i.e., the SPED-IRT). District level special education administrators are also encouraged to inform the SPED-IRT of any formal or informal contact they make with the new teacher to document the amount and types of support the new teacher receives.

Under this model, additional supports are available if the SPED-IRT or building administrator believes that the new hire is not making adequate progress. In such a situation, the special education coordinator who oversees the building where the new teacher works may be asked to attend a meeting with the new teacher to review the critical issues at hand and develop a plan of additional support. Due to the confidentiality between the SPED-IRT and inductee, the

SPED-IRT would share information in this meeting only if the new educator were present. Rather than having a punitive tone, the focus of such a meeting is to determine what additional support is needed, who can provide the support, and the desired outcome needed to determine if the support is effective. Additional support may include further technology training, regular meetings with a special education district facilitator who oversees special education professional growth and helps teachers obtain resources, release time to attend specific in-district or out-of-district professional growth opportunities, and release time to observe model programs in the district with the opportunity to reflect on the observation. A follow-up date is scheduled with the SPED-IRT who determines if the team needs to reconvene. For new teachers who do not make adequate progress their first year, a formal recommendation may be made for the teacher to repeat Phase 1 of their professional growth plan which includes continued SPED-IRT support for their second year of employment. For new hires making adequate progress, a formal recommendation would be made to move to Phase 2 of the professional growth process. In Phase 2, the support of the SPED-IRT is discontinued, the number of administrative observations decreases, and the educator follows their professional growth plan developed at the end of their first year.

District B

District B uses Peer Assistants for all educators new to the profession. The stated goal of the Peer Assistance Program is to promote individual and professional excellence, enhance instructional effectiveness, build a culture of support, develop reflective practices, and promote collegiality. The Peer Assistance focus is on effective lesson delivery and student learning. They are teachers who have been identified by the district as Master Teachers, and their role is to work closely with new educators to help them acclimate to the district. For a period of three years, these Peer Assistants are released from their classroom duties and each is assigned to 20 new teachers as they enter the district. Peer Assistants are assigned for one school year to only those educators who have no prior experience. Currently, Peer Assistants assigned to new special education teachers do not have a special education background.

The relationship between the Peer Assistant and the new educator begins during the pre-service training days at the beginning of the school year. All new educators report to work five working days before returning staff. For new special education teachers, three of these days are

spent with a district special education consultant who trains the new staff members on the special education process for the district. During this time the new teachers review components such as content development of the individualized education plan, technology support in writing the individualized education plan, special education compliance, various district programs and acronyms, and helpful tips in setting up a classroom for students with special needs. All new teachers are given a reference notebook that contains this new information plus district policy and procedures for all aspects of working with special needs students.

District B's induction program also includes professional growth opportunities throughout the school year for all educators. Three district level professional growth days are built into the school year. These are full days which provide extended periods of time to focus on issues specific to departments. Special education teachers use this time to receive training on a variety of topics such as new assessment tools for evaluations and interpreting evaluation data. District B also has an early release day once a month for building level professional growth. Ongoing training is also offered throughout the year for any educator in various areas such as the problem solving model, effective strategies, technology, and assistive technology. Finally, District B offers separate monthly meetings for all new educators working on the Kansas Performance Assessment process to obtain their state licensure.

Special education teachers in District B have additional opportunities for support and professional growth. In addition to the three full days described above, special education teachers also have district level monthly meetings. These meetings place an emphasis on professional development and focus on topics such as assessments and new regulations. Participation in these monthly meetings is not mandatory, but is strongly encouraged. New special education teachers may also participate in three separate after school events. The first event is a social which allows the new hires to meet district administrators. The other two events are designed as question and answer sessions that allow the new educators to seek additional information or get clarification on concerns that are specific to special education.

During the school year, Peer Assistants are required to make at least three formal observations with follow-up conferences. At least one of these observations is used as an official observation by the building principal. Under this model, additional support and assistance is available for new teachers who are struggling. A plan is developed based upon area of need. This plan could include more help with planning effective lessons or assisting the new educator

in the acquisition of key skills or knowledge. A district special education consultant may also become involved in aiding a struggling teacher. These consultants are assigned to buildings to work with teachers. They are not considered administrators.

Measures

Two separate tools were used to gather data for this research. As shown in Appendix E, participants were asked to complete a short demographic survey that was based on similar surveys used in prior research (Maslach et al., 1996; Zabel & Zabel, 1982, 2001). The purpose of obtaining demographic information was two-fold. First, the information was used to provide a more accurate picture of the new educators and their professional backgrounds. Second, the demographic information was used to help detect any patterns that emerged during data analysis. Such emerging patterns might warrant additional analyses or possibly indicate the need for further research on the impact of induction programs. The demographic survey asked participants to provide information in the following nine areas: age, gender, their highest professional degree, current special education endorsement/licensure status, number of years teaching in general education, number of years teaching in special education, age level of the majority of their students, student disability classifications in their current program, and the service delivery model/type of program currently used. These are factors that have been examined in earlier research on special education teacher burnout (e.g., Zabel & Zabel, 1982, 2001).

In addition to the demographic data sheet, participants were asked to complete the Maslach Burnout Inventory – Educators Survey, Third Edition (MBI-ES) (Maslach et al., 1996). Since the early 1980's, the Maslach Burnout Inventory has been the predominant tool used in research relating to burnout in education and other helping professions. This survey is widely recognized as a valid and reliable measure of teacher burnout. Scores for the three dimensions of *emotional exhaustion*, *depersonalization*, and *personal accomplishment* served as the dependent measures for this study.

Procedure

Prior to identifying eligible participants, representatives from each district were contacted by the researcher to provide in-depth information regarding their teacher induction programs. The researcher continued to ask clarifying questions until an appropriate and accurate description of the district's induction program for all new hires could be reported.

Along with a cover lettering asking for participation (Appendix G), the Maslach Burnout Inventory – Educators Survey (Appendix F), demographic data sheet (Appendix E), and a letter from the district special education executive director encouraging participation (Appendix H) was mailed on January 28, 2006 to the home buildings of all new special educators identified as eligible participants in this study. There were 51 eligible participants in District A, and 47 eligible participants in District B. All eligible participants were asked to participate. Two weeks after the initial mailing, a follow-up letter (Appendix I), the original demographic sheet and another copy of the Maslach Burnout Inventory – Educators Survey was sent to non-respondents along with another copy of the letter from their executive director urging their participation.

CHAPTER 4 - Results

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to investigate how participation of special education instructional resource teachers in new teacher induction programs affected burnout of special education teachers as measured by the Maslach Burnout Inventory – Educators Survey (MBI-ES). Using purposive sampling, 98 special education teachers in two Midwestern, metropolitan school districts were invited to participate in the study. Eligible participants were identified as special education teachers new to their position who provided direct instruction to students. Participants completed a demographic questionnaire and the MBI-ES. The MBI-ES provided the dependent measures for statistical analyses.

In late January 2006, a request to participate, a demographic survey, and the MBI-ES along with a letter from the district's executive director of special education urging their participation were sent to eligible participants. Approximately two weeks later, a follow-up letter was sent to non-respondents along with another set of the initial materials.

Response Rate

District A had 51 eligible participants and District B had 47 eligible participants. A total of 54 educators (55 percent) responded to the initial request, and an additional 23 educators responded to the follow-up request. Responses were received from a total of 77 persons resulting in a response rate of 79%. Forty of the respondents were from District A and 37 were from District B. From this sample, eight responses were not usable due to missing information on either the demographic sheet or on the MBI-ES. When these were removed, the overall response rate was 70% with equal response rates (70%) from each district. This usable data consisted of 36 educators from District A and 33 educators from District B. District A made up 52.2% of the overall usable responses, and District B made up 47.8%.

Demographic Characteristics

Each participant completed a demographic data sheet that asked for information in the following nine areas: age, gender, highest professional degree, current special education endorsement/licensure status, number of years teaching in general education, number of years teaching in special education, age level of the majority of their students, student disability classifications in their current program, and the service delivery model/type of program currently used.

Age and Gender

Participants from the two districts were comparable in age. In District A, the ages of respondents ranged from 23 years to 62 years. The mean age was 41.64 years and the standard deviation (SD) was 11.757. In District B, the ages of respondents ranged from 22 years to 60 years with a mean age of 40.00 and an SD of 11.467. In regard to gender, all respondents from District A were female, and 29 of the 33 respondents from District B were female. Only four (6%) of the total respondents were male.

Highest Degree Held

Table 4.1 shows the numbers and percentages for the highest degree held by participants in District A and District B, as well as data collapsed according to whether participants held an under graduate degree only or a graduate degree. Twice as many respondents from District A held only a BS/BA as compared to District B. Four more respondents in District B held a MS/MA degree. No respondents from District A had a Specialist degree, and each district had the same number of respondents with an EdD/PhD. When the data were collapsed, District B had a higher percentage of respondents with advanced degrees.

Table 4.1 District Comparisons - Highest Degree Held

	District A (n=36)		District B (n=33)	
<i>Source</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
BS/BA	15	42	7	21
MS/MA	20	56	24	73
Specialist^a	--	--	1	3
EdD/PhD	1	3	1	3
Collapsed Data				
Undergraduate Degree	15	42	7	21
Graduate Degree	21	58	26	79

^aNo data reported for District A.

Current Licensure/Endorsement

Table 4.2 shows the current special education licensure/endorsement status for participants from District A and District B as well as data collapsed according to whether participants held full licensure/endorsement or did not have full special education licensure/endorsement. When comparing the type of current licensure/endorsement, 14% more respondents in District A held full licensure/endorsement. District A also had fewer respondents with provisional licensure/endorsement and fewer teachers on a waiver licensure/endorsement. When the data were collapsed, more teachers from District A had full licensure/endorsement.

Table 4.2 District Comparisons - Current Licensure/Endorsement

	District A (n=36)		District B (n=33)	
<i>Source</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Full Licensure/Endorsement	28	78	21	64
Provisional Licensure/Endorsement	6	17	9	27
Waiver Licensure/Endorsement	2	6	3	9
Collapsed Data				
Full Licensure/Endorsement	28	78	21	64
Not Fully Licensed/Endorsed	8	22	12	36

Experience

Table 4.3 shows the comparison for years of experience in general education and special education for participants from District A and District B. In both districts, the average number of years teaching in general education was much lower than the number of years teaching in special education. For both districts, the average years in general education was less than three. On average, respondents in District B had approximately three more years of experience in a special education classroom than those in District A.

Table 4.3 District Comparisons – Teaching Experience (in years)

<i>Source</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>Median</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Range</i>
Regular Education				
District A (n=36)	2.56	0	5.03	0 – 17
District B (n=33)	2.39	0	4.46	0 – 21
Special Education				
District A (n=36)	7.78	6	7.80	1 – 31
District B (n=33)	10.70	9	9.90	1 – 32

Age Level of Students

Table 4.4 shows the age level of the majority of the students served by respondents for District A and District B as well as collapsed data according to whether students were considered elementary aged or secondary aged. The secondary age level represents the combined numbers for the senior high and middle school/junior high. When collapsing the data, the category of “Infant/preschool” was omitted since it was unclear as to the type of setting, length of day, and type of program. The data for the “Other” category was omitted because of the small number of responses. Of these three pieces of data, one respondent served students ages 18-21, one respondent served both infant/preschool and elementary, and one respondent served elementary, middle school/junior high, and high school. The collapsed data indicate the age level of students served was similar in both districts and between grade levels.

Table 4.4 District Comparisons – Age Level of Majority of Students

	District A (n=36)		District B (n=33)	
<i>Source</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Infant/preschool	4	11	4	12
Elementary	17	47	15	45
Middle School/Junior High	3	8	8	24
High School	10	28	5	15
Other	2	6	1	3
	District A (n=30)		District B (n=28)	
<i>Source</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Collapsed Data				
Elementary	17	57	15	54
Secondary	13	43	13	46

Student Special Education Classification

Table 4.5 shows the student special education classification for respondents in District A and District B as well as collapsed data according to whether teachers served students with just one special education classification (i.e., all students have same disability) or if teachers served multiple classifications (i.e., multiple disabilities among students for whom teacher provides special services). There were slightly more respondents from District A who served multiple types of disabilities than those who served students with a single disability. The number of District B respondents who serve students with single and multiple disabilities were almost equal.

Table 4.5 District Comparisons – Student Special Education Classification

	District A (<i>n</i>=36)		District B (<i>n</i>=33)	
<i>Source</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Learning Disabled	6	17	6	18
Mental Retardation	1	3	1	3
Emotional/Behavior Disorder^a	--	--	2	6
Gifted	4	11	4	12
Early Childhood	3	8	2	6
Other	1	3	2	6
Multiple Classifications Served	21	58	16	48
Collapsed Data				
One Classification	15	42	17	52
Multiple Classifications	21	58	16	48

^aNo data reported for District A.

Service Delivery/Program Type

Table 4.6 shows the service delivery/program type through which special education services were delivered by respondents of District A and District B as well as collapsed data according to whether respondents worked with a single model of service delivery or if they used multiple models for service delivery. As indicated by the collapsed data, District A had the same number of teachers reporting a single model of service delivery as a multiple model of service delivery while District B had a slightly higher number of respondents reporting a multiple model of service delivery.

Table 4.6 District Comparisons – Service Delivery/Program Type

	District A (n=36)		District B (n=33)	
<i>Source</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Self-Contained^a	1	3	--	--
Resource	12	33	10	30
Collaboration^b	--	--	1	3
Pull-out	2	6	3	9
Other^a	3	8	--	--
Multiple Delivery Models	18	50	19	58
Collapsed Data				
Single Delivery Model	18	50	14	42
Multiple Delivery Models	18	50	19	58

^aNo data reported for District B. ^bNo data reported for District A.

Maslach Burnout Inventory – Educators Survey

The Maslach Burnout Inventory – Educators Survey (MBI-ES) provides three separate measures of burnout: emotional exhaustion (EE), depersonalization (DP), and personal accomplishment (PA). Comparisons were made of the means, standard deviations, ranges, and medians for EE, DP, and PA data for District A and District B.

Emotional Exhaustion

Scores for *emotional exhaustion* can range from 0-54. A lower score is considered favorable indicating lower feelings of being emotionally exhausted or drained (Maslach et al., 1996). Scores that fall between zero and 16 indicate low feelings of emotional exhaustion, scores between 17-26 indicate moderate feelings of emotional exhaustion, and scores of 27 or higher indicate high feelings of emotional exhaustion.

Table 4.7 shows the comparative scores for emotional exhaustion on the MBI-ES for District A and District B. While participants' mean scores for EE were slightly higher than those of District A, there was less than a four point difference. A smaller difference is seen between the SD of each district with District A being less than two points lower than District B.

Combined results were comparable to data for both districts. These scores indicate that on average, new special educators in both districts experienced moderate levels of emotional exhaustion.

Table 4.7 District Comparisons – Emotional Exhaustion (EE)

<i>Source</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>Median</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Range</i>
District A (n=36)	18.99	20	9.07	2 – 44
District B (n=33)	22.32	22	10.73	4 – 46
Combined (n=69)	20.58	20	9.97	2 – 46

Depersonalization

Scores for *depersonalization* can range from zero to 30. A lower score is considered favorable indicating lower feelings of negativity and cynicism towards students (Maslach et al., 1996). Scores that fall between zero and eight indicate low feelings of depersonalization, scores between nine and 13 indicate moderate feelings of depersonalization, and scores of 14 or higher indicate high feelings of depersonalization.

Table 4.8 shows the comparative scores for depersonalization on the MBI-ES for District A and District B. There was less than a one point difference among the mean scores for District A, District B, and the combined score. In addition, there was slightly more than one-half of a point difference among the SD for all three; however, the range for scores in District A was more than four times greater than the range of scores for District B and slightly more than three times greater than the range for the combined scores. These scores indicate that on average, teachers in both districts experienced low feelings of depersonalization.

Table 4.8 District Comparisons – Depersonalization (DP)

<i>Source</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>Median</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Range</i>
District A (n=36)	2.31	2	2.79	0 – 12
District B (n=33)	3.12	2	3.33	0 – 10
Combined (n=69)	2.70	2	3.06	0 – 12

Personal Accomplishment

Scores for *personal accomplishment* can range from zero to 48. Contrary to the scores for emotional exhaustion and depersonalization, a higher score for personal accomplishment is considered favorable indicating high feelings of competence and achievement in one's job (Maslach et al., 1996). Scores that fall between zero and 30 indicate low feelings of personal accomplishment, scores between 31-36 indicate moderate feelings of personal accomplishment, and scores of 37 or higher indicate high feelings of personal accomplishment.

Table 4.9 shows the comparative scores for personal accomplishment on the MBI-ES. There was less than a one point difference among the mean scores, and there was less than one-half point difference among all three SD. These scores indicate that on average, new educators in both districts experienced high feelings of personal accomplishment.

Table 4.9 District Comparisons – Personal Accomplishment (PA)

<i>Source</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>Median</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Range</i>
District A (n=36)	41.42	41	4.63	32 – 48
District B (n=33)	42.06	43	4.89	31 – 48
Combined (n=69)	41.72	42	4.73	31 – 48

Statistical Analyses

To evaluate inferences that could be made about the impact special education instructional resource teachers as a feature of teacher induction programs might have on feelings of burnout for newly hired special educators, a series of analyses of variance (ANOVA) was performed to determine if there was a significant difference between groups using sample data. The populations being examined were districts that use special education instructional resource teachers and districts that do not have special education instructional resource teachers. The sample groupings were determined by district of employment and five categories from the demographic survey which served as the independent variables. The three dependent variables in this study were the EE, DP, and PA scores from the MBI-ES. ANOVAs were not conducted using the demographic categories of age, gender, years teaching in general education, and years teaching in special education.

Emotional Exhaustion

Table 4.10 shows the analyses of variance (ANOVA) for the burnout dimension of emotional exhaustion as the dependent variable and the two school districts as the independent variable ($p < .05$). The null hypothesis for this ANOVA stated that there was no significant difference in emotional exhaustion between new special education teachers who receive support from a special education instructional resource teacher and new special education teachers who do not receive support from a special education instructional resource teacher. No significant difference was found when comparing these two sample groups, so this null hypothesis was retained.

Table 4.10 Analysis of Variance Summaries for Emotional Exhaustion (EE)

<i>Source</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
District^a					
Between Groups	1	191.159	191.160	1.951	.167
Within Groups	67	6565.152	97.987		
Highest Professional Degree^b					
Between Groups	1	31.579	31.579	.315	.577
Within Groups	67	6724.733	100.369		
Licensure Status^b					
Between Groups	1	76.237	76.237	.765	.385
Within Groups	67	6680.074	99.703		
Age Level of Students^{b,c}					
Between Groups	1	157.629	157.630	1.760	.190
Within Groups	56	5016.478	89.580		
Classification of Student Served^b					
Between Groups	1	285.971	285.971	2.961	.090
Within Groups	67	6470.340	96.572		
Type of Delivery Model^b					
Between Groups	1	.122	.122	.001	.972
Within Groups	67	6756.189	100.839		

^aFor comparisons between District A and District B, the critical value was set at .05 ($p < .05$); all other ANOVA critical values set at .01 ($p < .01$). ^bCollapsed data used for ANOVA (refer to Tables 4.1, 4.2, 4.4, 4.5 and 4.6).

^c“Infant/toddler” category omitted resulting in $n = 57$.

Additional analyses were conducted using five categories from the demographic survey. These ANOVA used the collapsed data for each of the independent variables. The null hypothesis for each of these was as follows:

1. There is no significant difference in feelings of emotional exhaustion between new special education teachers whose highest degree earned is a graduate degree and new special education teachers whose highest degree earned is an undergraduate degree.
2. There is no significant difference in feelings of emotional exhaustion between new special education teachers who have full licensure/endorsement and new special education teachers who do not have full licensure/endorsement.
3. There is no significant difference in feelings of emotional exhaustion between new special education teachers who work primarily with elementary students and new special education teachers who work primarily with secondary aged students.
4. There is no significant difference in feelings of emotional exhaustion between new special education teachers who serve one type of disability and new special education teachers who serve more than one type of disability.
5. There is no significant difference in feelings of emotional exhaustion between new special education teachers who use one type of delivery model and new special education teachers who use more than one type of delivery model.

Taking into consideration the number of times the data was manipulated, a more conservative critical value ($p < .01$) was used to protect against an inflated alpha score which could result in a sampling error. No significant differences were found in any of the comparison sample groups, so these null hypotheses were retained.

Depersonalization

Table 4.11 shows the ANOVA results with the burnout dimension of depersonalization as the dependent variable and the two school districts as the independent variable ($p < .05$). The null hypothesis for this ANOVA stated that there was no significant difference in feelings of depersonalization between new special education teachers who receive support from a special education instructional resource teacher and new special education teachers who do not receive

support from a special education instructional resource teacher. No significant difference was found when comparing these two sample groups, so this null hypothesis was retained.

Table 4.11 Analysis of Variance for Depersonalization (DP)

<i>Source</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
District^a					
Between Groups	1	11.455	11.455	1.224	.273
Within Groups	67	627.154	9.361		
Highest Professional Degree^b					
Between Groups	1	.192	.192	.020	.888
Within Groups	67	638.417	9.529		
Licensure Status^b					
Between Groups	1	8.655	8.655	.920	.341
Within Groups	67	629.954	9.402		
Age Level of Students^{b,c}					
Between Groups	1	15.043	15.043	1.462	.232
Within Groups	56	576.337	10.292		
Classification of Student Served^b					
Between Groups	1	.620	.620	.065	.799
Within Groups	67	637.989	9.522		
Type of Delivery Model^b					
Between Groups	1	19.433	19.433	2.103	.152
Within Groups	67	619.176	9.241		

^aFor comparisons between District A and District B, the critical value was set at .05 ($p < .05$); all other ANOVA critical values set at .01 ($p < .01$). ^bCollapsed data used for ANOVA (refer to Tables 4.1, 4.2, 4.4, 4.5 and 4.6).

^c“Infant/toddler” category omitted resulting in $n = 57$.

Additional analyses were conducted using five categories from the demographic survey. These ANOVA used the collapsed data for each independent variable. The null hypothesis for each of these was as follows:

1. There is no significant difference in feelings of depersonalization between new special education teachers whose highest degree earned is a graduate

degree and new special education teachers whose highest degree earned is an undergraduate degree.

2. There is no significant difference in feelings of depersonalization between new special education teachers who have full licensure/endorsement and new special education teachers who do not have full licensure/endorsement.
3. There is no significant difference in feelings of depersonalization between new special education teachers who work primarily with elementary students and new special education teachers who work primarily with secondary aged students.
4. There is no significant difference in feelings of depersonalization between new special education teachers who serve one type of disability and new special education teachers who serve more than one type of disability.
5. There is no significant difference in feelings of depersonalization between new special education teachers who use one type of delivery model and new special education teachers who use more than one type of delivery model.

Due to the number of times the data was manipulated, a more conservative critical value ($p < .01$) was again used to protect against an inflated alpha score which could result in a sampling error. No significant difference was found in any of the comparison sample groups.

Personal Accomplishment

Table 4.12 shows the ANOVA results with the burnout dimension of personal accomplishment as the dependent variable and the two school districts as the independent variable ($p < .05$). The null hypothesis for this ANOVA stated that there was no significant difference in feelings of personal accomplishment between new special education teachers who receive support from a special education instructional resource teacher and new special education teachers who do not receive support from a special education instructional resource teacher. No significant difference was found when comparing these two sample groups, so this null hypothesis was retained.

As with the two previous dimensions of burnout, additional analyses were conducted using five categories from the demographic survey. These ANOVA used the collapsed data for the independent variable. The null hypothesis for each of these was as follows:

1. There is no significant difference in feelings of personal accomplishment between new special education teachers whose highest degree earned is a graduate degree and new special education teachers whose highest degree earned is an undergraduate degree.
2. There is no significant difference in feelings of personal accomplishment between new special education teachers who have full licensure/endorsement and new special education teachers who do not have full licensure/endorsement.
3. There is no significant difference in feelings of personal accomplishment between new special education teachers who work primarily with elementary students and new special education teachers who work primarily with secondary aged students.
4. There is no significant difference in feelings of personal accomplishment between new special education teachers who serve one type of disability and new special education teachers who serve more than one type of disability.
5. There is no significant difference in feelings of personal accomplishment between new special education teachers who use one type of delivery model

and new special education teachers who use more than one type of delivery model.

Table 4.12 Analysis of Variance for Personal Accomplishment (PA)

<i>Source</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
District^a					
Between Groups	1	7.139	7.139	.316	.576
Within Groups	67	1514.629	22.606		
Highest Professional Degree^b					
Between Groups	1	3.216	3.216	.142	.708
Within Groups	67	1518.552	22.665		
Licensure Status^b					
Between Groups	1	2.981	2.981	.132	.718
Within Groups	67	1518.787	22.668		
Age Level of Students^{b,c}					
Between Groups	1	13.529	13.529	.596	.443
Within Groups	56	1270.885	22.694		
Classification of Student Served^b					
Between Groups	1	.191	.191	.008	.927
Within Groups	67	1521.577	22.710		
Type of Delivery Model^b					
Between Groups	1	3.907	3.907	.172	.679
Within Groups	67	1517.861	22.655		

^aFor comparisons between District A and District B, the critical value was set at .05 ($p < .05$); all other ANOVA critical values set at .01 ($p < .01$). ^bCollapsed data used for ANOVA (refer to Tables 4.1, 4.2, 4.4, 4.5 and 4.6).

^c“Infant/toddler” category omitted resulting in $n = 57$.

Because of the number of times the data was manipulated, a more conservative critical value ($p < .01$) was again used to protect against an inflated alpha score which could result in a sampling error. No significant difference was found in any of the comparison sample groups, so these null hypotheses were retained.

CHAPTER 5 - Discussion

Introduction

This study investigated the impact of special education instructional resource teachers (SPED-IRT) as a feature of new teacher induction programs on feelings of burnout for newly hired special education teachers. Newly hired special education teachers in two large suburban school districts in a Midwest, metropolitan area participated in the study. One district (District A) utilized a SPED-IRT model. The other district (District B) utilized a more traditional induction model. To measure burnout, 36 teachers from District A and 33 teachers from District B completed a demographic survey and the Maslach Burnout Inventory – Educators Survey.

The general question this research addressed was:

“Do induction programs that include special education instructional resource teachers decrease the feelings of burnout for new special education teachers?”

Results indicate there was, on average, no difference in feelings of burnout between newly hired special education teachers in District A and District B. Specifically, this research addressed three questions:

1. Do induction programs that include special education instructional resource teachers decrease feelings of emotional exhaustion for new special education teachers as compared to new special education teachers who participate in traditional induction programs?
2. Do induction programs that include special education instructional resource teachers decrease feelings of depersonalization for new special education teachers as compared to new special education teachers who participate in traditional induction programs?
3. Do induction programs that include special education instructional resource teachers increase feelings of personal accomplishment for new special education teachers as compared to new special education teachers who participate in traditional induction programs?

Based upon the analyses it appears that, in general, an induction program that included special education instructional resource teachers did not have a different effect on participants' feelings of burnout when compared to a more traditional induction program.

Limitations

This study had several possible limitations including sample groups, differences in the two induction programs, participants' years of special education experience and amount of preparation, and the instruments used. One key limitation was the sample group used by the researcher. Using purposive sampling, participants in this study were drawn from samples of convenience which result in weak inferences to a broader sample. Due to the specific criteria of subject eligibility, participants were already placed in the two existing groups of school districts and newly hired special education teachers. The districts served neighboring communities in the same Midwestern, metropolitan area and likely drew from the same pool when hiring new special education teachers. These factors would indicate that the participants may not be representative of new special education hires in districts of different sizes, districts serving urban and rural areas, or districts in other suburban areas. The purposive sampling also limited the number of subjects invited to participate ($n = 98$). While the overall response rate was high (70% from each district), it was still a small number of responses compared to the number of new special education teachers in the state or nation.

The districts from which the samples were drawn may have provided their own limitations. Although District A utilizes a SPED-IRT who has duties not like those of the Peer Assistant in District B, the basic roles and responsibilities may have been sufficiently similar to make the districts' induction programs more homogeneous than originally anticipated. Teachers from both districts had similar scores in all comparison areas. The traditional model in this study, which utilizes a Peer Assistant program, differed in two respects from the SPED-IRT: (a) the traditional model had no matching of a special education "coach" with a special education inductee; and (b) the level of support in the form of consultations and observations was far less than that of the SPED-IRT model. One key difference between the two programs is that District B offers the Peer Assistance program only to educators who have no prior teaching experience. District A requires that all employees new to the district receive support from the SPED-IRT, regardless of their prior experience. Despite the programmatic differences, the basic support

provided by the new teacher induction programs in both districts may have been at a level that had a positive impact on feelings of burnout.

The organization of these deliberate and responsive induction programs followed the recommendations found in the literature for decreasing burnout and increasing retention (Billingsley et al., 2004; Council for Exceptional Children, 2000; Fore et al., 2002; Gersten et al., 2001; Nichols & Sosnowsky, 2002; Stempien & Loeb, 2002; Zabel & Zabel, 1983). Components of both induction programs included the following: technical assistance for paperwork, administrative support, opportunities for collegial support, opportunities for relevant professional growth activities, and assigned mentors. By providing newly hired special education teachers a systematic approach that addresses many factors related to burnout, both districts are likely making a positive influence on feelings of burnout as measured by the MBI-ES.

An additional possible limitation is the participants' years of experience. Analyses of the demographic information showed that their mean total years of experience in special education was 9.17 (SD = 8.92; range 1-32). In District A, the mean number of years teaching special education was 7.78 (SD = 7.80; range 1-31), and in District B, the mean was 10.70 (SD = 9.90; range 1-32). In addition, the average number of years of general education experience for the entire sample was 2.48 (SD = 4.73; range 0-21) with teachers in District A averaging 2.56 (SD = 5.03; range 0-17) years and teachers in District B averaging 2.39 years (SD = 4.46; range 0-21). The literature clearly shows that special education teachers with little or no prior experience are at the greatest risk for burnout and attrition (e.g., Nichols & Sosnowsky, 2002; Whitaker, 2000b). The mean number years of experience in special education in this study indicates that many of these "new hires" are not early career teachers. An inference could be made that the majority of the teachers in this particular sample already had a working knowledge of special education and had already survived the initial years in the field when burnout has been found to be a problem (e.g., Nichols & Sosnowsky, 2002; Stempien & Loeb, 2002; Zabel & Zabel, 2001).

Many districts today classify teachers with three or fewer years of experience as New Educators and teachers with four or more years of experience as Career Educators. Using this classification, 80% of the subjects in this study would be considered Career Educators and just 20% would be considered New Educators. Participants' relatively high amount of experience would likely have an impact on their scores for each measure of burnout on the MBI-ES. On the

MBI-ES, New Educators ($n = 26$) averaged 21.96 ($SD = 12.20$) on the EE subscale, 3.08 ($SD = 3.24$) on the DP subscale, and 41.46 ($SD = 4.05$) on the PA subscale. Career educators ($n = 43$) averaged 19.74 ($SD = 8.39$) on the EE subscale, 2.47 ($SD = 2.97$) on the DP subscale, and 41.88 ($SD = 5.14$) on the PA subscale. On average, teachers in both groups reported moderate levels of emotional exhaustion, low feelings of depersonalization, and high feelings of personal accomplishment. Due to experience, it would be expected that Career Educators would have scores that fall into these ranges, while New Educators would be more likely to score higher on EE and DP and lower on PA.

Participants' amount of preparation as indicated by their level of certification is another possible limitation. Full certification/licensure should indicate that a teacher is adequately prepared to assume the responsibilities and duties of a special education teaching position. While the literature suggests that special education teaching positions are increasingly being filled by teachers who do not have appropriate or full licensure (e.g., Boyer & Gillespie, 2000; Council of Exceptional Children, 2000; Whitaker, 2001), 71% of the participants in this study were fully licensed. This suggests that participants did have the appropriate training needed to be licensed and to meet the demands of their job. Earlier research has indicated that teacher perceptions of preparedness also influence burnout as teachers new to special education frequently report they are inadequately prepared (Stempien & Loeb, 2002; Zabel & Zabel, 2001). As measured by the Maslach Burnout Inventory, Embich (2001) found that teachers experience more emotional exhaustion as their level of preparedness declines. This conclusion was supported by Miller et al. (1999) who found a relationship between a teacher's perception of preparedness and their decision to stay in the classroom. Teachers who perceived themselves as ill-prepared for their jobs were more likely to leave the field of special education.

Because teacher burnout and attrition have received considerable attention in the professional literature over the past 25 years, it is likely that teacher preparation programs are addressing burnout. In their coursework, it is likely that future special education teachers are learning how to deal with burnout in proactive ways. In other words, teacher preparation programs may be helping to prevent burnout by providing students with the understanding and skills to help them survive. Appropriate training would likely reduce the variability of responses and scores on the MBI-ES. This spotlight on the related topics of burnout and attrition in the

professional literature has also likely influenced the attention district administrators are giving to preventing burnout and reducing attrition.

The instruments used in this study may contribute to another limitation. While no statistically significant differences were found, there is some variability within the sample groups as shown by the reported scores for the dimensions of burnout which did not hover around the mean. One possible explanation could be that the demographic survey failed to gather critical information that might have affected the results. For example, perceived levels of support from administrators, colleagues, and student families were not examined.

Discussion

There are several unexamined district characteristics that may have had an impact on the results. These include district size and affluence, resource availability, stakeholder support, and geographic location. These two districts are considered large and affluent for the state in which they are located. These characteristics have a direct impact on the resources, facilities, number of special education colleagues, and opportunities available for their educators, which may not be available to new hires in other districts. For example, due to budget constraints, large geographical areas served, or limited number of students with special needs, special education teachers from smaller, rural districts may experience very different working conditions. In less affluent urban or rural districts, budget constraints may result in less equipment, inadequate facilities, fewer qualified colleagues, and fewer training/support opportunities. A consequence could be more limited formal and informal support systems than those available in the larger, wealthier districts in this study.

Another assumption in affluent districts is that resources including materials, technology, modern/updated facilities, and a variety of specialists to provide support and training are readily available for teachers. These conditions could impact the size of special education classrooms, the type of technology available, and the different opportunities available for students such as indoor pools for adapted physical education (APE) or hydrotherapy.

The opportunities available in affluent districts are largely determined by the amount of support provided by all district stakeholders. Earlier research has shown that perceived levels of administrative, collegial, and parent support are closely tied to feelings of burnout (Fore et al., 2002; Gersten et al., 2001; Nichols & Sosnowsky, 2002; Wisniewski & Gargiulo, 1997; Zabel &

Zabel, 2000). The original 1982 study by Zabel and Zabel also pointed to perceptions of external support as having the same impact, such that teachers who felt they had external support also reported lower levels of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization and a greater sense of personal accomplishment as measured by the Maslach Burnout Inventory. Since the availability of resources is determined largely by the monies available to a district, the passing of bond issues and a willingness to pay higher taxes allow for financial security which is one way stakeholders show support for teachers and students. The budgets of these affluent districts also make it possible for new teachers to be offered a wealth of opportunities that may not be readily available in less affluent or smaller districts.

In addition, because of the recreational, cultural, and personal opportunities available in a metropolitan area, employment is highly sought after in these districts. Both of these districts can be selective and wait for highly qualified candidates to fill vacancies in both general education and special education. As a result, newly hired teachers are able to work with highly trained colleagues. Finally, these affluent districts are able to offer competitive salaries, benefits, and a pay scale that rewards teachers for experience and continued professional growth through graduate study.

Another factor that must be taken into account is the findings for “Classification of Students Served.” When looking at the ANOVA for the three dimensions of burnout measured by the MBI-ES, it appears that there is more variability for the independent variable “Classification of Students Served” for the dimension of EE ($F(1, 67) = 2.961, p = .190$). Although this score was not statistically significant, it did come closer to the more conservative critical value ($p < .01$) set by the researcher than scores for any of the other independent variables. This suggests that the condition of serving students with the same disability or a variety of disabilities may have some influence on experienced levels of EE. Earlier research has shown that feelings of burnout are affected by the number of heterogeneous disabilities served by a teacher (Nichols & Sosnowsky, 2002; Platt & Olson, 1990). An implication districts need to consider is the way students are grouped for services according to the type of disability.

Suggestions for Further Research

Several related topics arise from this study that warrant further examination. These include more in depth studies of the effects of teaching experience on burnout of newly hired special education teachers, the effects of age on burnout of newly hired special education teachers, and the effects of different types of induction programs in districts of various sizes and types.

The age of respondents is one characteristic that should be investigated. At the onset of this study, it was anticipated that the mean age for this sample of new hires would be much lower. What this research does not address is why the average age is so high. Future research could explore factors that influence the average age such as people who chose education as a second career after leaving the business world, teachers who decide to raise their families before starting or restarting a career, general education teachers who move into special education, and teachers who retire from one district and start over in a new district.

Relative to this last factor, there were several newly hired special education teachers in this study with 25 or more years of teaching experience. In Kansas, a point system is used to determine retirement eligibility for state employees, including teachers. After a teacher acquires 85 points based on years of experience and age, they may retire from one district and then take a position in another district. Increasingly, teachers are using this early retirement opportunity to take advantage of the available financial benefits. Since some of these teachers remain in the state and continue in special education positions, they are not counted in the attrition data provided to the state (McKnab, 2006). Without an accurate tracking system, it is difficult to estimate how many teachers fall into this category of new hires. However, both District A and District B report newly hired teachers who fit this description. Future studies should explore the above trends to get a more accurate picture of new hires.

As with the examination of age, years of experience for newly hired employees merits further investigation. The high number of years of experience found in this study suggests that some teachers are not leaving special education when given what could be considered natural opportunities through early retirement or relocation. Future research should address why special education teachers are choosing to stay and, as a separate study, how this high level of experience impacts teacher induction programs.

Future studies also should include larger samples, different types of programs, and different sizes and types of districts from a broader region or from across the nation. The current study allows for inferences about districts that are similar to one another, but offers little information for other districts with different demographic characteristics.

Finally, changes in teacher preparation programs should be studied. As the needs of special education teachers change, teacher preparation programs need to continue to adjust as well. For example, they may examine elective course offerings to determine if a larger variety of courses dealing with a wide diversity of disabilities can be made available for future educators. Programs may also examine the techniques that are being taught to help future educators deal with job related stress and feelings of burnout, as well as the opportunities that are available for teachers to receive financial support as they complete programs of study for full licensure. Exploration of each variable will provide further insight into the strategies that help new teachers survive the initial years in the classroom.

Summary

Special education teachers continue to leave the classroom in larger numbers than their general education peers. In order for districts to maintain a high quality special education teaching force, the impact of feelings of burnout on attrition and retention of special education teachers must be understood. While no statistically significant difference in feelings of burnout due to different new teacher induction programs was found in this study, the findings do suggest that special education teachers are staying in the field longer than originally expected and special education teachers are coming to the job better prepared. Most important, this study shows that newly hired special education teachers in both induction programs have relatively low feelings of burnout suggesting that both induction programs achieved the desired outcomes. It seems likely that factors other than induction programs in districts of this size and type contribute to reducing feelings of burnout for newly hired special education teachers.

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Appendix A - Terminology

Attrition – refers to teachers leaving the field of education for whatever reasons (Menlove, Garnes, & Salzberg, 2004).

Burnout – psychological syndrome widely characterized by emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and a lower sense of personal accomplishment; prevalent among those employed in human services occupations (e.g., Embich, 2001; Maslach, Jackson, & Leiter, 1996; Wisniewski & Gargiulo, 1997).

Depersonalization – one of three dimensions of burnout; refers to an indifference or negative attitude towards students or other co-workers (Maslach et al., 1996).

Emotional Exhaustion – one of three dimensions of burnout; key features include an emotional and psychological depletion to the extent that a teacher feels they no longer have anything to give to others (Maslach et al., 1996).

Induction Programs – a planned program that provides support for educators new to a school district; such a program provides group learning opportunities throughout the year that address specific topics relevant to new educators such as components of the district curriculum and district supported best teacher practices (e.g., Boyer & Gillespie, 2000; Conderman & Stephens, 2000; Whitaker, 2001).

Instructional Resource Teacher (IRT) – an experienced teacher whose role is to coach educators new to a district; the instructional resource teacher does not have a classroom assignment, a student caseload, or a responsibility to serve students.

Mentor – a skilled, experienced educator who works one-on-one with a new educator in an effort to support and ease the transition into their new profession, new building, and new district; mentors maintain their regular classroom schedules and duties (e.g., Whitaker, 2003).

Peer Assistance Program – a planned induction program that provides support for educators new to a school district; such a program uses Master Teachers who spend three years away from the classroom working with educators new to the profession.

Personal Accomplishment – one of three dimensions of burnout which involves feeling incompetent at one's job and feeling ineffective in working with students and other stakeholders (Maslach et al., 1996).

Retention – teachers continuing in their professional role from year to year (e.g., Billingsley et al., 2004; Boe et al, 1997; Council of Exceptional Children, 2000).

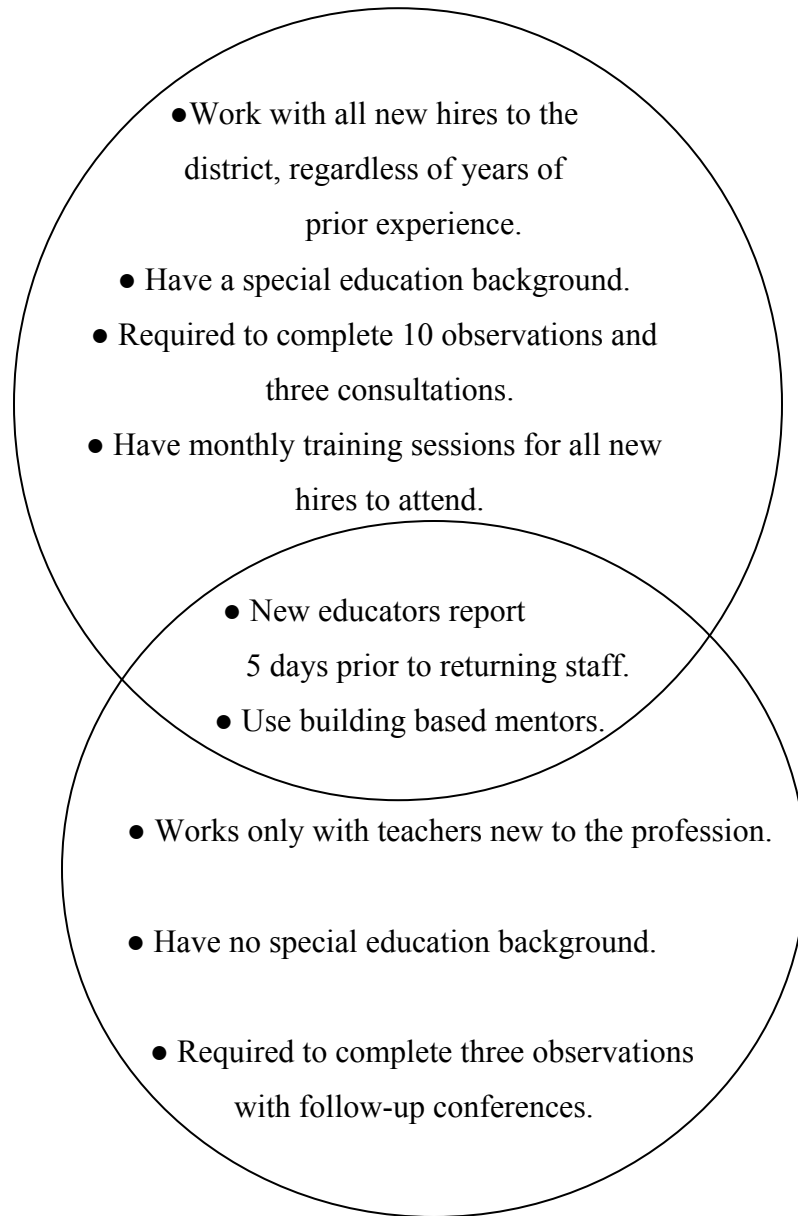
Special Education Instructional Resource Teacher (SPED-IRT) – an experienced special education teacher whose role is to coach special education teachers new to a district; the special education instructional resource teacher does not have a classroom assignment, a student caseload, or a responsibility to serve students.

Waiver – type of licensure granted to a school district which allows an individual to teach in a subject at a grade level not authorized by the teacher's certificate/license; a waiver is granted to the school district for a period of one year and must be approved by the State Board of Education (Kansas State Department of Education, 2006).

Appendix B - District Program Comparison

SPED-IRT Program

(District A)



Peer Assistance Program

(District B)

Appendix C - Role of SPED-IRT and Inductee (District A)

SPED-IRT Role	New Educator Role
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assists new educators with knowing the curriculum by providing materials, information, support, and guidance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seeks any needed materials, information, or guidance from SPED-IRT.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Observes new educators teaching lessons based on the district-adopted curriculum at least four times per year to provide support and feedback. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For SPED-IRT observations, plans and delivers lessons that include effective instructional practices based on the district-adopted curriculum and on Standards 2 and 3.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Considers input from evaluator in determining new educator's focus areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shares results of mid-year and end-of-year evaluations with SPED-IRT.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourages and guides the new educator in self-reflection. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engages in thoughtful self-reflection after lessons.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co-plans lessons that emphasize effective instructional strategies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co-plans lessons that emphasize effective instructional strategies.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicates regularly with new educator via phone, email, inter-school mail, and/or in person. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responds to communication from SPED-IRT. Note: SPED-IRTs use email regularly. PLEASE check daily!
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Informs the new educator of any schedule changes or conflicts before any scheduled visits. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Informs SPED-IRT of any schedule changes or conflicts before any scheduled visits.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourages participation in and reflection on professional growth activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participates in and reflects on professional growth activities.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides innovative and energizing professional growth that is research-based and matched to teacher needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actively participates in professional growth and exhibits professional demeanor.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintains a confidential, collegial relationship with new educators. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understands that relationship with SPED-IRT is one of trust and confidentiality.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consults with new educators on topics such as the IEP process and paperwork, lesson planning, parent conferencing, communication, and management. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reminds new educators of their roles, responsibilities, and opportunities for learning. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Serves as a resource, liaison, and troubleshooter. 	

Appendix D - District Demographic Comparisons

	A*	B
2001-2002		
Enrollment	21,470	17,876
Free Lunches (% to nearest hundredth)	7%	1%
Professional Staff	1,285.1	1,019.4
SPED Staff	248.7	169.6
SPED Vacancies	**	**
2002-2003		
Enrollment	22,023	18,489
Free Lunches (% to nearest hundredth)	8%	1%
Professional Staff	1,291.7	1,043.3
SPED Staff	247.6	165.8
SPED Vacancies	**	**
2003-2004		
Enrollment	22,794	18,906
Free Lunches (% to nearest hundredth)	9%	2%
Professional Staff	1,320.3	1,054.9
SPED Staff	255.3	174.7
SPED Vacancies	2.0	2.0
2004-2005		
Enrollment	23,509	19,345
Free Lunches (% to nearest hundredth)	10%	2%
Professional Staff	1,481.6	1,062.4
SPED Staff	282.4	187.7
SPED Vacancies	10.0	2.0
2005-2006		
Enrollment	24,533	19,867
Free Lunches (% to nearest hundredth)	11.6%	2.2%
Professional Staff	1,584.6	1,083.5
SPED Staff	289.1	203.4
SPED Vacancies	2.0	0.0

*District which provides experimental condition.

**State did not collect middle school vacancy data prior to the 2004-2005 school year.

Appendix E - Participant Demographic Questionnaire

Please circle the number or fill in the blank as appropriate.

1. Your age: _____ years

2. Your gender: 1. female 2. male

3. Highest Professional Degree:

1. BS/BA
2. MS/MA
3. Specialist
4. EdD/PhD

4. Current special education endorsement status:

1. full licensure/endorsement
2. provisional licensure/endorsement
3. waiver licensure/endorsement

5. Number of years teaching in regular education: _____ years

6. Number of years teaching in special education: _____ years

7. Age level of the majority of your students:

1. infant/preschool
2. elementary
3. middle school/junior high
4. high school
5. other: _____

8. Student classifications in your current program: (check all that apply)

1. LD
2. MR
3. E/BD
4. Gifted
5. Early Childhood
6. Other _____

9. Service Delivery/Program Type (check all that apply)

1. self-contained
2. resource
3. collaboration
4. pull-out
5. Other _____

Appendix F - Maslach Burnout Inventory

The Maslach Burnout Inventory – Educators Survey is copyrighted material and cannot be reproduced in this digital format. Contact Consulting Psychologists Press, Inc. for additional information.

Consulting Psychologists Press, Inc.

3803 E. Bayshore Road

Palo Alto, CA 94303

Appendix G - Cover Letter to Participants

January 28, 2006

Dear (District Name) Special Educator,

You are being contacted because you have been identified as a new special education teacher in your district. The impact of feelings of burnout on attrition and retention of special education teachers is an issue school districts must address if they wish to maintain a high-quality teaching force. Two school districts in the Kansas City metro area, including (District Name), are involved in an effort to clarify the relationship of burnout, attrition, and retention. Results will be used to help answer the question “How do induction programs impact feelings of burnout for new special education teachers?”

To assist with this study, you are being asked to complete and return the two enclosed questionnaires. The first questionnaire relates to demographic characteristics. The second questionnaire is the Maslach Burnout Inventory. It is anticipated that you will need no more than about 20 minutes to complete these questionnaires. Both questionnaires can be returned using the enclosed stamped, addressed envelope.

Each questionnaire has an identification number to allow for follow-up, if necessary, with non-respondents. These numbers will be removed upon receipt to preserve your anonymity. It is anticipated that there will be no adverse experiences associated with participation in this study. Please remember that you are under no obligation to participate and may omit any items you wish when completing your surveys.

If you would like more information regarding this study, you may contact me at the address and telephone number listed below. For information on procedures for protection of human subjects you may contact Dr. Rick Scheidt, Chair of the Institutional Review Board (785-532-3224) or the Institutional Review Board, 1 Fairchild Hall, Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS 66506.

Preliminary analyses of this study should be completed by early spring 2006. Results will be shared with the special education director for each participating district. If you wish to receive your own copy of this report, please call or write to me in early summer.

Because the results of this study may be used by your district to revise portions of the new teacher induction program, I am requesting that you return the questionnaires within 10 days. The information you provide will contribute to an understanding of the relationship of burnout and attrition, and increase the retention of high-quality teachers. Thank you for your participation.

Sincerely,

Julie Veatch
Doctoral Student, Special Education
Kansas State University

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Appendix H - Executive Director Letter to Participants

January 28, 2006

Dear Special Education Teacher,

Helping new teachers get acclimated to the (District Name) School District is of great importance to us. As you have experienced, the **new teacher induction program** is a key component when it comes to providing you with the support you need for a successful start to your (District Name) teaching career.

As Special Service providers, I know you are extremely busy. While I don't wish to add to your responsibilities, I am urging you to take time to complete the enclosed two surveys and return them as soon as possible. The information gained from this research will help guide us as we continue to examine ways we can best support new teachers in our district.

Thank you in advance for your timely assistance with these surveys. We look forward to seeing the results for our district.

Sincerely,

(Name)
Executive Director

Appendix I - Participation Follow-Up Letter

February 11, 2006

Dear (District Name) Special Education Teacher,

Two weeks ago you were invited to take part in a study attempting to clarify the relationship of burnout, attrition, and retention. Information from this study could be used to help districts retain high-quality special education teachers by providing support programs for new teachers. At this time, I have received responses from over one-half of those who were asked to participate.

As a special educator myself, I realize the many demands on your time and energy, and I am reluctant to add to that. However, special education teachers, such as you, are the only source of information for this study.

I hope to have a representative sample of teachers from the Kansas City metro area who will represent the experiences of special educators who participate in new teacher induction programs. Consequently, I am asking that you add your valued input to the study.

Enclosed is a copy of the original contact letter, the two-part questionnaire, and a stamped, return envelope along with a copy of the letter from (Name), Executive Director of Special Education for (District Name) District Schools, urging your participation.

I hope to hear from you soon.

Sincerely,

Julie Veatch
Doctoral Student, Special Education
Kansas State University

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