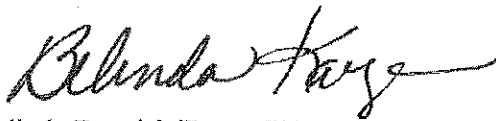


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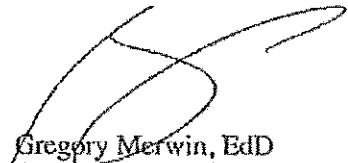
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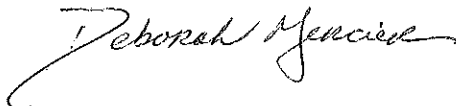


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TEACHER PERCEPTIONS OF EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTIONAL COACHING IN  
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by

Laura K. Jasso

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## ABSTRACT

Many school districts are utilizing instructional coaches to support teachers as they implement their professional learning in the classroom. This study examined teachers' perceptions of effective instructional coaching practices to gain insight about which aspects of instructional coaching teachers find most supportive in implementing change in the classroom. Adult learning theory, andragogy, was used as the theoretical framework guiding this study. Survey data from the Perceptions of Coaching Survey (PCS) was collected from 116 teachers across six states. These teachers were engaged in professional development on supporting English learners and were receiving follow-up coaching support from their district. Five participants were interviewed to further investigate teachers' perceptions of coaching practices. Two maintained a month-long journal to reflect on any coaching interactions that occurred. The findings of this study revealed that teachers perceive coaching to have a positive impact in supporting the implementation of change in the classroom, and a primary theme emerged that coaching aims to improve instruction. The aspects of coaching that teachers were most satisfied with focused on implementing classroom strategies including having a coach modeling strategies in the classroom, being observed and receiving feedback from a coach, and watching fellow colleagues teaching the same things. Teachers also identified desirable qualities of coaches, including knowledge, trustworthiness, confidence, positivity, and flexibility from a supportive and consistent, non-administrative presence in the classroom. Teachers reported that what they learn from coaching applies to their current teaching situation and that coaching motivates them to try new things in the classroom.

*Keywords:* professional development, instructional coach(ing), andragogy, andragogical principles

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

### **Background of the Study**

This mixed-methods research study examines the effectiveness of instructional coaching on teacher willingness to implement change in the classroom under the theoretical construct of adult learning theory, or andragogy. The instructional coaching presented in this study was in the form of support for teachers engaged in professional development for supporting English learners with the language demands of Common Core.

There is a long history of information on the topic of professional development for educators. Because teachers make a significant impact on student academic achievement, the literature supports the notion that professional development is a critical component of successful school systems in ensuring success of all learners (Darling-Hammond, 1997, 2010; Reeves, 2009; Fullan, 2010; Ellis & Kisling, 2009; Guskey, 2000; Magidin de Kramer, Masters, O'Dwyer, Dash, & Russell, 2012). Therefore, a quality teacher in every classroom is crucial to successful schools. In securing a high-quality teaching force, there is a consensus throughout the research that educators of all experience levels require ongoing, top level professional development to adequately and continuously support students in successfully meeting challenging academic standards (Ellis & Kisling, 2009). This is especially critical in times of educational reform, such as the recent adoption of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). A strong case has been made that professional development is vital for schools to meet the goal of having a high-quality educator in every classroom. Without it, a high-quality education force is unachievable.

Not all professional development opportunities are equally effective. Traditionally, teacher professional development has been dominated by isolated training sessions. Only

offering or requiring an hour or day-long professional development session to teachers is insufficient (Knight, 2009). There is much more involved in quality professional development than having teachers attend training (Croft, Coggshall, Dolan, & Powers, 2010; Knight, 2009; Knight & Cornett, 2009).

Implementing something new requires change, and change is not easy. For example, Croft et al. (2010) asserted that there must be a “willingness to change as the evidence base of effective teaching grows, as curricula change, and as the needs of learners evolve” (p. 13). With traditional professional development models, a teacher’s will to change in the absence of any follow-up support may not occur. If expectations for implementation of learning do not exist, or if accountability for implementation is weak, the strategies learned in training are unlikely to impact learning in the classroom. The impact on student learning will be minimal if professional development exists only as a learning opportunity for educators and does not make its way into actual classrooms (Knight, 2009). The actual effects of professional development can only be realized if it reaches the students, and teachers deserve support with implementation. According to Killion “Improving instruction is hard work...the impact of school reform initiatives increases exponentially if school-based implementation support is added to the mix” (as cited in Knight, 2009, p. 8). For professional development to be effective, Knight and Cornett (2009) advised that it is necessary for workshops to be followed up with additional support for instruction. Here is where the concept of instructional coaching comes in.

In considering what can be done to offer support to teachers in implementing their professional development experiences in the classroom, a body of research has developed to include the concept of instructional coaching. Killion (2009) found that schools and districts are increasingly “employing coaches to assume some of the responsibilities related to

implementation”. Instructional coaching is one form of coaching and is used in the context of this study. Instructional coaching is specifically designed to support teachers in the practical application of their professional learning (Knight, 2007). For example, upon completing a training seminar, an instructional coach would assist teachers in applying the new knowledge with the students in the teacher’s actual classroom, which would move the professional learning opportunity from just theory into practice. Coaches may also help teachers to plan for the implementation of the strategy in the classroom, or they may demonstrate the strategy in the classroom and, at some point, can even conduct observations and provide the teacher with feedback (DeNisco, 2015). Being that the coaching exchanges occur within the teacher’s work environment, instructional coaching falls under the more specific category of job-embedded professional development.

Job-embedded professional development is becoming more prevalent in today’s schools as the research continues to support the concept of practical application of professional learning. Learning to do something well requires learning opportunities that take place both in academic settings as well as through supported, on-the-job opportunities for practice (Croft et al., 2010). While there is a solid research base on the importance of professional development for educators, the research on instructional coaching and job-embedded professional development both remain limited to primarily informational contributions and opinion pieces. Croft et al. (2010) made the same observation in reporting that “much of the research on professional development for teachers is descriptive without causal investigation, making it hard to pinpoint what factors contribute to highly effective job-embedded professional development” (p. 8). Aside from the fact that there are gaps in the body of research that examine the effects of coaching or job-

embedded professional development, research that explicitly connects instructional coaching as a form of job-embedded professional development is underdeveloped in the literature.

This study begins to uncover how instructional coaching as professional development can increase teacher willingness to implement change in the classroom. Moreover, it focuses on which specific components of instructional coaching most impact teacher support in implementing change in the classroom. This study included in-service teachers of diverse teaching experiences who were currently involved in an instructional coaching cycle in their actual classroom setting following an in-service training. The study included kindergarten through Grade 8 teachers who were engaged in professional development for supporting English learners with the language demands of the Common Core standards.

### **Statement of Problem**

Traditional approaches to professional development for teachers typically consist of training sessions, and without follow-up support, teachers find themselves alone in the actual implementation of new classroom strategies (Knight, 2009). Implementing new ideas or strategies in the classroom is not a simple task, and it can be challenging even for the most experienced teacher. Until the professional learning actually impacts the student, the effect that any given professional development has on student learning remains minimal. For the effect of professional development to be successful, it must directly support students, and teachers require assistance to do this. A standards-based approach, focused directly on improving instruction has guided much of the policy-making around education for the last two decades. Such policies have placed pressure on instructional improvement, but a “disconnect between policy and what happens in the classroom” remains (Woulfin, 2014, p. 2). “After years of disappointing results from conventional professional development efforts and under ever-increasing accountability



pressures, many districts are now hiring coaches to improve their schools” (Russo, 2004, p. 1).

This information guided the context of this research study, focusing on the issues of:

1. The actual implementation of strategies learned in professional development in the classroom environment.
2. The lack of teacher support in implementing new strategies in the classroom.

This study addresses the problems by using a phenomenological approach that examines the effect that the inclusion of instructional coaching as a component of professional development has on teacher willingness to implement change in the classroom. Furthermore, from teachers’ perspectives, what specifically about instructional coaching is most supportive in carrying out those changes? The principles of adult learning theory, or andragogy, were utilized as a guiding theory and basis for examining the phenomenon of instructional coaching throughout the research conducted.

### **Purpose of Study**

Considering the demands of the 21st Century educator, the presence of teacher professional development is especially critical in ensuring that today’s teachers can meet the diverse learning needs of the 21st Century Learner. Teachers of all experience levels must be willing to embrace change to keep up with the demands of the 21st Century. Most importantly, teachers require support in doing so. Keeping pace with the rapidly changing nature of the 21st Century, the needs of 21st Century learners may be a challenge for even the most experienced educator.

With the 2010 adoption of the new Common Core State Standards (CCSS) (<http://www.corestandards.org>) comes a need for change in instructional approaches in supporting students in meeting the rigorous demands of the new standards. The CCSS have

increased the expectations of today's learners (California Department of Education, 2014). For example, multiple-choice testing is no longer the primary measurement of proficiency and accountability. The new assessments under the CCSS include some multiple choice items, and students are now required to demonstrate proficiency via short answer response, by completing longer written performance tasks, which demand the synthesis of various resources (Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium, 2018). Students must be able to comprehend complex texts and articulate their learning through the use of academic language. Teachers cannot continue to teach the same as they have in the past under the new standards and expect students to be successful. DeNisco (2015) quotes, "it's naive to think a teacher can learn a whole new set of teaching practices without seeing them done first, and with no support" (p. 28).

In addressing these timely issues, the purpose of this study is to explore the aspects of effective instructional coaching practices as a component of professional development that support teachers in implementing research-based strategies in the classroom at a time when all teachers are immersed in learning new standards. A secondary purpose of this research is to contribute to a limited body of research on instructional coaching. Furthermore, having a background in instructional coaching and teacher professional development, the researcher aspired to uncover the aspects of instructional coaching that teachers find to be the most effective in supporting change in the classroom. This study expands on current ideas on the impact instructional coaching has on supporting teachers with implementing change in the classroom.

### **Significance of the Study**

The significance of this study is twofold. It contributes to a limited body of research on coaching as a component of professional development support for educators. Additionally it

informs the ever rapidly changing nature of education, such as the latest adoption of new standards with the implementation of CCSS and addressing 21st Century skills.

### **Gaps in the Research**

While there is a solid body of literature on the importance of professional development for educators, the research on instructional coaching remains limited to primarily informational contributions and opinion pieces, yet schools and districts are increasingly hiring coaches to support professional development initiatives (Knight & Cornett, 2009). Since coaching is a prominent form of professional development support, further investigation on the topic is relevant. Croft et al. (2010) stated, “much of the research on professional development for teachers is descriptive without causal investigation, making it hard to pinpoint what factors contribute to highly effective job-embedded professional development” (p. 8). And in studying the impact of instructional coaching, Knight and Cornett (2009) pointed out that “little rigorous research has been conducted studying the effectiveness” of coaching in professional development (p. 1). Of the 250 publications Knight and Cornett (2009) referenced in their study, they discovered there were many recommendations for best coaching practices, but the evidence to support the recommendations was sparse. Although the body of research on general professional development for teachers is extensive, much of the research focuses on traditional professional development models in which participants receive face-to-face training, and then go back to the classroom without any follow-up support or mention of the topic they received training on.

According to Croft et al. (2010), the research on job-embedded professional development is still developing. The literature related to instructional coaching in schools is slightly stronger than the research on stand-alone job-embedded professional development. However, individual

research examining instructional coaching within the context of job-embedded professional development is difficult to come by.

In a summary of research on coaching, Cornett and Knight (2009) reported that there are approximately 200 publications relevant to coaching, but most of it consists of only preliminary studies, and that nothing currently represents the rigorous standards of research and that questions on the effectiveness of coaching are beginning to be raised by educators. Cornett and Knight (2009) attributed the gaps in the research to the idea that “many aspects of coaching are newly developed” (p.193).

DeNisco (2015) further stated that there are also demographic gaps in the data on instructional coaches and that there is no information on the number of instructional coaches that are currently present in schools. Not only does this research study show promise of filling a gap in the literature, but the topic is also timely as well.

### **Timeliness**

According to the literature, it has determined that professional development is an essential component for the success of today’s learners (Darling-Hammond, 1997, 2010; Reeves, 2009; Fullan, 2010; Ellis & Kisling, 2009; Croft et al., 2010). Considering that public education in the United States is in a major transition with the 2012 adoption and implementation of the CCSS, a study that focuses on the topic of professional development of teachers is necessary.

Twenty-first Century educators are faced with the challenge of educating diverse groups of learners on standards that are more challenging than the standards of earlier times. As schools across the United States who have adopted CCSS implement the new standards, professional development is vital to student success and necessary for all teachers. Districts are utilizing

instructional coaches to help teachers master the new teaching skills of the CCSS (DeNisco, 2015).

### **Definition of Terms**

Readers may be unfamiliar with the following terms. The terms are defined within the context of this study to avoid confusion.

*Andragogy*: Andragogy is the theory of adult learning. The founding theorist, Knowles (1980) described andragogy as the “art and science of teaching adults” (p.54).

*Instructional Coach*: “Instructional coaches partner with teachers to help them incorporate research-based instructional practices into their teaching” (Knight, 2009, p. 30). An instructional coach “provides intensive, differentiated support to teachers so that they are able to implement proven practices...partners with teachers to help them incorporate research-based instructional practices into their teaching.” (Knight, 2009, p. 30). The support may include providing ongoing and consistent follow-up through lesson demonstrations, observations with feedback, and “conversations with teachers as they implement new strategies and knowledge” (Croft et al., 2010, p. 6). “Instructional coaches are onsite professional developers who work collaboratively with teachers, empowering them to incorporate research-based instructional methods into their classrooms” (Knight & Cornett, 2009).

*Job-embedded professional development*: “Job-embedded professional development (JEPD) refers to...learning that is grounded in day-to-day teaching practice and is designed to enhance teachers’ content-specific instructional practices with the intent of improving student learning (Croft et al., 2010, p. 2) which is “conducted among educators at the school and facilitated by... principals, coaches, mentors or teacher leaders” (Yendol-Hoppey & Dana, 2012, p. 2).

*Phenomenology:* Phenomenology is a qualitative methodology that “describes the common meaning for several individuals of their lived experience of a concept or phenomenon” (Creswell, 2013, p.76).

### **Theoretical Framework**

Andragogy, or adult learning theory, was used in this research study as the theoretical framework in supporting teachers as learners as they implement change in the classroom as a part of their professional development. Croft et al. (2010) asserted that “research-based knowledge about how adults learn...should inform the design of any effective professional development effort...” (p. 8). In addition to supporting implementation, the approach to supporting and working with teachers as adult learners in their professional development must be considered. The methodology used in working with professional adult learners throughout the study was based on the six theoretical principles of andragogy (Knowles, Holton, & Swanson, 1998). The six principles are: The Need to Know, The Learner’s Self Concept, Role of the Learner’s Experience, Readiness to Learn, Orientation to Learning, and Motivation.

### **Research Questions**

The overarching question guiding this research study was to determine what specific aspects of coaching as a form of job-embedded professional development most support teachers in implementing change in the classroom.

This research study aims to answer two specific research questions:

1. What aspects of instructional coaching, when included in professional development models, most support implementation of change in the classroom from the teachers’ perception?
2. According to teachers’ perceptions, which of the six principles of andragogy, when applied to coaching, are most impactful in supporting changes to classroom instruction?

The research questions addressed the concept that professional development alone will have little impact on student learning outcomes if the professional development initiative never makes it into the classroom. Teachers must implement change in the classroom before the effectiveness of any professional development can be evaluated. This study will examine the impact of instructional coaches in affecting change in teacher implementation of professional development initiatives.

### **Hypothesis**

The following hypotheses were tested to determine the specific factors of instructional coaching that teachers perceive to be beneficial in implementing change in the classroom:

Hypothesis 1: Teachers who receive instructional coaching support following professional development perceive some to all components of coaching to have a positive impact in supporting them in implementing change in the classroom.

Hypothesis 2: In regard to teacher perception, the principles of andragogy positively impact teacher motivation to implement change in the classroom.

Hypothesis 3: There will be a correlation between positive perceptions of coaching and the principles of andragogy.

### **Delimitations and Limitations**

The limitations outside of the control of the researcher included the quality of teachers' past or current professional development experiences and any existing biases toward professional development. Because this was a voluntary study, the sample size and demographics of the teachers willing to participate in the survey were out of the researcher's control as well. For example, there were a disproportionate number of female to male participants. A

disproportionately small number of participants met the 60+ age-range and held Doctorates as their highest degree.

The delimitations set by the researcher focused on the population size for each additional form of data collection. In designing this study, the researcher prepared to conduct five to ten interviews, and collect up to five journals. Ultimately, five participants were interviewed about their coaching experiences, and two participants maintained a month-long journal to document their coaching experiences. These delimitations were put in place for the purpose of managing time constraints and monetary resources. Chapter Three includes additional explanations on the data collection.

The delimitations used in this study were determined with the goal of gaining a better understanding of the complete relationship that exists between teacher professional development and coaching support in the willingness of teachers to implement change in the classroom. To begin with, the researcher will only seek out educators who are actively teaching. A second delimitation was the use of teachers who were engaged in professional development at the time of data collection.

### **Assumptions**

This study includes the following assumptions: the participants will respond to the surveys honestly and accurately, the participants understand the vocabulary and concepts associated with andragogical principles, and instructional coaching, and the data collected accurately measures teacher willingness to implement change in the classroom based on perceptions of professional development and instructional coaching.



### **Organization of the Study**

This research study is presented in five chapters. Chapter One established the background of the study including the problem statement, the purpose and significance, and the theoretical framework. The research questions and hypothesis were also presented in Chapter One, with a final discussion on limitations, delimitations, and assumptions.

Chapter Two moves on to provide a review of the literature, which includes the following themes: Andragogy, or adult learning theory, the history of professional development in education, and coaching as a form of job-embedded professional development. In Chapter Three, the methodology used for data collection in this research study is explained followed by a presentation of findings in Chapter Four. Finally, Chapter Five provides a discussion of the overall study along with recommendations for further research, and a conclusion.

## CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This chapter provides an overview of the body of literature on instructional coaching as a component of professional development support for teachers. Educational researchers have studied teacher professional development and coaching for several decades. The following review presents literature pertinent to this study and is organized into three sections:

Andragogy/Adult Learning Theory, The History and Importance of Professional Development in Educational Policy, and Instructional Coaching in Professional Development Support.

The review begins with an overview of andragogy, or adult learning theory as the theoretical framework guiding this study in considering the needs of teachers as adult professional learners. The key terms and phrases used in conducting a search for this section of the review included *adult learning theory*, *Knowles, Malcolm*, *andragogy*, *learning theories*, *adult learning*.

The second section of this literature review focuses on the history and importance of professional development in educational policy. The key terms and phrases used in conducting a search for this section of the review included *teacher professional development*, *teacher staff development*, *job-embedded professional development*, *professional development policy*, *educational policy professional development*, *staff development policy*, *education policy staff development*, *history professional development education*, *history staff development education*, *Title I professional development*, *No Child Left Behind professional development*, *Common Core State Standards professional development*, *Local Control Accountability professional development*, *Every Student Succeeds professional development*.

In the final section, instructional coaching is reviewed as a component of professional development support. The key terms and phrases used in reviewing this topic included *coaching*,

*mentoring, instructional coaching, teacher coaching, coaching education, coaching professional development, coaching staff development, coaching job-embedded professional development, coaching methods, coaching theory, coaching models, coaching cycles, Knight, Jim.* The literature review concludes with a synthesis of the literature of all three sections.

### **Andragogy/Adult Learning Theory**

Andragogy focuses specifically on adult learning and education, and it is defined as the “art and science of teaching adults” (Knowles, 1980, p. 54). It provides “a way of thinking about working with adult learners” (Merriam & Brockett, 1997, p. 135). Andragogy continuously serves as the principal instructional method in adult education (Rachal, 2002), providing a “set of guidelines for effective instruction of adults” (Feuer & Gerber, 1988, p. 35).

Having a strong background in adult education, Knowles (1962) built the theory of andragogy based on the concept that adult learning is much different than childhood learning. Knowles (1962) recognized a gap in addressing this difference when stating, “the adult educational field is in the process of developing a distinctive curriculum and methodology” (p. 255), which led to the initial development of andragogy as a learning theory and a “distinct area of academic study” (St. Clair, 2002, p. 3). The initial development of andragogy built off of the “art and science of teaching” (pedagogy, 2017). Knowles (1980) concluded that relying on pedagogy in adult learning settings led to teaching adult learners in a similar manner to children. The realization that adults and children are different types of learners became the primary consideration in the development of this theory.

Knowles’ (1975; 1980; 1984) work moved beyond pedagogy to begin to describe what andragogy was and was not within the context of several educational and psychological theories, including those of Maslow, Lewin, and Skinner as reported by Houde (2006). One primary

difference is that where pedagogy mainly focuses on teaching, andragogy focuses on learning. The focus is on the learner, and the educator plays the role of a guide, facilitator, or consultant as opposed to a “director of learning and a transmitter of knowledge” (Kerwin, 1975, p. 14). Rather than merely using pedagogy to describe what andragogy was not, Knowles (1980) established a set of basic principles of adult learning (Gould, 2010).

Originally based on four principals, today andragogy rests on six principles: The need to know, readiness to learn, the learner’s self-concept, the role of the learner’s experience, orientation to learning, and motivation (Knowles, Holton, & Swanson, 1998). Explained next is how each of these principles fit into teacher professional development. These principles guide the successful teaching of adults. Figure 1 provides an overview of the six principles.

Andragogical Principle	Characteristics
1. Need to Know Principle	Adults need to know why they need to learn something and a context and purpose for learning needs to be established (Taylor & Kroth, 2003).
2. Principle of Readiness to Learn	The learner finds the learning necessary to maintain and enhance their lives (Gould, 2010).
3. Principle of Learners’ Self-Concept	“Adults have a self-concept of being responsible for their own decisions...” (Knowles et al., 1998, p. 65).
4. Principle of the Learners’ Experience	Due to their vast experiences, adult learners have valuable resources to bring into the learning environment. The experiences of the adult learners need to be considered. Adults need to apply their existing knowledge and life experience to new learning opportunities (Fidishun, 2000).
5. Principle of Orientation to Learning	A shift from subject-centeredness to one of problem-centeredness (Taylor & Kroth, 2009). Adults are motivated to learn when they perceive that the new knowledge being presented will help them perform a task or solve a real-life problem (Taylor & Kroth, 2009)

## 6. Principle of Motivation

Adults are motivated to learn when they perceive that the new knowledge will help them perform a task or solve a real-life problem (Taylor & Kroth, 2009).

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*Figure 1.* Characteristics of the six andragogical principles. This figure provides a brief description of each of the six principles of andragogy.

### **Need to Know Principle**

The need to know principle says adults need to know how, what, and why they are learning. These are three aspects of the need to know principle (Knowles et al., 1998). First, adults need to know how the learning will occur. Second, they need to know what will be learned. Finally, they need to know why the learning is important or necessary (Knowles et al., 1998). Knowles et al. (1998) explained that understanding what they need to know established a rationale for the adult learning situation and “can result in more effective mutual planning...increased motivation to learn, and amore positive post-training results” (p. 133).

One of the major flaws of traditional professional development is that trainers typically teach what they want to train on and not necessarily what the personnel want or need to know (Barkley & Bianco, 2001). Due to policy constraints, this situation may not always be avoidable in public education. Regardless of policy, the learners need to know why they are being asked to engage in the learning, what the expected outcomes are, as well as a context and purpose for the learning (Taylor & Kroth, 2003). Communicating this rationale needs to happen early on. In the context of teacher professional development, the need to know principle suggests that teachers need to know the purpose and value of what they are learning to engage in the learning. One way to establish a rationale with teachers is through student achievement data (Killion & Kennedy, 2012; O’Neal, 2012). Student achievement is discussed further in the second section of this literature review being that student achievement is at the center of professional development policy in education.

Essentially, adult learners need to be aware of why they need to know what they are learning to commit to the learning entirely. Gould (2010) suggests that it is insufficient just to state the benefits of the learning or the consequences of not engaging in the learning. Teachers want to know how is it going to help them and how it is going to help their students learn. As a form of professional learning, when coaching is brought in as a component of professional development for teachers, teachers need to know why they are being coached as well as the value the coaching experience has to offer them.

A strategy shared by Barkley and Bianco (2001) that exemplifies this principle in action is modeling new content, which allows participants to see the new content in action (e.g. a video of classroom implementation). The practice of modeling strategies is a common coaching practice (Knight, 2009). Rather than simply explaining to teachers why or what they are learning, modeling brings the learning to life and demonstrates the value of the strategies they are learning. The practice of modeling in coaching is discussed in more detail in the third section of this literature review.

### **Principle of Readiness to Learn**

Tying closely to the need to know principle, the next principle of andragogy is the readiness to learn. Not only do adults need to know why they are learning, but they also need to feel that they are ready to learn. An adult's readiness to learn occurs "when their life situation creates a need to know" (Knowles et al., 1998, p. 144) that is relevant to their current situation and helps "to maintain and enhance their lives" (Gould, 2010, p. 92). The learner is ready to learn when the content is relevant to learner's life (Taylor & Kroth, 2009). Apparently, readiness can only be established after the need to know has been established.

In the context of teaching and for the purposes of this study, the adoption of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) brings forth a clear need for change in instructional approaches for supporting students in meeting the rigorous demands of the new standards. Darkenwald and Merriam (1982) reported that a readiness to learn is influenced by the need to “perform the roles and tasks inherent in adulthood,” and regardless of experience, all educators are still relatively new to these teaching approaches guided by the CCSS and are experiencing a professional learning curve brought on by the new standards (p. 99).

### **Principle of Learners’ Self-Concept**

The next principle of andragogy is the learners’ self-concept, interchangeably referred to as *self-directed learning* (Knowles et al., 1998) in the literature. Under this principle, “adults have a self-concept of being responsible for their own decisions...” (Knowles et al., 1998, p. 65). Along these same lines, Knowles (1980) defines *adulthood* “as arriving at a self-concept of being responsible for our own lives, of being self-directing” (p. 57). Adult learners “can and do engage in taking control of their learning, assume ownership for their learning, are capable of weighing different learning strategies that they feel are best for their particular learning needs, and can motivate themselves to engage and complete a learning task ” (Knowles et al., 1998, p. 135-136). Throughout his work, Knowles (1998) strongly emphasized the notion that adults are self-directed and argued that adult learning programs must account for this aspect of adult learners. Thus, the self-directedness of adults is an important consideration for teacher professional development.

Knowles et al. (1998) noted that the principle of self-directedness has received the most attention of the andragogical principles. Merriam and Caffarella (1991) identified this principle as having a “salient strand of research” (p. 207). This principle, for example, can also be thought

of in regard to Zimmerman's (1990) self-regulated learning theory, in which "students become masters of their own learning" (p. 4). While much of Zimmerman's work (1990; Zimmerman & Schunk, 1989) falls within a pedagogical context, this theory can be considered within the context of the andragogical principle of the learner's self-concept in thinking about teachers as students in their professional learning situations. For example, similar to the descriptions of the learner's self-concept previously described, Zimmerman (1990) describes self-regulated learners as those who "proactively seek out information" (p. 4).

In the context of teacher professional development, Taylor and Croft (2009) point out that because adults are self-directed learners, they may resist learning situations in which they feel something is being imposed on them. Professional development is typically imposed on teachers as a requirement of some educational policy. As a result, teacher professional development may contradict this principle since educational policy usually mandates it. Therefore, it is especially important to ensure teachers understand the rationale and the value of the content that is being presented in cases of mandated professional development. Educational policy is discussed in detail in the next section of this literature review.

### **Principle of the Learners' Experience**

The role of the learner's experience is the next principle of andragogy. A central, albeit obvious, concept in andragogy is that "adults have more experience and more diverse experience than children" (Houde, 2006, p. 93). It is "the accumulations of an adult learner's life experiences that differentiate them from child learners" (Wilson, 2005, p. 29) and "provide a rich resource for learning" (Knowles et al., 1998, p. 139).

Due to their vast experiences, adult learners have valuable resources and knowledge to bring into a new learning situation. According to this principle, the prior experiences of the adult



learners must be considered. When adult learners' "experiences are ignored or devalued, adults will perceive this as rejecting not only their experience, but rejecting themselves as persons" (Knowles et al., 1998, p. 67). On the other hand, "to acknowledge experience is to also acknowledge the person" (Gould, 2010, p. 92). Adults appreciate being able to apply their existing knowledge and life experience to new learning opportunities (Fidishun, 2000). In regard to professional development, Wang, Farhad, Zhang, and Baharin (2011) discussed the need for trainers to be flexible based on their participants' "competencies, interests, experience, and needs" (p. 157).

It is worthwhile to note that the principle of experience may conversely present some challenges in adult learning situations that are important to be aware of. Wilson (2005) suggests, "experience can hinder learning based on pre-determined expectations as to what education should look and feel like" (p. 29). One example reported in a 2001 study on the role of andragogy in staff development support stated, "adults utilized their experience as a touchstone to comprehend new concepts and reflect their responses for acceptance or rejection to the new learning context" (Wang et al., 2011, p. 155). Gould (2010) additionally explained that experience may lead to closed-mindedness as well as circumstances in which old habits are difficult to break. This mindset could be a result of the learner feeling that his or her experience is not valued.

In the context of coaching, Killion (2009) stated, "coaches may face resistance from teachers because of the intrusiveness required to fulfill the role... of classroom supporter" (p. 12). Although resistance to coaching is more likely to come from veteran teachers, most teachers are open to receiving support that is going to improve their practices, even those with veteran experience (Killion, 2009). Because a learner's experience can negatively impact the

learning, Wilson (2005) suggests that adult education professionals have a responsibility to utilize the learner's experiences in a way that allows them to fully participate in the learning at hand.

### **Principle of Orientation to Learning**

The principle of orientation to learning is “closely related to prior learning experiences” (Knowles et al., 1998, p. 146). As a person matures, the orientation of learning shifts from subject-centered learning, to learning that focuses on problem-solving (Smith, 2002) or as Taylor and Kroth (2009) state, “a shift from subject-centeredness to one of problem-centeredness” (p. 6). An adult orientation to learning focuses on tasks that will tackle existing problems or address existing needs where the learner can immediately apply the new learning to a real-life situation (Gould, 2010). Adults are motivated to learn when they perceive that the new knowledge will help them perform a task or solve a real-life problem (Taylor & Kroth, 2009).

In the context of teaching, real-life motivation could stem from student achievement needs, the adoption of a new curriculum, or integration of new technology. Along these lines, Darkenwald and Merriam (1982) reported that adults are more prone to engage in learning that will “improve occupational performance” (p. 180).

In addition to an orientation to learning based on problem-solving, this principle also focuses on adults working together, or collaboration. Under this principle, the adult learner and educator collaborate and negotiate learning outcomes and decide upon what will serve as evidence of meeting those outcomes (St. Clair, 2002). The concept of collaboration ties in well with instructional coaching, which is a collaborative effort between two equal educators (Knight, 2009).

## **Principle of Motivation**

The sixth and last-to-be-developed principle of andragogy is the principle of motivation. The literature suggests that motivation is one of the most critical of the six principles because it “plays an implicit role in the other five principles” (Houde, 2006, p. 90). As stated previously, adults are motivated to learn when they perceive that the new knowledge will help them perform a task or solve a real-life problem (Taylor & Kroth, 2009). The motivation to learn depends on the learning having a solution to a problem in life or work as well as its degree of payoff toward that problem (Knowles et al., 1998).

Under the principle of motivation Knowles et al. (1998) explained that adults are internally motivated more than they are externally motivated. For example, while external factors, such as better jobs or higher salaries may influence adults, internal motivators, such as quality of life, are more impactful on adult motivation. Two other motivational theories, self-determination theory and the theory of socio-emotional selectivity, help to explain the principle of motivation. Self-determination theory is a needs-based theory that suggests an inherent drive for growth that centers on three needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness, which are all relevant to andragogy (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

Additionally, Houde (2006) has provided an examination of andragogy through the lens of the socio-emotional selectivity as a theory that focuses on the variable of age in impacting “individuals’ relationships with time, goals, and emotions” (p. 90). Further, in the case of professional learning, the quality of workplace life needs to be taken into account. Likewise, Carstensen et al. (1999) asserted that adults are motivated more so by emotion than they are by a need for knowledge. The assertion that adults are less motivated by the necessity of knowledge than they are by their emotional needs, such as the quality of workplace life, is an important

consideration in adult learning situations. Therefore, motivation is an important consideration for the activities and relationship that develop between a coach and teacher. The topic of coaching relationships appears in a later section of this literature review.

In demonstrating the evidence of motivation and adult learning, Stockwell (2009) conducted a study that addressed teachers' self-motivated efforts in developing teaching strategies with new teaching software. In this study, Stockwell (2009) discovered that when teachers were able to explore and determine how best to implement strategies on their own, they reported higher levels of motivation. At the same time, however, the results of this study also revealed that self-direction without support was frustrating for teachers. These findings demonstrate the importance of ensuring that there is a balance between self-directed learning and supported learning in consideration of the learner's motivation to engage in and apply the new learning. In addition to a problem-solving orientation to learning, the principle of motivation also closely aligns with the principle of self-concept in that self-concept supports self-direction, which has been found to motivate adults to learners (Knowles et al., 1998). However, self-directed learning structures motivate adults only as long as they are also receiving support, as reported in Stockwell's (2009) study.

A clear case has been made that effective adult learning must acknowledge that the needs of adult learners differ from those of children (Darkenwald & Merriam, 1982). Therefore, andragogy provides "a formal, theory-based body of knowledge to be nurtured and cultivated" (Feuer & Gerber, 1988, p. 32) for both educators and trainers of adults. The six principles of andragogy guide this study in the context of considering the needs of teachers as adult learners in their professional learning and development. Andragogy has had a significant impact on "adult education curriculums and teacher preparation" (Knowles et al., 1998). Likewise, Wilson (2005)

stated “andragogical principles are influencing training efforts in all educational learning situations including nursing, social work, business, religion, agriculture and law...as well as in workforce development efforts” (p. 38).

Although Knowles (1998) mentions teacher preparation and the continuing education of in-service teachers, andragogy does not surface in the literature on the ongoing learning of teachers in the context of on-the-job professional development. Note that this does not include situations in which educators are obtaining additional degrees and certificates from higher-educational institutions separate from their work environment. This study attempts to fill the gaps in the literature, not only for professional development in general but for coaching specifically. The next section of this literature review focuses on the history and importance of professional development in educational policy.

### **Professional Development in Educational Policy and Reform**

Educational policy guides in-service professional development in the field of education. Although policy plays a role in ensuring teachers receive ongoing professional development throughout their career, policy does not ensure that it is effective. Even though policy-making around education over the last two decades has focused on a standards-based approach focused directly on improving instruction (Woulfin, 2014), the existence of professional development alone is largely ineffective at changing teachers' practice or improving student learning outcomes (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009). While policy ensures that professional development occurs, it does not guarantee that effective professional development is provided (Gulamhussein, 2013). For example, in one study, Darling-Hammond et al. (2009) found that although 90 percent of teachers reported having participated in professional development, most also reported that their professional development was useless.

Policy plays an important role, because it does support ongoing professional learning. The purpose of this section of the literature review is to provide a historical overview of the educational policies from the past two decades that have had an influence on teacher professional development. In this next section, a review of literature focused on effective professional development practices that impact change in teaching practices and student achievement will be presented.

### **Title I**

In an effort to properly equip teachers and staff in Title I schools to support all students in successfully achieving the standards, the federal government mandated schools to provide professional development activities under Part A of Title I (funds generated based on student populations identified as having low socioeconomic status) (U.S. Department of Education, 1996). The U.S. Department of Education (2004) website states:

The purpose of this title is to ensure that all children have a fair, equal, and significant opportunity to obtain a high-quality education and reach, at a minimum, proficiency on challenging State academic achievement standards and state academic assessments...and can be accomplished by ensuring that high-quality...teacher preparation and training...significantly elevating the quality of instruction by providing staff in participating schools with substantial opportunities for professional development... (<http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/esea02/pg1.html>).

This required educational agencies that receiving Title I to provide high-quality professional development focused on improved teaching of the state content standards in preparing students to meet performance standards. Fiscally, this mandate included a required 10 percent of Title I funds to be allocated to teacher professional development

([https://www2.ed.gov/legislation/ESEA/Title\\_I/profdev.html](https://www2.ed.gov/legislation/ESEA/Title_I/profdev.html)). However, even though Title I specifically references “high-quality” professional development, no systems were put in place to define, evaluate, or monitor the quality of the professional development being provided by schools (Gulamhussein, 2013).

### **No Child Left Behind (NCLB)**

Not long after, with the induction of NCLB in 2001, the federal government infused an additional billion dollars into schools specifically for in-service teacher professional development. State departments of education across the country began receiving this federal funding. State departments worked alongside local school systems to implement the required instructional and assessment practices under NCLB (Hines, et al., 2007). As a result of this reform initiative, an increase in teacher professional development occurred as NCLB policies began to require professional development in ensuring the presence of “highly-qualified teachers” in every classroom (<http://www2.ed.gov/nclb/methods/teachers/hqtflexibility.html>). However, as Darling-Hammond (2010) pointed out, “money is necessary, but money alone is not enough” (p. 132). Still, no systems were put in place that addressed the quality of the professional development being provided (Gulamhussein, 2013).

### **Common Core State Standards (CCSS)**

One of the more recent examples of educational reform has been the implementation of the Common Core State Standards. “The Common Core standards are the most visible embodiment of college-career ready knowledge and skills” (Gulamhussein, 2013, p. 6). The standards have deconstructed traditional methods of rote memorization, emphasizing on developing students’ critical thinking skills (Gulamhussein, 2013). These new standards are holding teachers accountable for new ways of teaching. Therefore, regardless of years of

experience, all teachers “have to learn new ways to teach, ways to teach they likely never experienced themselves and that they rarely see their colleagues engage in” (Gulamhussein, 2013, p. 6). These changes create a clear and timely need for professional development for all teachers. The newness of the standards was somewhat problematic, especially in the beginning, since there was no pool of Common Core “experts” (Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium, 2018).

### **Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)**

The most recent policy impacting educational reform occurred in December 2015 when NCLB was replaced by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). The ESSA continues to mandate significant investment in professional development (Crow, 2015). In summarizing the new professional development guidelines under ESSA, Crow (2015) deconstructed the new definition of professional development under ESSA, claiming that it is more closely aligned with the standards for professional learning. The new definition captures the essence of the purpose and importance of professional development stating, “educator learning is an integral local strategy for building educator capacity to help students succeed with high academic standards” (Crow, 2015, p. 1). Crow's statement encompasses the overall need for teacher professional development; that is, to build teacher capacity.

Crow (2015) provided further comments on professional development under ESSA that explained some of the features of effective professional development stating, “professional development must be sustained, intensive, collaborative, job-embedded, data-driven, classroom focused...” (p. 1). As will be discussed later in this literature review, these aspects of quality professional development also present themselves in the literature on coaching as a form of professional development for teachers.



### **State Policies: The case of California's Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP)**

Professional development policy also appears in state educational policy. For example, professional development now appears in LCAPs across the state of California. LCAP's are a component of the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF), which funds schools based on student demographics in an attempt to equalize funding in public education (CDE, 2015). The LCFF and LCAPs have granted districts localized control of funding based on student demographics with the goal of creating transparency around how localized spending is being handled (CDE, 2015). Districts must "describe how they intend to meet annual goals for all pupils, with specific activities to address state and local priorities identified" (Retrieved from: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/fg/aa/lc/lcfffaq.asp>, 2016).

As per LCAP requirements, districts are accountable to improved student outcomes as a result of their spending decisions. Districts must provide evidence of improving the services of high-need students as reflective of additional funding that is brought in by specific populations (WestEd, 2014). Therefore, portions of local funding are being allocated to teacher professional development to meet the objectives set out by LCAP. Crow's (2015) claims on professional learning being a local responsibility in "building educator capacity to help students succeed with high academic standards" (p. 1) fits well with California's new policies.

Professional development is essential in maintaining successful school systems, and educational policy supports it. Although the intent of policies around teacher professional development is student improvement, the presence of professional development alone is not enough. To be effective it must effectively develop teachers' skills and improve student outcomes. Although the description of "high quality" is included in the policies discussed, the policies do not explicitly describe what "high quality" looks like, nor are there sound systems in

place to evaluate the quality of professional development (Guskey, 2000). Darling-Hammond (2009) stated that “a combination of strong pressure”, which is driven by educational policy for example, “and support is needed” (p. 315). The next section of this literature review provides an overview of the characteristics of effective professional development.

### **Characteristics of Effective Professional Development**

While policies addressing teacher professional development continue to remain place, and some are beginning to address the quality of professional development, the intention of such policies is not always carried out in practice. In other words, policy alone does not ensure the effectiveness or quality of teacher professional development. It merely ensures that it is in place. Even though much of the policy-making around education for the last two decades, at both the national and state level, has focused directly on securing a high-quality teaching force and improving instruction, there remains a “disconnect between policy and what happens in the classroom” (Woulfin, 2014, p. 2). Fortunately, the body of literature on professional development is robust and includes a significant focus on the importance of professional development in developing a high-quality teaching force. Without question, professional development is necessary for schools to meet the goal of having a high-quality educator in every classroom (Ellis, & Kisling, 2009), and effectiveness is critical.

### **Student Achievement and Teacher Quality**

Since educators are accountable to students, an effective professional development model considers student learning standards and how to equip students in reaching those standards (Killion & Kennedy, 2012). The “research has confirmed that a significant factor in raising academic achievement is the improvement of teachers’ instructional capacity in the classroom” (Killion & Kennedy, 2012, p. 12). Therefore, effective professional development focuses on

student outcomes. The standards for professional learning (Mizell et al., 2011) also establish that professional development must be data based and used to “plan, assess and evaluate” (p. 43) the effectiveness of professional development as it pertains to student learning outcomes. The focus on student achievement brings in a variable of accountability to professional development initiatives, further increasing effectiveness.

Killion and Kennedy (2012) used the “sweet spot” metaphor to describe where professional learning and student learning intersect with the goal of achieving results. This intersection between teachers’ learning needs and students’ learning needs was especially important in the most recent era of school reform under CCSS. As expectations for student learning increased with the new standards, what educators must do to support student learning evolved as well. Due to the ever-changing nature of the school system, Killion and Kennedy (2012) argued that it is easy for school systems to miss the “sweet spot,” but if educator professional standards and student-learning standards intersect the “sweet spot” of professional development can be established. Further, once the “sweet spot” is in sight, coaches can then support professional development initiatives by supporting teachers as they support their students in their classroom practice.

Similar to Killion and Kennedy (2012), Brooks and Gibson (2012) argued that professional development for teachers should not only increase teachers’ knowledge but more importantly, it should result in improved practice, as evident through an improvement in student learning. In other words, the learning must be implemented and to achieve such improvements, the researchers exert that professional development must be “ongoing, sustained, intensive and supported by modeling and coaching” (Brooks & Gibson, 2012, p. 2). Castillo (2012) also concluded that effective professional development incorporates modeling and coaching, which

moves teachers beyond theory to practice and has a direct impact on teacher learning and practice as well as student outcomes. “Studies have shown that coaching is effective at changing teacher practice and student achievement” (Gulamhussein, 2013, p. 21).

Several educational reform researchers (Darling-Hammond, 2010; Fullan, 2010; Barber & Mourshed, 2007) have asserted that teachers make the most significant impact on student academic achievement. Both Darling-Hammond (2010) and Fullan (2010) argued that the teacher is the most powerful factor in student success. Fullan (2010) stated that “having an effective teacher versus a less effective one for three years in a row can alter one’s achievement as much as fifty percentile points” (p. 84). Both Darling-Hammond (2010) and Fullan (2010) include this quote from Barber and Mourshed (2007) in their work: “the quality of education cannot exceed the quality of its teachers” (p. 16).

Fullan (2010) clarified that such sentiments are not a complaint against teachers as individuals, but rather a systematic problem that indicates that teachers need support. Educators of all experience levels benefit from high-quality professional development to successfully help their students meet academic standards, particularly in times of educational reform, such as the implementation of the new Common Core Standards.

In supporting his conclusions on the impact of teacher effectiveness, Fullan (2010) first analyzed teacher preparation programs and the selection of teachers during the hiring process. He went on to conduct a comparison of the selection of teachers between the United States and other top-performing countries in the world. He revealed that top performing countries tend to select from the top 30% of graduating classes to fulfill teaching positions as opposed to the United States who “draws from the middle 30%-probably lower” (p. 81). Therefore, the quality of teacher preparation leaves many schools in the U.S. to grapple with the systematic problem of

building individual teacher capacity from the onset of their careers in many cases. Clearly, pre-service teacher training alone, at least in the United States, has shown to be insufficient, again supporting the necessity of professional development.

Guskey (2000) for example, argued that improvements in education are a direct result of professional development, and that “it is an absolutely necessary ingredient in all educational improvement efforts” (p. 4). Similarly, Magidin de Kramer, Masters, O’Dwyer, Dash, and Russell (2012) reported that improving teacher quality is the most effective way to improve student achievement, and providing in-service teachers with professional development improves teacher quality. To increase the academic performance of students, it is imperative that teachers participate in ongoing professional development so that they can enhance and expand on their teaching skills, content knowledge, and stay current in their practice (Magidin de Kramer et al., 2012). Professional development provides teachers the opportunities to increase their knowledge and to develop new instructional practices (Gore & Ladwig, 2006), but ultimately the development of professional knowledge should lead to measurable improvements in student learning.

Likewise, in identifying the central purposes of professional development for educators, Webb and Norton (2013) asserted that first and foremost, professional development aims to improve student learning and that this is accomplished by providing educators with the knowledge and skills that are required to perform at a certain level of competence for either their current position or in preparing them for a potential future position. However, improvements in student learning can only occur if a change takes place in implementing new instructional practices and strategies in the actual classroom. Coaches can be of assistance to teachers in

accomplishing this by supporting them in implementing their new learning, so that it is more likely to reach students and become sustainable.

The research presents several common characteristics of effective professional development beyond the impact it has on student achievement, including the presence of coaching. The final section of this literature review will address the topic of coaching as the central focus of this research study. Another characteristic of effective professional development for teachers is that it is systematic, which is discussed next.

### **A Systems Approach to Teacher Professional Development**

Fullan (2010), Webb and Norton (2013), and Odden and Picus (2011) reported on the importance of a systems approach to professional development. For professional development to be effective Fullan (2010) stated that it must come from a systems approach. Professional development cannot be individualistic. It must focus on improving the system as a whole: “individualistic strategies, no matter how good, will never result in system change” (p. 86). Therefore, effective professional development builds collective capacity within the system, which requires mutual learning opportunities.

Alongside Fullan's (2010) systematic approach to professional development, Webb and Norton (2013) asserted that effective professional development involves multiple stakeholders where parents and administrators also have opportunities to develop the knowledge and skills needed to support students in meeting academic and content standards. Further, effective professional development is a component of school improvement plans developed with input and participation from multiple stakeholders. Odden and Picus (2011) also explained that effective professional also includes a systematic, collaborative aspect of teachers working together in teams based on consistent and coherent messages of intent and expectation.

Additional information on the effectiveness of professional development for teachers includes Gulamhussein's (2013) principles of effective professional development published in a report by the Center for Public Education and the standards for professional learning developed by the National Staff Development Council (The Professional Learning Council, 2015).

### **Gulamhussein's Five Principles of Effective Professional Development**

In responding to findings that suggest that the traditional one-time workshop approach to teacher professional development is insufficient, Gulamhussein (2013) identified and reported on five principles of effective professional development. These five principles provide a foundation and guidance in defining and monitoring the effectiveness of teacher professional development.

The first of Gulamhussein's (2013) principles states, "the duration of professional development must be significant and ongoing to allow time for teachers to learn a new strategy and grapple with the implementation problem" (p. 14). That is, the longer the professional development, the greater impact it has on teacher practice. Subsequently, the greater impact it has on student achievement. One of the likely benefits of extensive professional development is the amount of time it provides teachers to practice the new learning in their classrooms. One study Gulamhussein (2013) reported on found that teachers may need "up to fifty hours of instruction, practice and coaching before a new teaching strategy is mastered and implemented" (p. 14). Another found that teachers who had "eighty hours or more of professional development were significantly more likely to use the teaching practice than those who had less than eighty hours..." (Gulamhussein, 2013, p. 14). Additionally, in Darling-Hammond, et al.'s (2009) review of nine studies on professional development, a correlation between longer durations of professional development and teacher implementation of change resulted in student improvement in all nine studies. However, increasing the length of teachers' professional development was

found to be insufficient without support. Darling-Hammond (2010) reported a similar finding in that “implementing new practices well takes at least three to five years of steady effort” (p. 110).

Therefore, the second principle states “there must be support for a teacher during the implementation stage that addresses the particular challenges of changing classroom practice” (Gulamhussein, 2013, p. 15). Support during the application of new learning eases the frustration teachers may feel early on and in turn increase the likelihood of sustainable implementation (Gulamhussein, 2013). For example, in a study on 50 teachers, Knight and Cornett (2009) found that those who had coaching along with professional development workshops used new teaching practices in their classes more than those who did not receive coaching. Since coaching is a primary theme of this research, this principle is investigated further in the coaching section of this literature review.

The third principle states, “teachers’ initial exposure to a concept should not be passive, but rather should engage teachers through varied approaches so they can participate actively in making sense of a new practice” (Gulamhussein, 2013, p. 16). This principle addresses the fundamental notion that teachers need to conceptually and theoretically understand something before they can implement it, placing an importance not only on what, but also how new practices are presented in workshops (Gulamhussein, 2013). As the case is with students, teachers also learn better when they are active participants in their learning. Some of the methods Gulamhussein (2013) suggests for achieving this include: “readings, role-playing techniques, open-ended discussion of what is presented, live modeling, and visits to classrooms to observe and discuss the teaching methodology” (p. 16).

Next the fourth principle states that “modeling has been found to be highly effective in helping teachers understand a new practice” (Gulamhussein, 2013, p. 17). Modeling provides



teachers with the opportunity to not just hear about the concept, but to see it in action and conceptualize how it could be played out with students in their classroom. Modeling is an essential coaching process (Knight, 2009). The final section of this literature review provides a further discussion on modeling in coaching.

Finally, principle five states, “the content presented to teachers shouldn’t be generic, but instead specific to the discipline (for middle school and high school teachers) or grade-level (for elementary school teachers)” (Gulamhussein, 2013, p. 17). Just as modeling helps to bring concepts to life, teachers need to consider how the content they are learning might manifest in their classroom. Even when it comes to professional development on general pedagogy, such as asking open-ended questions, which is an effective strategy across the board, Gulamhussein (2013) concluded that such practices are “best understood ...within the content a teacher teaches” (p. 17).

Gulamhussein’s (2013) principles inform the field and contribute to the literature on what constitutes professional development as effective. Another valuable resource is the professional learning standards published by The Professional Learning Association (Killion & Crow, 2011).

### **Standards for Professional Learning**

The Professional Learning Association (Killion & Crow, 2011) has identified the features of effective professional learning for teachers that lead to effective teaching practices and increased student achievement, which they have organized into a series of seven standards. A group of forty education professional associations and organizations worked collaboratively to develop the standards. These standards provide schools with guidance for effectiveness of teacher professional development.

The standards are organized into seven categories: learning communities, resources, learning designs, outcomes, leadership, data, and implementation. Each standard begins with the statement, “Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students...” (Learning Forward, 2011, p. 42). This opening statement communicates an emphasis on teacher effectiveness and student learning as described earlier in this section of the literature review.

The first standard focuses on professional learning that occurs within a learning community that is committed to “continuous improvement, collective responsibility, and goal alignment” (Killion & Crow, 2011, p. 81). This standard highlights the importance of implementing professional learning that is sustainable and collaborative. Although some professional learning will inevitably occur individually, this standard places emphasis on the shared accountability for learning within a school system. This is comparable to Fullan’s (2010), and Odden and Picus’ (2011) systems approach to professional development described earlier. The features of this standard can be brought to fruition through an ongoing cycle that begins with a cooperative analysis of data to identify student needs used to establish goals, followed by the practical application of evidence-based strategies in the classroom along with an ongoing evaluation of implementation and student results. Webb and Norton (2013) recommended involvement and input from multiple stakeholders in this process where parents, teachers and administrators work together in including professional development in school improvement plans that focus on supporting students in meeting academic and content standards.

The second standard addresses the need for resources to execute the plans described in the first standard. Several resources are required to carry out effective professional development including human, fiscal, and material resources (Killion & Crow, 2011). Such resources are

critical for the sustainability of any professional development initiative. Therefore, careful allocation of these resources is necessary so that they are prioritized and coordinated based on the established goals, and then monitored on an ongoing basis.

Although there is no reference to andragogy in the next standard, it places an emphasis on the integration of “theories, research, and models of human learning” (Killion & Crow, 201, p. 43) to professional learning outcomes focused on adult learners. Similar to Gulamhussein’s (2013) “teacher as technician” model, the recommendations outlined in this standard include learning designs that engage adult learners in applying their knowledge as opposed to a surface-level presentation of new ideas. One way to accomplish active engagement is through collaborative learning and discussions. This standard also discusses job-embedded learning designs, explaining that increasing student learning requires multiple opportunities for educators to practice new learning in authentic settings. Coaching, as the focus of this study is one form of job-embedded professional development that supports teachers in practicing new learning in authentic settings, such as classrooms.

The next standard states that professional learning outcomes should be aligned with both student curriculum standards and educator performance standards. If educators are accountable to improved outcomes for students, student standards alone are insufficient. Teachers should have their own performance expectations that “delineate the knowledge, skills, practices, and dispositions of highly effective educators” (Killion & Crow, 201, p.84). As stated throughout the literature, the teacher is the most influential factor in student success (Barber & Mourshed, 2007; Ellis, & Kisling, 2009; Darling-Hammond, 2010; Fullan, 2010). And “the quality of education cannot exceed the quality of its teachers” (Barber & Mourshed, 2007, p. 81). Such standards help to build in an aspect of accountability of their own learning. This notion aligns with the

self-concept principle of andragogy, which states that adults are self-directed learners who are essentially responsible for their own learning.

In the fifth standard the importance of leadership roles in supporting systems for effective professional learning that building teacher capacity is addressed. This standard also aligns closely with Fullan's (2010) systems approach to professional development. The leadership outlined in this standard can occur at several different levels ranging from the classroom teacher, to district office personnel, and even within the greater community, such as from local university faculty. Therefore, the leadership does not need to be formal. Regardless of the formality, an important part of the leader's role is to ensure that professional learning focuses on "substantive results for themselves, their colleagues, and their students" (Killion & Crow, 2011, p. 53). It is important to note that the intention of this standard is not meant to insinuate that accountability should be carried out in an authoritative manner. Instead, as supported by the other standards, it should be carried out collaboratively through conversations that are focused on common goals tied to student performance.

The next standard incorporates the need for a variety of data sources in planning, assessing, and evaluating professional learning. It is recommended that both quantitative and qualitative forms data are included and that these cycles of data analysis occur on an on-going basis. Under the need to know principle of andragogy, adult learners need to know why they are being asked to engage a particular learning situation. Killion and Kennedy (2012) and O'Neal (2012) suggested that student achievement data is one way to establish a rationale for learning with teachers in the planning phase. Data is then used to assess and evaluate the effectiveness of the professional learning.

As with previous standards, the last standard closely aligns with the focus of this study, in addressing the need for sustained support for implementation of professional learning to impact long-term change (Killion & Crow, 2011). Changes in teacher practice and student outcomes require time. Throughout the process, support in implementation is crucial for long-term sustainability. “Episodic, periodic, or occasional professional learning has little effect on educator practice or student learning because it rarely includes ongoing support or opportunities for extended learning to support implementation” (Killion & Crow, 2011, p.79). This statement alludes to the notion that one-time workshops are especially ineffective forms of professional development in impacting change in the classroom as discussed earlier in this chapter. Constructive feedback is also mentioned in this standard as a critical component of teacher support with professional learning. Support can be provided through coaching, which includes opportunities for constructive feedback.

In providing a framework for effective professional learning for teachers, these standards inform the field and contribute to the literature on what defines professional development as effective.

### **Andragogy and Professional Development Effectiveness**

The professional learning standards (Killion & Crow, 2011) along with other sources incorporate a focus on adult learning methods, yet the correlation between the theory of andragogy specifically, and the effectiveness of teacher professional development is lacking in the research. Although the body of literature on andragogy in teacher professional development is sparse, what is presented in the research on andragogy suggests that the principles of andragogy can positively impact the effectiveness of teacher professional development because teachers are adult learners. For example, St. Clair (2002) affirms the principles of andragogy as

being centered on adult learning of new information as well as growth in adult learner professionals in refining their practice.

Similarly, Knowles, Holton, and Swanson (1998) stated:

The core principles of andragogy enable those designing and conducting adult learning to build more effective learning processes for adults. It is a transactional model in that it speaks to the characteristics of the learning transaction, not to the goals and aims of that transaction (p. 2).

Therefore, andragogy also serves as a relevant framework to consider in exploring adult learning in the context of professional development settings for teachers.

Earlier in this literature review, each of the six principles of andragogy was presented. Each of these principles can be effectively carried out in examples of effective professional development. For instance, the andragogical principle of self-concept states that adults have a need to be self-directing, and do not favor being told what to do. The theory of andragogy asserts that adult learners struggle with this when there is no place for self-direction in professional development settings (Houde, 2006; Wang et al., 2011; Knowles et al., 1998; Taylor & Croft, 2009). Yet, because teacher professional development is largely guided by policy as discussed earlier, the perception may be that the learning is being imposed on teachers, inadvertently causing resistance (Houde, 2006). Further, the principle of self-concept considers that adults aspire to be the creators of their own behavior. Therefore, in supporting these needs of teachers as adult learner, Wang et al. (2011) recommend that trainers serve as facilitators, motivators, or coaches and that this can improve the self-concept and self-image of the adult learners they work with in guiding them, rather than enforcing them to achieve their professional goals and expectations.

Next, the andragogical principle of the readiness to learn is an important consideration in teacher professional development. Readiness to learn occurs when the learner finds it necessary or new learning may be required “to maintain and enhance their lives” (Gould, 2010, p. 92). Some examples of when this need may arise for in-service teachers would be with the adoption of new curriculum, the implementation of new standards, or a change in grade levels.

Alongside the principle of readiness to learn, adults also need to know why they need to learn. Under the need to know principle, a rationale needs to be attached to the learning outcomes in a professional development setting. In school settings, student achievement data is a useful tool in accomplishing this (O’Neal, 2012). Further, Odden and Picus (2011) affirmed that effective professional also includes a systematic, collaborative aspect of teachers working together in teams based on consistent and coherent messages of intent and expectation, which would support the need to know principle of andragogy.

Killion and Kennedy (2012) also touch on the need to know principle of andragogy, particularly for experienced veteran teachers. Because of their vast experiences, the rationale may not be as easily established. This leads to the principle of learner’s experience, which states that the learner’s experienced needs to be acknowledged and valued.

Next, the principle of motivation stresses that adults are less motivated by the need for knowledge than they are motivated by their emotional needs. This is an important consideration in the professional development of adult professionals. For example, Stockwell (2009) found that when teachers were able to explore and determine how best to implement new strategies in their own classrooms, the participants indicated higher levels of motivation, but that self-direction without support was frustrating rather than motivating for teachers. This is an important point to consider regarding motivation and professional development. Stockwell’s

(2009) findings suggested that teacher freedom to explore new learning in the classroom is a motivator, but that there also needs to be support, such as coaching, to avoid frustration, which could inadvertently demotivate teachers.

Along with Gulamhussein's (2013) five Principles of Effective Professional Development, The Professional Learning Association's seven professional learning standards (Killion & Crow, 2011) the six principles of andragogy show promise in enhancing the effectiveness of professional development. Yet there remain significant gaps in the research connecting andragogy to professional development, particularly in the case of teachers.

Throughout the literature there is a great deal of information describing what constitutes professional development for teachers as effective. However, a significant gap exists in evaluating and reporting on professional development effectiveness.

As the central focus of this study, the next section is dedicated to coaching as a critical element in successful professional development. As a central theme of this research, the topic of coaching is explored further in the next section.

### **Coaching in Teacher Professional Development**

The previous section of this literature review focused on professional development policy in educational reform and the qualities of effective professional development that supports teachers in impacting student learning. As Knight and Cornett (2009) have stated, "when teachers are expected to change their instruction, additional support is necessary" (p. 17). Ultimately, effective professional development must impact student learning, and coaches can support teachers in doing this.

A recurring characteristic of effective professional development throughout the literature includes sustained teacher support with implementing research-based strategies in the classroom



(Gulamhussein, 2013) through ongoing modeling and coaching (Darling-Hammond, McLaughlin, 2011). Throughout the research, teacher coaching has shown to be an effective practice in supporting teachers (Brooks & Gibson, 2012; Castillo, 2012; Croft et al., 2010; Gulamhussein, 2013; Kee et al., 2010; Killion & Kennedy, 2012; Knight, 2009; NRTA, 2010; Odden & Picus, 2011; Reeves, 2009; Schlosser, Steinbrenner, Kumata & Hunt, 2007; Stoltzfus, 2008; Works Clearinghouse, 2008). “There must be support for a teacher during the implementation stage that addresses the specific challenges of changing classroom practice” (Gulamhussein, 2013, p. 15)

Coaching in and of itself can be a form of stand-alone professional development. Or, it can be a method of support for other types of professional development. Either way, coaching falls under the category of “job-embedded professional development” (JEPD) where teachers are provided with some theoretical training outside of the classroom. The real learning then occurs through practice, as the teacher applies what they have learned in their classroom (Croft et al., 2010). Successful training for teachers includes some degree of coaching during school hours (Odden & Picus, 2011). Kee, Anderson, Dearing, Harris and Frances (2010) provide a helpful description on the importance of coaching,

Schools need to move from places that “correct” to places that “connect” for development and growth. Coaching provides that venue, rich with language and skills, to seek, find, and develop the best within. Coaching offers the pathway for new responses, new awareness, new results (p.4).

This statement focuses on the impact that coaches can have in supporting teachers with their professional learning. But what constitutes coaching as effective?

To begin with, effective coaching focuses on research based best practices, and the ability to put such strategies into practice in the classroom (Castillo, 2012). Therefore, it is imperative that a coach be knowledgeable in both the content and the strategies in which they are providing support for. Consequently, it is essential for coaches to participate in any training initiatives or workshops that teachers are partaking in.

Several studies report on the effectiveness of coaching. For example, a study on the effectiveness of K–3 literacy coaches published by National Reading Technical Assistance (NRTA) (2010) reported findings on principal, teacher and coach perceptions collected through surveys and coaching logs. The NRTA (2010) study revealed that the vast majority of principals agreed that coaches are knowledgeable and that they are a valuable resource for providing ongoing professional learning support for teachers. Teachers also agreed that the support they received from coaches was helpful, and that the coaches they worked with were knowledgeable and that coaching is a valuable resources.

Therefore, although not authoritative or administrative, coaching is a leadership role. This leadership role is based on building relationships with staff members in supporting their professional growth (Kee et al., 2010). In a *What Works Clearinghouse* (2008) study, participants reported that the aspects of coaching that were most valued included the trust and relationship with the coach, and the ability to communicate more effectively about results. Kee, et al. (2010) identified language as the primary connector in coaching relationships, focused on specific communication skills such as listening, paraphrasing, questioning, and providing feedback.

Reeves (2009) also addressed the relationship aspect of coaching, emphasizing the importance of distinguishing the role of the coach as one that is completely separated from

supervision and evaluation. This separation is essential so that the coaching relationship is honored and trust is established. A lack of trust can negatively impact the coaching relationship, which in turn can negatively impact outcomes in the classroom. To support the coaching relationship, Reeves (2009) suggested that a clear coaching protocol be established at the onset, so that it is clear that the role of the coach is not that of an evaluator.

The idea of protocols supports another characteristic of effective coaching. Protocols can be established through coaching processes or cycles. Throughout the literature on coaching there are various coaching cycles, processes, and models described. The terms “cycles”, “processes”, and “models” are used synonymously throughout the literature.

One mode of coaching described in the literature is the “Teacher as Technician” model (Gulamhussein, 2013). This model is organized in two stages. At the beginning, teachers are introduced to new teaching ideas. Later, they are supported during the implementation of those ideas in the classroom. Each stage offers unique activities and forms of support. For example, the first stage focuses on presenting new, content-specific methodology. This stage engages teachers as active learners and includes opportunities for modeling the new methodology (Gulamhussein, 2013). This could take place in a training workshop. A coaching cycle is then initiated in the second stage.

Under the teacher as technician model, the cycle begins with the coach and teacher having an initial meeting to discuss any concerns or needs. From there a feedback protocol is introduced and reviewed to prepare for the coach to teach a model lesson in the teacher’s classroom using the new methods learned in stage one. The teacher observes the coach. After teaching the lesson, the coach returns at a later time to observe the teacher implementing the same methods that were modeled. Afterwards, the coach and teacher come together to debrief

and discuss ways to further “improve using the teaching skill in an upcoming lesson” (Gulamhussein, 2013, p. 22). The cycle continues to repeat several times based on what the teacher needs. Gulamhussein’s (2013) research has discovered that it can take up to twenty rounds of coaching to truly master a new teaching skill (Gulamhussein, 2013). Clearly, an extensive amount of time is given to this coaching model. However, it is time well spent as Gulamhussein (2013) has uncovered a correlation between longer durations of professional development and sustainable implementation of effective teaching methods.

Knight (2009), director of the Kansas Coaching Project (KCP) out of the University of Kansas, described a coaching cycle within the context of coaching contracts. When a coaching relationship is initiated, Knight (2009) recommended that a “coaching contract” be established. The coach may initiate this by giving small or large group presentations to promote what they have to offer. Alternatively, the coach could also make contact with individual teachers to share what coaching supports that they have to offer. Teachers then decide whether or not to engage in a “coaching contract.” If they decide to engage, then the contract is initiated. In some cases, administrators may refer teachers to coaches. This may be as a result of teachers being identified as needing improvement through evaluation, or it may be a systems wide requirement that all teachers will receive coaching as a follow up component to professional development training. One example of this was reported in a *What Works Clearinghouse* study (2008) where participants indicated that they relied on their supervisors to establish the initial coaching contract, but after having been coached, they would “engage in coaching with or without a supervisor’s recommendation” (p. 216). Regardless, when administrators are involved, it needs to be handled delicately so as not to confuse the coaching relationship for one that is

authoritative, evaluative, or administrative (Killion & Crow, 2011; Kee et al., 2010; Reeves, 2009).

Once a coaching partnership has been contracted, an initial meeting should take place in which the coach and participating teacher collaboratively establish goals that are directly connected to the teacher's professional growth and development (Knight, 2009). From there, the coaching process often begins with the coach modeling a practice in the classroom, or demonstrating a lesson.

In modeling a lesson, Knight (2009) described the importance of establishing a teaching and/or learning focus ahead of time to provide teachers with a focus for the lesson demonstration. This can be facilitated through the use of a pre-established observation form to guide teachers through the modeled lesson. If so, the observation protocol should be discussed prior to the coach visiting the classroom and then used to guide conversations to debrief the lesson afterwards (Knight, 2009).

After the coach has modeled a lesson and the teacher has had some time to practice implementing the strategies they observed, the cycle continues with the coach returning to watch the teacher model a lesson and provide feedback (Knight, 2009). Knight (2009) stressed the importance of using the term "watch" rather than the more intimidating "observe" to maintain the neutrality of the coaching relationship. When watching the teacher, the coach should use the same observation form that as used by the teacher during the coach-modeled lesson. Again, the coach and teacher would use the observation form to guide a conversation to debrief the lesson. In some cases, co-teaching of a lesson with the coach and the classroom teacher may occur between the modeled and watched lessons as part of a gradual release approach (Knight, 2009). Next steps are then established collaboratively between the coach and the teacher.

Sometimes a coaching cycle will start over. Or, a certain process within the cycle may be revisited (Knight, 2009).

Stoltzfus (2008) used the “coaching funnel” to describe another coaching process similar to Knight’s (2009). The coaching funnel begins with goal setting. However, unlike Knight’s (2009) coaching cycle, rather than taking a collaborative approach, the teacher independently establishes a personal objective and provides a rationale for why personal improvement is needed (Stoltzfus, 2008). Then the next step is to collaboratively explore the options that can lead to fulfilling the objective, followed by deciding on what actions to take (Stoltzfus, 2008). Finally, the teacher takes action based on what was established with the coach from the funneling process (Stoltzfus, 2008). The “funnel” strategy is a more hands-off approach than the protocol described by Knight (2009) as it involves less collaboration and places an emphasis on teacher autonomy.

Goal setting has been reported to significantly impact changes in behavior changer. Schlosser et al. (2007) explored the results and impact of training and coaching in a follow up study. Four years from the original study, it was determined that coaching does not necessarily make poor employees better. However, Schlosser et al. (2007) found coaching is useful in taking good employees and making them the best. The participants of the follow up study indicated that goal setting became the biggest behavior changing result of coaching, and that the coaching kept their passion going. In the context of goal orientation as a theory of motivation in student learning, Wolters, Yu, and Pintrich (1996) described goals as “the very specific purposes that individuals are striving for in a specific setting” (p. 212).

Knight’s (2009), Stoltzfus’ (2008), Schlosser et al. (2007), and Wolters et al. (1996) all included some aspect of goals setting in. This commonality suggests that effective coaching is

goal driven. In the context of goal orientation as a theory of motivation in student learning, Wolters et al. (1996) described goals as “the very specific purposes that individuals are striving for in a specific setting” (p. 212).

Along the same line of goals setting, Reeves (2009) also argued that effective coaching focuses on changing performance for purpose of improvement. In an adult professional learning context, Reeves (2009) suggested that operating in a constant comparison of the present state to an ideal state solidifies the coaching interactions. In other words, the coaching relationship is defined by goals. However, for this approach to be effective, the person receiving the coaching must agree that a change is needed. It also requires specific, accurate and timely feedback needs to be incorporated (Reeves, 2009). Feedback is another consistent theme presented in the literature on effective coaching.

The Professional Learning Association stated “constructive feedback accelerates implementation by providing formative assessment through the learning and implementation process” (Killion & Crow, 2011, p. 81). Effective feedback offers nonjudgmental explicit evidence to monitor teaching practices alongside established goals providing teachers with opportunities to reflect and refine their practices over time while acknowledging progress (Killion & Crow, 2011). Regular feedback supports ongoing improvement and can provide encouragement (Knight, 2009; Gulamhussein, 2013; DeNisco, 2015; Killion & Crow, 2011).

One phenomenological study found that coaching helped participants “sharpen their focus and better identify the direction to take their work” (Kee et al., 2010 p. 215) increasing the participants self-reported confidence and perceived capacity. The participants of this study also indicated that they continued to use what they had learned from coaching in their day-to-day practice.

Finally, as it was established earlier, effective professional development impacts student achievement. The “research has confirmed that a significant factor in raising academic achievement is the improvement of teachers’ instructional capacity in the classroom” (Killion & Kennedy, 2012, p. 12). Consequently, effective coaching positively impacts student achievement as well. Brooks and Gibson (2012) argued that professional development for teachers should not only increase teachers’ knowledge, but more importantly it should result in improved practice, as evident through an improvement in student learning. To achieve such improvements, the researchers concluded that professional development must be “ongoing, sustained, intensive and supported by modeling and coaching” (Brooks & Gibson, 2012, p. 2). Therefore, coaching plays an important role in the sustainability of professional development initiatives.

### **Conclusion**

The body of literature defends the importance of professional development for educators (Darling-Hammond, 1997, 2010; Fullan, 2010; Guskey, 2000; Reeves, 2009). Further, there are policies in place that ensure the presence of professional development (Woulfin, 2014; U.S. Department of Education, 1996, 2004; Crow, 2015; CDE, 2016). The presence of professional development alone however is not enough. Therefore, standards have been published to help define effective professional development. For professional development to be effective, it must impact student learning. For it to impact student learning, teachers need to implement change in the classroom, and they deserve support along the way. One way to support teachers in implementing change in the classroom is through coaching. Coaching can include cycles or processes such as goal setting, modeling, observing, and providing feedback.



The overarching purpose of this research study is to identify the specific aspects of coaching, as a form of job-embedded professional development that teachers perceive to be the most effective in supporting change in the classroom, and if there is a correlation between effective coaching and the principles of andragogy. The methodology for conducting this study is discussed in the next chapter.

### CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

The goal of this research was to gain insight into the aspects of instructional coaching that teachers find most supportive in implementing change in the classroom. This study utilized a qualitative and quantitative methodology of data collection and analysis (Lunenburg & Irby, 2008) with an emphasis on qualitative methods. This study is phenomenological in nature in that it will examine the phenomenon of coaching. Further supporting a phenomenological approach, the theory of andragogy is “based on observation and experience, rather than empirical research” (Houde, 2006, p. 90).

Teacher perceptions of coaching were investigated via surveys, interviews and journaling to answer the research questions:

1. What aspects of instructional coaching, when included in professional development models, most support implementation of change in the classroom from the teachers’ perception?
2. According to teachers’ perceptions, which of the six principles of andragogy, when applied to coaching, are most impactful in supporting changes to classroom instruction?

To address the research questions, the following hypotheses were developed with consideration for the evidence presented in the literature review.

1. Teachers who receive instructional coaching support following professional development perceive some to all components of coaching to have a positive impact in supporting them in implementing change in the classroom.
2. In terms of teacher perception, the principles of andragogy positively impact teacher motivation to implement change in the classroom.

3. There will be a correlation between positive perceptions of coaching and the principles of andragogy.

The methods used to address the research questions are presented through three levels of data collection: surveying, individual interviews, and a reflective journaling activity.

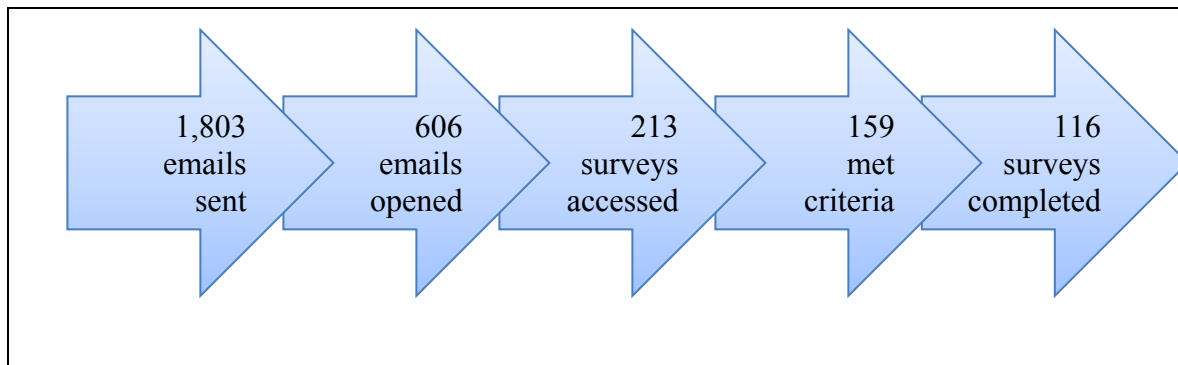
## **Research Design**

### **Participants**

The teachers who participated in this study were solicited from six states and multiple U.S. regions (Southern California, Northern California, Pacific Northwest, and Midwest). Their schools also represented urban, suburban, and rural populations spanning socioeconomic ranges. The sample represented diversity in regard to age, gender, years of experience, and level of education.

Access to participants was gained via convenience sampling by way of inviting kindergarten through Grade 6 teachers to complete the initial survey after attending a five-day professional development institute about supporting English learners from E.L. Achieve, the organization in which the researcher is employed as a full time professional development consultant for elementary English learner initiatives across the country. The survey was distributed via email invitation using the online email service Mail Chimp. The researcher gained access to participant emails based on the address provided at the time of registration for the five-day professional development training. The surveys were administered on Survey Monkey, an online survey program. As reported by the Mail Chimp service, a total of 1,803 email invites were sent, and 606 of those emails were opened. From there, a total of 213 participants proceeded to the survey link, of which 159 participants passed the initial screening

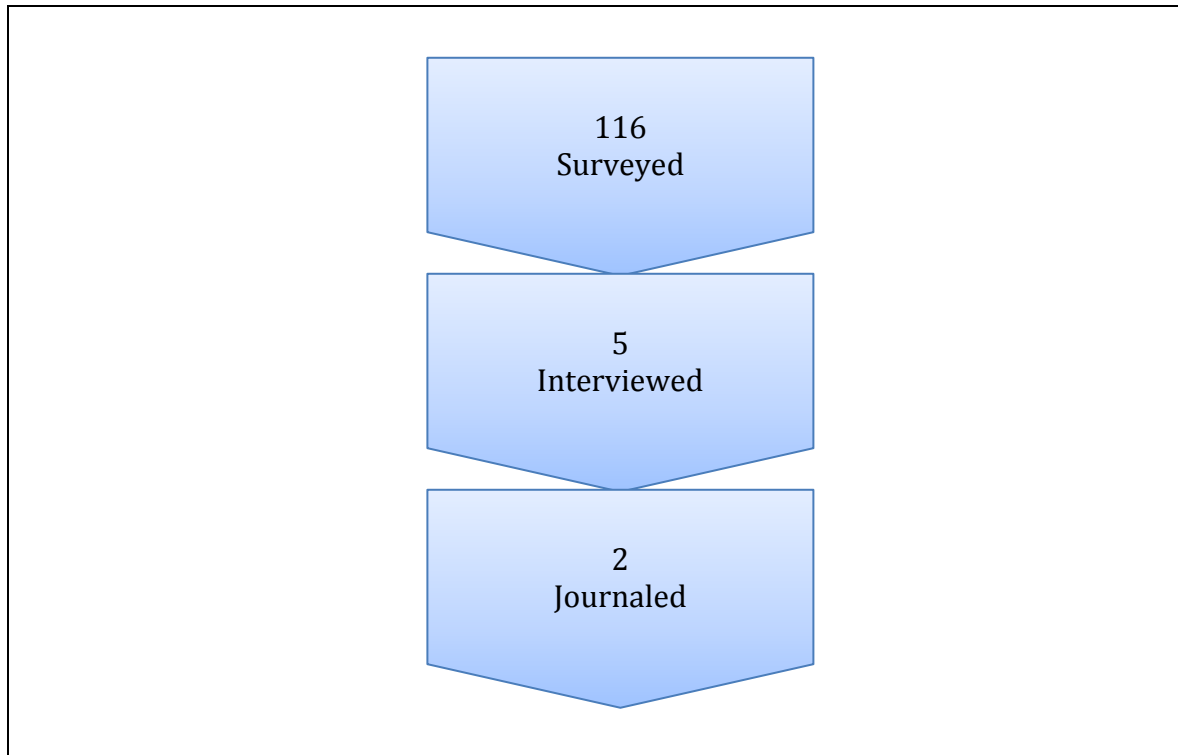
questions. Of those 159 participants, 43 did not proceed with or complete the survey, establishing a final sample size of 116 participants. (see Figure 2).



*Figure 2.* Process for initial participant selection. This figure shows the development of the final sample size for the survey.

At the conclusion of the survey, participants were asked if they were interested in contributing to the further by participating in a 20 to 30-minute interview about their coaching experiences. Those who were interested were able to provide follow-up contact information through Survey Monkey before they submitted their surveys. Compensation of time was offered in the form of a \$10.00 gift card and was awarded at the completion of the interview. Out of the 116 participants who completed the survey, 25 were interested in being interviewed and shared their contact information. The researcher followed up with all interested parties to confirm interest and schedule interviews. Twenty were contacted via email, and five were contacted by phone in which the researcher left a voice message. Eleven of twenty responded to the email request, but none responded to the voice message. Of the eleven responses, seven interviews were scheduled, but only five were completed with those whose schedules could be coordinated with the researcher within the data collection time frame. The five interviews met the research criteria of interviewing 5 to 10 participants.

At the conclusion of the interview, participants were asked if they would be interested in providing more information via a month-long journaling activity. All five interviewees expressed interest, and two actually completed the journals (see Figure 3).



*Figure 3.* Final participation by each phase of research. This figure shows the sample size for each phase of the research.

### **Instrumentation**

**Perceptions of coaching survey (PCS).** The instrument used to collect quantitative data consisted of a Likert-style survey used to capture teachers' perceptions of instructional coaching. Since a validated survey on teachers' perceptions of instructional coaching was not available, it was necessary to create a survey. "Only a handful of instruments have been created, mainly for dissertation work" (Wilson, 2005, p. 48). Those cited in Wilson (2005) date back to the 1970's and include Hadley's (1975) Educational Orientation Questionnaire (EQQ) published in 1975, Kerwin's (1979) modification of the EQQ resulting in

the Educational Description Questionnaire (EDQ), and Christian's (1982) Student Orientation Questionnaire (SOQ). These instruments were referred to for inspiration in creating the survey that not only recorded teachers' perceptions of instructional coaching, but also does so from an andragogical perspective. The final instrument resulted in the Perceptions of Coaching Survey (PCS) (see Appendix A).

After reviewing these instruments (Hadley, 1975; Christian, 1982; Kerwin, 1979), including Wilson's (2005) *Adult Learning Principles Design Elements Questionnaire* (ALPDEQ), the researcher decided to focus on Wilson's (2005) ALPDEQ for primary inspiration in constructing the PCS. The ALPDEQ was chosen for several reasons. First off, it was the most recent published survey that included the principles of andragogy. Secondly, although it focuses on adult learning in higher-learning situations, the questions were easily adaptable to coaching situations. Finally, at 77 items, the ALPDEQ was extensive, providing the researcher with a solid bank of items to analyze and adapt for the purposes of this study.

The ALPDEQ is organized into three sections based on the principles of andragogy (Ekoto & Gaikwad, 2015). The questions in the first section focus on perceptions of learning experiences in current adult learning situations. Section two focuses on perceptions pertaining to the design and delivery of adult learning. Finally, section three was course specific and therefore, not referenced in the creation of the PCS (Wilson, 2005). The ALPDEQ is geared toward adult learners in higher education or continued learning classes. It is not designed for adult learners in professional development situations. Therefore, it was not an appropriate instrument for this study.

The initial construction of the PCS began by analyzing individual items from a review of the ALPDEQ (Wilson, 2005) along with the literature on andragogy, professional development,

and instructional coaching that was presented in Chapter 2. During the first round of analyzing the ALPDEQ, potential questions were identified as being relevant to adult learning within the context of teacher professional development. Questions that were geared toward more institutionalized adult learning contexts, such as post-secondary coursework or perceptions of professors, were disregarded. Therefore, an entire section of the ALPDEQ was not considered because it specifically dealt with postsecondary instructor and coursework perceptions.

This led to 28 Likert scale survey items grounded in the six principles of andragogy to then be screened for ambiguity, wording, and content overlap. The questions were reworded so that they focused on coaching rather than coursework. For example, the question, “I knew why this learning experience would be beneficial to me” (Wilson, 2005, p. 229) was changed to, “I know why coaching is beneficial to me professionally.”

Seven additional questions were added to the beginning of the survey. The first question, *coaching is helpful in implementing new strategies in my classroom*, was added along with five other questions that focused on each of the coaching processes (see Figure 4). One question was included to allow participants to report on their overall satisfaction with the coaching they were receiving on a 10-point scale with 10 being extremely satisfied. Five questions were included toward the end of the survey to obtain demographic information based on gender, years of teaching experience, age-range, degrees and credentials held, and grade levels currently teaching. The final item was an open-ended response: *Briefly define/describe what coaching means to you in one paragraph or less*. Responses to this question were used in the qualitative analysis of the study.

The survey also included informed consent, an introductory statement explaining the study, and an option to provide contact information to indicate interest in participating in the

research further through one-on-one interviews. A definition of coaching comprised from Knight (2009) and Croft et al.'s (2010) research was included in the introductory statement. This resulted in the final survey, Perceptions of Coaching Survey (PCS). The entire survey is located in Appendix A.

Survey Question	Coaching Process Addresses
I find it helpful when a coach models a lesson or strategy for me in my classroom with my students.	Coach modeling
It's helpful when my coach provides feedback after watching me teach a lesson.	Coach observes and provides feedback
My coach/coaches help me to plan for instruction.	Co-planning
A coach should help with lesson preparation (copies, creating charts, etc.)	Assistance with lesson preparation
Being able to watch my colleagues model a lesson/strategy is beneficial to my teaching.	Observing colleagues

*Figure 4.* Coaching processes. This figure shows the coaching process aligned with certain survey questions.

Content validity of the PCS was then secured under the scrutiny and evaluation of several experts as recommended by Lunenburg and Irby (2008) consisting of a professor of quantitative studies at Concordia University: three colleagues in the researcher's doctoral cohort and three coaches from a school district in California.



**Focused one-on-one interviews.** In addition to the open-ended survey response, another instrument used to collect qualitative data was a six-question interview protocol that was used to conduct one-on-one interviews with participants (see Appendix B). The interview questions (Figure 5) were open-ended and semi-structured, and were designed to elicit participants' perceptions of their coaching experiences. The researcher crafted the interview questions with guidance of the research presented in the literature review.

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#### Interview Questions

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- 1) Which aspects of coaching do you find to be the most beneficial to you in trying out new things in your classroom and why?
- 2) If you could create the perfect coach, describe that person.
- 3) Thinking about your professional development experiences:
  - a. How does having follow-up coaching support compare to not having it when it comes to actually trying out your new learning in your classroom?
  - b. Can you think of any specific examples?
- 4) Sometimes teachers are resistant to coaching. Why do you think this is?
- 5) Describe one of your most successful coaching experiences. What made it so successful?
- 6) Have you ever experienced a coaching situation that did not go well? What do you think made it unsuccessful?

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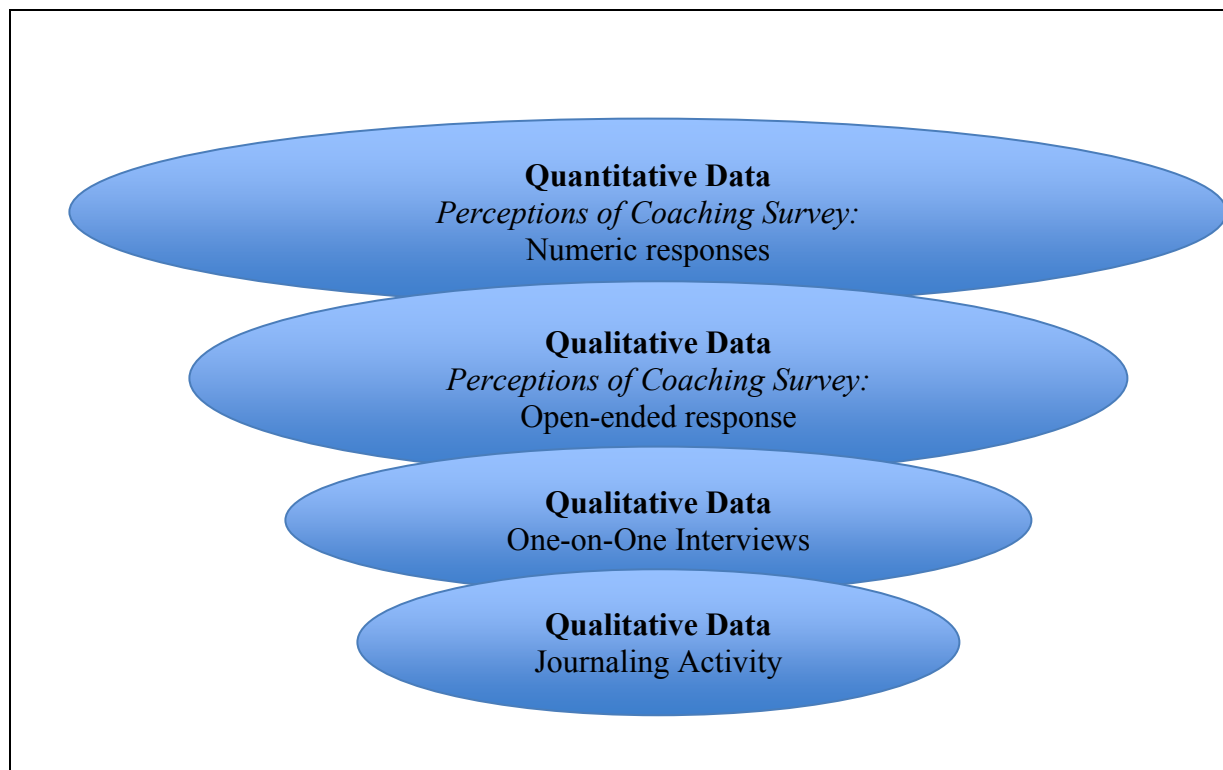
*Figure 5.* Interview questions. This displays the questions used during the interviewing phase of the research.

Content validity of the interview questions was safeguarded by the inspection and assessment of several experts as recommended by Lunenburg and Irby (2008). This included a professor of qualitative studies at Concordia University, Irvine, three colleagues in the researcher's doctoral cohort, and three coaches from a school district in California.

**Coaching journals.** An additional instrument used to collect qualitative data was a digital coaching journal created by the researcher on Google Drive (see Appendix C). Each journal included a personal link on Google Drive to be shared only between the researcher and each individual participant. A protocol for how to complete journal entries was included as well as a statement explaining the study. The journals were open-ended to allow participants to freely reflect upon any interactions with their coach over a four-week period. The goal of the open-ended nature of the journaling activity was to elicit authentic feedback without probing for specific information. Content validity of the journaling protocol was established under the review of the researcher's dissertation committee members.

### **Procedures**

A quasi-experimental, mixed methods research design (see Figure 6) was used in this study and began with a quantitative approach followed by qualitative methods that allowed for a deeper analysis of the quantitative results. The quantitative component of the study was based on data collected from the *PCS*. The qualitative piece of this study used phenomenology to gain a deeper understanding of teachers' experiences with the phenomenon of coaching through an open-ended question on the *PCS*, focused one-on-one interviews, and a journaling activity.



*Figure 6.* Mixed-methods quasi-experimental research design. This figure displays the qualitative and quantitative data used in this mixed-methods study.

The quantitative portion of the study included 116 survey respondents. The qualitative section was comprised of five participants who volunteered to participate in one-on-one interviews, two of whom voluntarily completed the journaling activity.

The survey began with a statement introducing the research study and informed consent (see Appendix A). Only teachers who agreed to consent for participation in the survey research could access the survey. A total of 159 provided consent.

Next were a series of screening questions:

1. Does the grade(s) you teach fall within kindergarten through Grade 6?
2. Does your district have coaches?
3. Do you have access to a coach?

Any “no” response prevented the subject from participating in the survey any further. A final total of 116 participants met the screening criteria and proceeded to complete the survey.

Respondents were asked to complete the survey within ten days. A reminder was sent out on day seven. Additionally, those who did not complete the survey within 10 days received a second email with a seven-day extension, thus giving them a total of 17 days to complete the survey. Mail Chimp was utilized to filter out participants who had already completed the survey so as not to confuse or unnecessarily bother them.

At the conclusion of the survey, participants were asked if they were interested in participating in this study further via a 20 to 30 minute interview about their coaching experiences. Those who were interested could provide follow-up contact information before they submitted their surveys. A \$10 gift card was offered as compensation for the time required for partaking in the interview, and was presented at the completion of the interview. Of the 116 participants who completed the survey, 25 expressed interest and shared their contact information. The researcher followed up with all interested parties. Twenty were contacted via email to schedule a time to conduct an interview. Five were contacted by phone (the researcher left voicemails). Eleven responded to the email request, and none responded to the voice message. Seven interviews were scheduled, but only five were completed with participants whose schedules could be coordinated with the researcher within the data collection time frame. This met the research criteria of interviewing 5 to 10 participants.

All of the interviews were conducted between the researcher and participants individually via telephone. Individual interviews were conducted as opposed to a focus group due to scheduling constraints among participants. All participants were provided with information on the purpose and intended outcome of the study before answering any questions (Lunenburg &

Irby, 2008). Participants were assured confidentiality and notified of the option to stop the interview at any time. They were encouraged to answer freely and to provide specific examples. The interview questions were open-ended and semi-structured (see Appendix B). Questions were designed to elicit participants' perceptions of their coaching experiences. The duration of each interview was approximately 20 minutes. Interviews were recorded on an iPhone 6 and then transcribed by the researcher.

At the conclusion of the interviews, subjects were asked a final question, inviting them to participate in a month-long journaling activity in which they would record and reflect on any coaching interactions they engaged in over the course of that month. Participants were offered a \$20 gift card as compensation for this lengthy activity. All five interviewees expressed interest, but only two actually completed the journals, which met the research criteria of collecting <5 journals. Since the participant pool for the journaling phase of data collection was established by asking interviewees, it is important to note that the participants had also completed a survey and an interview.

Each journal participant was provided a personal link on Google Drive that was shared only between the researcher and the individual participant. The protocol for journal entries was provided as well as a statement explaining the study. The journals were open-ended to allow participants to freely reflect upon their coaching exchanges over a four-week period.

In order to protect validity, a guideline was set for journal reflection to take place within 48 hours of the exchange with a coach so as to capture a fresh experience. To document adherence to this guideline, participants recorded the journal entry date as well as the date of the coaching exchange. The researcher also kept track and recorded the dates journal entries were updated.

Participants maintained their journals over a four-week period. Weekly thank-you messages and reminders were sent out via email and personal contact was made via telephone or email at the end of the third week. At the end of the fourth week, the link to the Google Drive was changed to “view only” as a way to maintain initial responses so participants could not go back in and change their responses. Participants were informed that their link would become un-editable at the end of the four weeks, but that they would still have viewing capabilities, and that they could request any information not be included in the research. Neither of the participants requested this.

### **Data Analysis**

Data analysis was conducted in SPSS and included descriptive statistics, Mann-Whitney U tests, Kruskal-Wallis test, an analysis of variance (ANOVA), correlational and qualitative analyses. Descriptive statistics were used to describe the characteristics of the sample in gender, age, grade levels taught, and years of teaching experience.

The Mann-Whitney U test was used to test for differences in total perception scores from the PCS between males and females to determine if males and females differ in terms of coaching satisfaction. This was used instead of a t-test so as to compare medians instead of means since there was a substantial difference in the number of male ( $N = 7$ ) and female ( $N = 107$ ) subjects. A one-way between-groups analysis of variance (ANOVA) was considered to investigate the impact of age levels of coaching satisfaction as measured by the sum of total perception scores, but since there was a significant difference in the variance between groups, a Kruskal-Wallis test was conducted instead to examine whether there was a difference in coaching satisfaction across five age groups. A Pearson's  $r$  correlation coefficient was used to explore the relationship between coaching satisfaction and years of teaching experience, and a

one-way between-groups analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to compare perception scores of coaching satisfaction according to the highest degree held. Descriptive analyses were also conducted to analyze teachers' perceptions and satisfaction with coaching according to the principles of andragogy.

Qualitative analyses were used in analyzing the open-ended survey question, one-on-one interviews, and the journals. All data sets were analyzed separately. The coding process Creswell (2013) was used in analyzing the interviews and open-ended survey question. For each data set, emerging themes were identified (Lunenburg & Irby, 2008). Interview transcriptions were analyzed first, beginning with reading and memoing (Creswell, 2013). As emerging themes were identified (Lunenburg & Irby, 2008) an extensive list of tentative codes was developed. Those codes were then reduced into a few themes and were assigned names based on participants' exact words and the terminology used in the literature. The open-ended survey responses were read and coded based on similar themes identified from the interviews. Reading and memoing techniques were used in analyzing the data gained from journals (Creswell, 2013).

### **Strategies for Validating Findings**

The first method for validating findings was conducted by checking the reliability of the PCS prior to administering the survey. It was determined that the PCS had good internal consistency, with a Cronbach alpha coefficient reported of .87 (Pallant, 2013).

Triangulation was also used to ensure validity. This included verifying evidence from the different sources that are presented in the literature review to shed light on the themes that were coded (Creswell, 2013). Furthermore, a member of the researcher's dissertation committee reviewed the quantitative data collection methods and results (Creswell, 2013). Their feedback was used to ensure validity of findings. An additional member of the researcher's dissertation

committee reviewed the qualitative data collection methods and results (Creswell, 2013). This included member checking in reviewing the themes that were coded. Their recommendations were incorporated into the research findings as well.

Member checking was also used during the interviews as a method to validate the accuracy and completeness of the statements interpreted by the researcher (Lunenburg & Irby, 2008). Creswell (2013) furthermore describes member checking as “the researcher soliciting participants’ views of the credibility of the findings and interpretations” (p. 252). This was accomplished by sharing the interview transcription with the interviewee. All five respondents were satisfied with the interview transcriptions.

Upon analyzing the interview data, the researcher shared the initial analysis with individual participants to ensure that the intended meaning was captured. Participants were content with the analysis of their interviews. The same was done regarding the analysis of journal findings. To further maintain validity of journal responses, a guideline was set that journal reflections took place within 48 hours of the exchange so as to capture a fresh and timely experience. To capture adherence to this guideline, participants recorded the journal entry date as well as the date of the coaching exchange.

### **Ethical Issues**

The researcher considered the potential ethical issues that might surface in conducting this study. Measures to protect against these concerns were taken. To begin with, the researcher successfully completed a course on “Protecting Human Research Participants” with the National Institutes of Health Office of Extramural Research and appropriate permissions were granted. Approval was granted from the researcher’s university institutional review board as well as from the researcher’s employer, the organization in which participant access was gained from for data



collection. Further permission to gather data was obtained from each individual participant throughout each phase of data collection.

All participants were guaranteed anonymity. Participants were also assured that responses would be kept confidential. They were informed that they could remove themselves from the study at any time since participation in the study was completely voluntary. In analyzing and reporting qualitative data, multiple perspectives were reported to create composite stories so that individuals could not be identified (Creswell, 2013). Numbers were assigned to distinguish between participants without identifying them by name or affiliation (Creswell, 2013). Because the participants were receiving professional development from the company the researcher is employed by, this was an especially important measure to protect both the participants as well as the coaches they worked with so that any negative feedback would not result in any negative consequences.

The purpose of this study and how the data would be used was also disclosed to participants prior to each phase of data collection. Participants were also offered rewards (\$10 and \$20 gift cards) for participation and completion of the interview and journal activities, respectively, so as in to create reciprocity for providing data for the study (Creswell, 2013).

### **Summary**

This study examined teacher perceptions of satisfaction with their coaching experiences to answer the research questions:

- 1) What aspects of instructional coaching, when included in professional development models, most support implementation of change in the classroom from the teachers' perception?

- 2) According to teachers' perception, which of the six principles of andragogy, when applied to coaching, are most impactful in supporting changes to classroom instruction?

A total of 116 participants from six states in various regions of the United States including (Southern California, Northern California, the Pacific Northwest, and the Midwest) completed the Perceptions of Coaching Survey (PCS). Survey participants were invited to participate in one-on-one interviews, and five interviews ensued. Two interviewees went on to complete a month-long journaling activity. Survey data was collected and initial analysis began at the end of the 2015-2016 school year. Interview and journal data was collected and was analyzed during the beginning of the 2016-2017 school year.

## CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

### Quantitative Results

Results from 116 surveys were included in the analysis. Of the 116 survey respondents, 27 identified as kindergarten through second grade teachers, 21 identified as kindergarten through eighth grade teachers, 51 identified as third to fifth grade teachers, 3 identified as third through eighth grade teachers, and 7 identified as sixth through eighth grade teachers. These demographics are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

*Grade Level Spans Taught by the Sample*

Grade Span	<i>N</i> = 116
Kindergarten – Grade 2	27
Kindergarten – Grade 8	21
Grade 3 – Grade 5	51
Grade 3 – Grade 8	3
Grade 6 – Grade 8	7

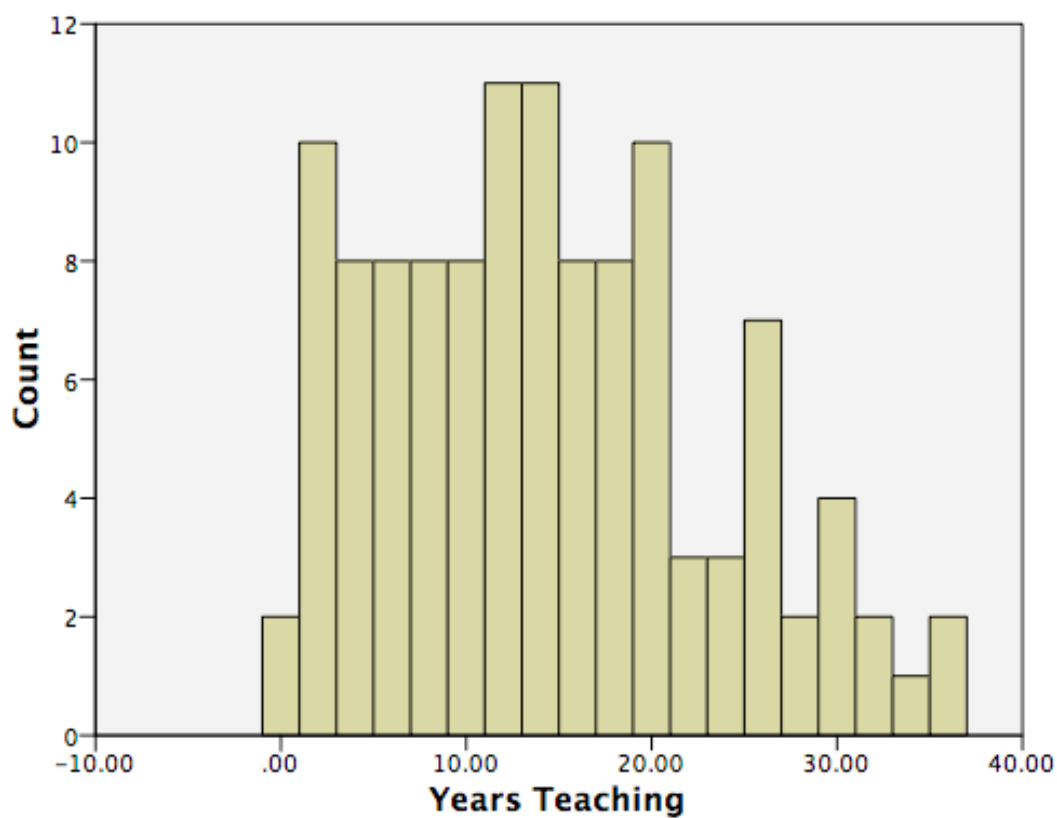
Participants were diverse in age and years of teaching experience (see Table 2 and Figure 7). Years of teaching experience ranged from 0 to 35 years as presented in Table 3. However, there were significantly more female ( $n = 107$ ) participants than male ( $n = 8$ ) (see Table 2). One participant did not indicate gender.

Table 2

*Survey Participant Age-ranges and Genders*

Age Range	Male ( <i>n</i> = 7)	Female ( <i>n</i> = 107)	Undisclosed ( <i>n</i> = 1)
20-29	2	14	0
30-39	3	30	1
40-49	2	28	0
50-59	0	32	0
60-69	0	3	0

*Note.* One respondent did not disclose age.



*Figure 7.* Participant years of teaching experience. This figure displays years of teaching experience from the sample.

The survey included 35 selected response options organized on a four-point scale: Strongly Agree (4), Agree (3), Disagree (2), and Strongly Disagree (1). All but two items were positively phrased (e.g. “Coaching is helpful in implementing new strategies in my classroom”). The exceptions were, “I’ve had important life/work issues that were ignored in my coaching experiences” and “I wish more had been done to prepare me for the coaching methods used.” These items were reverse-coded as *Strongly Agree* (1), *Agree* (2), *Disagree* (3), and *Strongly Disagree* (4).

One question asked participants to rank their level of coaching satisfaction on a scale of 1 (*Unsatisfied*) to 10 (*Extremely Satisfied*). The final question was open-ended and asked participants to briefly describe what coaching means to them in a paragraph or less.

To first assess the overall levels of satisfaction with coaching, the first survey item, *Coaching is helpful in implementing new strategies in the classroom*, was analyzed in isolation. An average response of ( $M = 3.03$ ;  $SD = .72$ ) on a four-point scale was reported, and 94.7% agreed or strongly agreed. The final selected response question: *On a scale of 1 to 10, 1 being not satisfied at all, 10 being extremely satisfied, how satisfied are you with the coaching services you receive?*, was examined separately as well and resulted in ( $M = 7.63$ ;  $SD = 2.22$ ).

Descriptive statistics were used to compare the mean scores for five survey items pertaining to coaching activities (modeling, observing with feedback, co-planning, prepping, and observing colleagues) as well as the mean percentage of participants who agreed or strongly agreed to each question. In the end, 98.2% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that it is helpful when a coach models a lesson or strategy in their own classrooms with their students ( $M = 3.57$ ;  $SD = .53$ ). In terms of a coach providing feedback after watching the teacher teach a lesson, 96.6% agreed or strongly agreed that this was helpful ( $M = 3.48$ ;  $SD = .60$ ). When it

came to coaches helping plan for instruction, 77.4% of participants agreed or strongly agreed ( $M = 3.0$  ;  $SD = .84$ ) and 47.8% that coaches should help with lesson preparation ( $M = 2.54$ ;  $SD = .85$ ). Finally, 100% of the participants agreed or strongly agreed that being able to watch another colleague model a lesson or strategy was beneficial ( $M = 3.53$ ;  $SD = .50$ ) (see Table 3).

Table 3

*Coaching Satisfaction According to Coaching Activity*

Survey Item	M	SD	% agree or strongly agree
I find it helpful when a coach models a lesson or strategy for me in my classroom with my students.	3.57	.53	98.2%
It's helpful when my coach provides feedback after watching me teach a lesson.	3.48	.60	96.6%
My coach/coaches help me to plan for instruction.	3.0	.84	77.4%
A coach should help with lesson preparation (copies, creating charts, etc.).	2.54	.85	47.8%
Being able to watch my colleagues model a lesson/strategy is beneficial to my teaching.	3.53	.50	100%

A Mann-Whitney U Test was conducted to compare the total perception scores for coaching satisfaction for males and females. Total scores were obtained by calculating the sum of all answers. A higher score indicated a higher level of satisfaction. The Mann-Whitney U test revealed no significant difference in coaching satisfaction levels between median score for males ( $Md = 119.5$ ,  $n = 8$ ) and females ( $Md = 114$ ,  $n = 107$ ),  $U = 380$ ,  $z = -.53$   $p = .60$   $r = .05$ .

A one-way between-groups analysis of variance (ANOVA) was considered to explore the impact of age on levels of coaching satisfaction as measured by the sum of total perception scores. Participants were divided into five groups according to their age (Group one: 20 to 29

years; Group two: 30 to 39 years; Group three: 40 to 49 years; Group four: 50 to 59 years; Group five: 60 years and above). As there was a significant difference in the variance between groups (Levene's  $F = 2.82, p = .02$ ), a Kruskal-Wallis test was done instead of an ANOVA. There was ( $X^2 = 0.64, p = 0.99$ ). The means for each age group are presented in Table 4.

Table 4

*Impact of Participant Age-range on Levels of Coaching Satisfaction*

Age-range	$n = 116$	$M = 114.64$	$SD = 17.24$
Undisclosed	2	110.8	11.09
20 – 29 years	16	115.44	11.49
30 – 39 years	33	114.86	17.53
40 – 49 years	30	114.11	14.83
50 – 59 years	32	115.38	19.90
60+ years	3	108.21	41.23

The relationship between the total perception score as measured by the sum of all answers for coaching satisfaction and years of teaching experience was investigated using a Pearson's  $r$  correlation coefficient. "Preliminary analyses were performed to ensure no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity and homoscedasticity" (Pallant, 2013, p. 140). There was a very small positive correlation between coaching satisfaction and years of teaching experience, which was not statistically significant ( $r = .067, n = 116, p = .477$ ).

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to compare the mean scores of total perception of coaching satisfaction and degrees held. Participants were divided into three groups according to the highest degree held (Group one: Bachelor's Degree; Group two: Master's Degree; Group

three: Doctorate). There was no statistically significant difference at the  $p < .05$  level in satisfaction scores for the three groups  $F(3, 112)$ ,  $p = .157$ . The 26 participants holding a Bachelor's Degree had a satisfaction score of ( $M = 117.20$ ;  $SD = 14.34$ ). Those 84 holding a Master's Degree had a mean satisfaction score of ( $M = 113.57$ ;  $SD = 18.13$ ) and the two who held a Doctorate Degree had a satisfaction score of ( $M = 138.5$ ;  $SD = 4.95$ ). These results are displayed in Table 5.

Table 5

*Levels of Coaching Satisfaction According to Degree Held*

Degree Held	$N = 116$	$M = 114.64$	$SD = 17.24$
Undisclosed	4	108.67	7.79
Bachelor's	26	117.20	14.34
Master's	84	113.57	18.13
Doctorate	2	138.5	4.95

The relationship between the total perception score (as measured by the sum of all answers) for coaching satisfaction and total scores for questions within each principle of andragogy were investigated. Questions were divided into six groups according to the six principles of andragogy (Group one: Need to Know; Group two: Readiness to Learn; Group three: Self-concept; Group four: Experience; Group five: Orientation to Learning; Group six: Motivation). Each principle was analyzed using a Pearson's  $r$  correlation coefficient.

“Preliminary analyses were performed to ensure no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity and homoscedasticity” (Pallant, 2013, p. 140). There was a statistically significant large positive correlation between coaching satisfaction and each principle of andragogy: self-concept



( $r = .63, n = 116, p = .000$ ); need to know ( $r = .56, n = 116, p = .000$ ); readiness to learn ( $r = .79, n = 115, p = .000$ ); learner's experience ( $r = .75, n = 116, p = .000$ ); and orientation to learning ( $r = .81, n = 113, p = .000$ ).

Descriptive statistics were used to further compare the mean scores of total scores for questions within each principle of andragogy as well as the mean percentage of participants who agreed or strongly agreed for the questions in each category. Questions were divided into six groups according to the six principles of andragogy (Group one: Need to Know, Group two: Readiness to Learn, Group three: Self-concept, Group four: Experience, Group five: Orientation to Learning, Group six: Motivation). The survey questions pertaining to coaching satisfaction and the need to know principle of andragogy had a mean satisfaction of ( $M = 3.36; SD = .62$ ), and 94.2% agreed or strongly agreed with these statements on the survey. Readiness to learn had a mean satisfaction of ( $M = 2.87; SD = .81$ ) with 70.58% agreeing or strongly agreeing with the survey items pertaining to this principle. Learner's self-concept had a mean score of ( $M = 3.01; SD = .72$ ), and 70.8% agreed or strongly agreed with the survey items in this category. The items regarding learner's experience resulted in 93.55% agreeing and a mean of ( $M = 3.36; SD = .69$ ). Orientation to learning had a mean score of ( $M = 2.96; SD = .75$ ), and 84.1% agreed or strongly agreed with these survey items. Finally, 89.35% of participants agreed or strongly agreed with items on the principle of motivation with a satisfaction score of ( $M = 3.13; SD = .70$ ). These results are presented in Table 6.

Table 6

*Coaching Satisfaction According to the Principles of Andragogy*

Andragogical Principle	Questions <i>n</i> = 28	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	% agree or strongly agree
Need to Know	3	3.36	.62	94.27%
Readiness to Learn	4	2.87	.81	70.58%
Learners' Self-Concept	8	3.01	.72	70.8%
Learners' Experience	2	3.36	.69	93.55%
Orientation to Learning	5	2.96	.75	84.1%
Motivation	6	3.13	.70	89.35%

To address the hypothesis that in terms of teacher perception, the principles of andragogy positively impact teacher motivation to implement change in the classroom, additional data analysis was conducted on each of the individual questions pertaining to the principle of Motivation (see Table 7). Ninety-four percent agreed or strongly agreed that coaching motivates them to try new things in their teaching practice, and 91.3% indicated that it taps into their inner drive to learn new things. In terms of feeling energized about teaching as a result of being involved in coaching, 87.9% of participants agreed or strongly agreed, and 86.2% specified that their past coaching experiences have motivated them to continue working with a coach. In responding to the survey item, *The knowledge I gain from coaching can immediately be applied in my work*, 92.2% agreed or strongly agreed. Finally, 62.9% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that coaching motivates them to give their best at work.

Table 7

*Principle of Motivation Response Frequency by Survey Item*

Survey Item	Response	N	%
Coaching motivates me to try new things in my teaching practice.	Strongly Agree	53	45.7%
	Agree	56	48.3%
	Disagree	6	5.2%
	Strongly Disagree	0	0
I feel energized about my teaching as a result of being involved in coaching.	Strongly Agree	34	29.3%
	Agree	68	58.6%
	Disagree	11	9.5%
	Strongly Disagree	2	1.7%
The knowledge I gain from coaching can immediately be applied in my work.	Strongly Agree	41	35.3%
	Agree	66	56.9%
	Disagree	7	6%
	Strongly Disagree	2	1.7%
Coaching taps in to my inner drive to learn new things.	Strongly Agree	33	28.4%
	Agree	73	62.9%
	Disagree	8	6.9%
	Strongly Disagree	2	1.7%
Coaching motivates me to give my best effort at work.	Strongly Agree	34	29.3%
	Agree	64	55.2%
	Disagree	13	11.2%
	Strongly Disagree	3	2.6%
My past coaching experiences have motivated me to continue working with a coach.	Strongly Agree	33	28.4%
	Agree	67	57.8%
	Disagree	12	10.3%
	Strongly Disagree	4	3.4%

**Qualitative Results****Open-ended Survey Question**

The final question on the survey was opened-ended and asked respondents to do the following: *Briefly define/describe what coaching means to you in one paragraph of less.* Eighty-one of the 116 survey participants provided a response. Responses were compiled into a separate

document and each response was read and coded for themes. This resulted in a very large data set with many emerging themes. Text Fixer, a free online program designed for text conversion was used to determine the frequency count of keywords in the text of all responses (see Figure 8). Only those words that occurred ten times or more were included in Figure 8. Some words that had a frequency above ten were omitted from Figure 8, such as “coaching” and “coach,” which occurred 121 times. The words that occurred at least ten times included various forms of: *support, student, help, need, lesson, feedback, improve, classroom, strategies, instruction, process, and practice*. The frequencies of each of these are displayed in Figure 8.

Keyword	Frequency
Support	32
Student	29
Help	29
Need	28
Lesson	24
Feedback	17
Improve	15
Classroom	14
Strategies	11
Instruction	10
Process	10
Practice	10

*Figure 8.* This figure displays the frequency count of the keywords reported in response to the open-ended survey item.

A common theme that emerged from the open-ended responses was the notion that coaching aims to improve instruction. Figure 9 captures some of the statements that were shared in regard to teacher beliefs on how coaching does this.

Belief Shared
Someone who is able to help fine-tune my instruction to best meet the needs of students.
[Includes] the opportunity to observe me implementing new strategies and giving me feedback on what I am doing and how I can improve or enhance my teaching.
Working with my coach allows me to work out the kinks in my instruction.
Coaches help you to be a better teacher by focusing on your strengths and weaknesses.
Coaching is a process in which a teacher is assisted in going through a reflective process to improve or refine an aspect or multiple aspects of his or her teaching.
Coaching means a team of people who support educators in order to better their practice.
It should open lines of communication to allow for constructive feedback on teacher practices and suggestions for improvement.
My coach has added more productive years to my teaching because they helped me achieve the greatest sooner than doing it on my own.
Coaching offers me the opportunity to hone my craft.
Coaching is a support for teachers to help enhance instruction by modeling, explaining, planning, and answering questions about instruction.
Coaching gives me an opportunity to have a sounding board that will hopefully improve my instruction and student achievement.
The coaching I have received has been monumental in helping me improve my craft.
Coaching means working collaboratively to improve teaching skills.
Coaching means someone else is helping me better my practice through modeling, planning, preparing, and feedback.
I believe coaching is very influential to make every teacher improve their practice.

*Figure 9.* This figure shows teacher beliefs about how coaching improves their instruction.

### Focused One-on-one Interviews

Five teachers participated in one-on-one interviews. In analyzing their responses, they are referred to as Participant 1, Participant 2, Participant 3, Participant 4, and Participant 5 for purposes of anonymity. They are presented as P1, P2, P3, P4, and P5 in the figures to save space. Each interview was hand-coded by the researcher. The interview questions remained constant, but participants responded uniquely.

Each participant was asked, *Which aspects of coaching do you find to be the most beneficial to you in trying out new things in your classroom, and why?* Two dominant themes emerged from participants' responses to this question. The first theme included a presence of a coaching cycle that included planning, modeling/demoing lessons, co-teaching, co-planning, watching lessons, videos, and/or observations. The second was centered on the classroom implementation of strategies. Figure 10 captures the exact words expressed by each participant for each of the two themes.

Theme Addressed	Participant 1	Participant 2	Participant 3	Participant 4	Participant 5
Coaching cycle	<i>Coaching cycle</i>	<i>Planning</i>	<i>Modeling</i>	<i>Watching a modeled lesson</i>	<i>Demo/modeling</i>
	<i>Gradual release</i>		<i>Co-teaching</i>		<i>See other colleagues (with the coach)</i>
			<i>Co-planning</i>		
			<i>Watching a lesson</i>		<i>Videos</i>
Classroom Implementation	<i>Implementing strategies How to implement</i>	<i>Supporting classroom implementation</i>	Theme not addressed	<i>Helps with implementation</i>	<i>Observes Curriculum or strategy</i>

*Figure 10.* The words used by each participant to describe the most beneficial aspects of coaching when it comes to trying new things in the classroom. This figure shows the aspects of coaching participants found to be the most beneficial in trying new things in the classroom.

The second interview question asked participants to describe the perfect coach, *If you could create the perfect coach, describe that person*. In addition to describing a coach that incorporates the themes of implementation and coaching cycles from Question 1, new themes emerged to include coaches who had a consistent, non-administrative presence in classrooms. These themes are displayed in Figure 11 according to the exact words expressed by each participant.

Theme Addressed	Participant 1	Participant 2	Participant 3	Participant 4	Participant 5
Consistent Presence	<i>Consistent Comes back Follows up</i>	Theme not addressed	<i>Be there Active presence</i>	<i>Supports in classroom</i>	<i>Visible Comes to classroom</i>
Non-Administrative Presence	<i>Doesn't tell you what to do</i>	Theme not addressed	Theme not addressed	<i>Doesn't make you do something Non-administrative</i>	<i>Don't act like administrators Doesn't tell you what to do</i>

*Figure 11.* Describing the perfect coach. This figure captures participants' descriptions of the perfect coach.

Participants were then asked to reflect on, *How does having follow-up coaching support compare to not having it when it comes to actually trying out your new learning in your classroom?* Participants continued to mention the theme of coaching cycles and coaching roles from Question 1, such as *a coaching cycle*, *model a lesson*, and *help plan*. Due to the nature of the question, responses were grouped into the common theme of follow-through/follow-up from a coach. Figure 12 displays the specific ideas participants' expressed on the benefits of receiving follow-up coaching as well as the disadvantages of not receiving it.

Theme Addressed	Participant 1	Participant 2	Participant 3	Participant 4	Participant 5
Follow-through/ Follow-up	<i>Coming back to it</i>  <i>If there's no follow-up, things fall through</i>  <i>It's important for coaches to revisit on a regular basis</i>	Theme not addressed	<i>Practicing it and having follow-up is better.</i>  <i>As opposed to not being able to do a follow-up or a review.</i>	<i>Checking in to see how I'm doing or what I do.</i>	Theme not addressed

*Figure 12.* How having follow-up coaching compares to not having it. This figure shows how participants compare having coaching to not having coaching in follow-up to professional development.

Next, participants were asked to think about occasional instances of teacher resistance to coaching and why they think this happens: *Sometimes teachers are resistant to coaching. Why do you think this is?* Three themes emerged: a resistance to change, a resistance to extra work, and a self-concept of already knowing (see Figure 13). Participants also alluded to older, more veteran teachers demonstrating resistance.



Theme Addressed	Participant 1	Participant 2	Participant 3	Participant 4	Participant 5
Resistance to change	<i>Fixated on what is</i>	Theme not addressed	<i>Set in their ways Don't want change Can't accept change</i>	<i>Stuck Set in their ways Don't want to look at a different way</i>	Theme not addressed
Resistance to extra work	<i>More work to do something new</i>	Theme not addressed	<i>Extra work Too much work</i>	Theme not addressed	<i>Don't want to do the work</i>
Self-concept of Already Knowing	<i>Feel only they know their students</i>	Theme not addressed	Theme not addressed	<i>Think they know it all</i>	<i>Think they know it all</i>

Figure 13. Causes for teacher resistance to coaching. This figure captures what participants shared in regard to resistance to coaching.

For Question 5, participants were asked to describe one of their most successful coaching experiences: *And then what made it so successful?* Each participant shared a different type of situation, but the overarching themes that emerged were collaboration and reflection. Participant 1 talked about the coaching she received as a *head start for the very first year working at a new district*. Participant 2 spoke about a *half-day pull out* to work with a coach who *facilitated benchmark analyses* and *re-teaching planning* based on that data analysis. Participant 3 shared an experience where a coach assisted in an *unexpected transition from being an elementary teacher to a Jr. High teacher*. Participant 4 described an instance when the coach *came and co-taught* a lesson in the classroom. Participant 5 told the story of a *four-year* long coaching relationship with an *old coach* that was *like a partner-teaching situation*. The themes that emerged from these various situations are captured in Figure 14. They include coaching that was collaborative and led to reflection.

Theme Addressed	Participant 1	Participant 2	Participant 3	Participant 4	Participant 5
Collaboration	<i>How collaborative the work was</i>	<i>Facilitating the work Facilitating the conversations</i>	<i>A project that we worked on</i>	<i>Co-taught</i>	<i>Partner-teaching situation We talked</i>
Reflection	<i>A moment of reflection</i>	<i>Facilitating that conversation about, how did it go? What did you do? Helped us create see the value</i>	<i>Made me see things differently</i>	<i>I can do that That's really easy</i>	<i>We debriefed, talked about how things went</i>

*Figure 14.* Successful coaching interactions experienced by teachers. This figure shows the positive coaching experiences reported by each interview participant.

Conversely, Question 6 asked, *Have you ever experienced a coaching situation that did not go well? What do you think made it unsuccessful?* Each respondent shared a unique situation captured in Figure 15. Participant 1 reflected on his or her experience as a kind of coach and an instance when a student-teacher did not take their constructive criticism well. Participant 2 discussed a situation in which the coach did not follow through after helping create a reading organizer. Participant 3 expressed frustration with a coach not checking in, providing feedback, nor sharing new ideas. Participant 4 did not disclose any coaching experience that did not go well. Finally, Participant 5 talked about how the coach thinks he or she may not need coaching, causing him or her to feel that they are losing out on something.

Participant	Belief Shared
Participant 1	<i>I currently have student teachers in my classroom, so I'm kind of a coach. One of them if I can reflect, doesn't take constructive criticism well. So I have to acknowledge a personality that is a little more emotional about constructive feedback. So I think personalities come into gear and I have to understand that maybe letting them know this is something that you can improve on but at the same time being understanding of emotional needs.</i>
Participant 2	<i>I was asked by a coach having trouble getting people to let them in their rooms. I was fine with it so she asked, what would you like to do? I said, creating an organizer for my reading groups that that would be a useful tool. The coach listened and helped create it but then there was a lack of follow through on what was going to happen and basically never came back. The coach never came and watched me do it and use it so that we could have that reflective conversation and so it was disappointing. That created a sense of why am I going to bother? I'm not going to ask for anything because there wasn't follow through.</i>
Participant 3	<i>I feel like I'm bossy to that person. I'll say what I need, and they get me whatever I need, but I feel like they should be doing it for me. I feel a coach should be there and come to me. It's frustrating because it's not beneficial for all my students. There are no check ins. I don't know if the coach is on the campus. I'm not informed of the days, or times. The coach doesn't pop in unless I ask. If they watch a lesson, it's very brief opposed to taking notes or offering feedback. Give me feedback. Give me an idea. If you have a different idea than I do, if you see something that another teacher is doing, please tell me. I'm open to suggestions. Communication and not reaching out is an issue. I think that coach doesn't feel confident enough to or have enough knowledge to be able to offer suggestions.</i>
Participant 4	<i>I don't think I've had any.</i>
Participant 5	<i>The coach thinks maybe I don't need it. So I feel like I'm losing out on something. I could ask, but I don't want to. I feel like it's more work for me to have to ask because I have to think about it, the coaching. I really don't want to spend my time with that. The coach should reach out. The partnership is not going well.</i>

Figure 15. Unsuccessful coaching situations. This figure displays negative coaching situations participants experienced and what contributed to its unsuccessfulness.

## Online Journals

Additionally, two teachers participated in maintaining a month-long journal online where they recorded any interactions that occurred with their coach. The journal protocol is displayed in Figure 16. The participants are referred to as Participant A and Participant B. Participant A completed five entries and Participant B completed three.

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Date
Form of Coaching the took place
What worked well or was beneficial to your teaching practice?
What suggestions do you have that could have improved the exchange?

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*Figure 16.* Journal prompts for month-long journaling activity. This figure shows the prompts participants responded to during the journaling phase of data collection.

Participant A indicated several forms of coaching that took place. The first interaction involved sending a text to the coach to request a meeting. The coach and Participant A scheduled a meeting time for the following day. At the request of Participant A, they met to discuss how to proceed with new curriculum. The coach advised Participant A to directly contact the Director of Instruction with questions. Another example occurred twelve days later when Participant A sent an email requesting curriculum materials and advice related to student test scores prior to Winter break. The coach delivered the curriculum directly to the classroom two days later. The only words exchanged that day were, “*how are you?*” Participant A then sent an email to the coach eight days later requesting the student test scores a second time. On the last day of school Participant A sent an email asking for the information after break.

Participant B also shared several coaching experiences including a professional development day provided by the district literacy coaches. The first half of the day focused on

literacy and the second half of the day focused on math. The teachers practiced different math problems. Participant B talked to the coach about the session when she encountered him or her in the teachers' lounge four days following the professional development day. Participant B recorded the third and final entry twenty-three days later. This entry described an instance when an entire team of district coaches, assistant principals, and principals visited Participant B's classroom during a math lesson. After the visit, the group sent an email to the whole school thanking them.

A summary of themes from Participant A and Participant B's coaching experiences are presented in Figure 17 and Figure 18. Figure 17 captures what worked well or was beneficial about the coaching exchange. Figure 18 presents teacher recommendations for improving coaching situations.

Participant A	Participant B
n/a	<p><i>[It was] very beneficial in providing more strategies... to refine our practice.</i></p> <p><i>All teachers were engaged in the work.</i></p> <p><i>What I found beneficial was "doing the math".</i></p> <p><i>The coaching cycle gave us more ideas.</i></p> <p><i>I became more confident.</i></p> <p><i>Both coaching sessions were well delivered.</i></p> <p><i>It was a way for us to grow in our practice and change things up a bit.</i></p> <p><i>It was nice to check in with [the coach] and talk about the learning.</i></p> <p><i>It was making a difference with my kids.</i></p>

Figure 17. Coaching exchanges that worked or were beneficial. This figure captures participants' perceived benefits of coaching.

Participant A	Participant B
<p><i>I would have preferred [the coach] talking to the director and solving the problem for me as opposed to taking themselves out of it. [The coach] taking charge/being proactive. Asking me how the new curriculum is working.</i></p> <p><i>I should not be the one requesting information.</i></p> <p><i>[The coach] could have come during one of my classes to observe and/or talk with the students.</i></p> <p><i>The coach should be an expert and have follow through.</i></p>	<p><i>More time to ask clarifying questions</i></p> <p><i>For our coaches to come into our classrooms and see if we are correctly implementing the new strategies and give feedback (they could have offered).</i></p>

Figure 18. Suggestions for improving coaching exchanges. This figure displays participants' recommendations for improving coaching.

### Summary

This chapter presented quantitative results from 116 diverse teacher participants who completed the Perceptions of Coaching Survey (PCS) along with qualitative results from the open-ended survey question, five focused one-on-one interviews, and two journals in examining teacher perceptions of satisfaction with their coaching experiences. Quantitative data found that coaching is helpful in implementing new strategies in the classroom, and that teachers are generally satisfied with their coaching experiences. The data also suggests that overall teachers are satisfied with the majority of the coaching activities they engage in and that the principles of andragogy have a positive impact on coaching.

Several forms of data analysis were conducted to compare the total satisfaction between groups of teachers. Although a diverse group of teachers were surveyed, there were no

statistically significant differences between male and female teachers, between teacher age levels, years of teaching experience or degrees held.

Total satisfaction was also analyzed by andragogical principle revealing that the need to know, learner's experience, and motivation principles have the most positive correlation to coaching satisfaction. The andragogical principles of readiness to learn and an orientation to learning had the least impact on coaching satisfaction, and the learner's experience was neutral. The principle of motivation was investigated further, illuminating that when applied to coaching, andragogy positively impacts teacher motivation to implement change in the classroom.

In addition to quantitative data, data collected from the PCS also provided qualitative data from the open-ended response, *Briefly define/describe what coaching means to you in one paragraph or less*. Several participants described coaching as a service that aims improves instruction. This perspective was identified as a central theme. Some recurring keywords also emerged from this open-ended question including support, student, help, need, lesson, feedback, improve, classroom, strategies, instruction, process, and practice.

The qualitative data gained from the five one-on-one interviews continued to support the notion that teachers connect coaching to the classroom implementation of strategies through coaching cycles and activities, such as planning, modeling, co-teaching, co-planning, and observation. Participants also saw the benefits in having coaching follow-up as opposed to not having it following professional development learning. They also described quality coaches as those who maintain a consistent, non-administrative presence in their classrooms. In terms of resistance to coaching, all respondents placed blame on teachers rather than coaches, citing a resistance to change, a resistance to extra work, and a self-concept of already knowing as the causes. Participants also perceived resistance to come from older, veteran teachers. Finally, the

participants shared stories of both successful and unsuccessful coaching experiences. Successful coaching experiences were described as collaborative, facilitative and reflective. Unsuccessful coaching largely included issues having to do with a lack of follow-through on the coach's part.

Finally, the responses of two journaling participants captured reflections on specific coaching exchanges. These exchanges included various forms of communication, such as texting, emailing, and informal conversations. The activities that were described included meeting to discuss curriculum, a professional development session, and a classroom visit. The two journals reflected contrasting perceptions regarding individual coaching exchanges.

This chapter presented the qualitative and quantitative results from this study. The next chapter moves on to provide a deeper discussion and analysis of findings to inform suggested implications for coaching practices as well as future research recommendations.



## CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

In the preceding chapter, the presentation and analysis of data were reported. This chapter consists of a deeper discussion of the findings, recommendations for practice, and implications for further research.

The purpose of this study was to examine teacher perceptions of satisfaction with their coaching experiences with an emphasis on andragogy to answer the research questions:

1. What aspects of instructional coaching, when included in professional development models, most support implementation of change in the classroom from the teachers' perception?
2. According to teachers' perception, which of the six principles of andragogy, when applied to coaching, are most impactful in supporting changes to classroom instruction?

A total of 116 participants from various regions of the United States, including six states, completed the Perceptions of Coaching Survey (PCS). Upon completing the survey, participants were invited to participate in one-on-one interviews, and five interviews ensued. The interview respondents also represented various regions of the United States, including three states. Two of the interview participants, representing two different states went on to complete a month-long journaling activity.

Having the opportunity to gather data from participants from various school districts across different regions of the United States offered the unique opportunity of being able to capture teachers' perceptions on coaching that were not limited to a single district's specific approach to coaching. Regardless of what coaching services teachers were receiving based on what their district was implementing, a vast range of what is perceived as effective coaching was

captured based on broad experiences. In turn, the findings of this study can be used to inform countless districts that utilize coaches to support teacher professional development.

### **Discussion of the Findings**

#### **Quantitative**

The quantitative results of this study addressed the hypothesis that teachers who receive instructional coaching support following professional development perceive some to all components of coaching to have a positive impact on supporting them in implementing change in the classroom. Although levels of coaching satisfaction naturally varied, overall, participants were mostly satisfied and had positive perceptions about their coaching experiences.

For instance, teachers mostly agreed that “*coaching is helpful in implementing new strategies in the classroom,*” with an average response of 3.03 on a four-point scale with 94.7% who agreed or strongly agreed. Likewise, on a scale of one to 10, one being not satisfied at all, and 10 being extremely satisfied, participants were more satisfied than unsatisfied with the coaching services they had received, with a mean response of 7.63. This finding is consistent with what has previously been reported in the research. For example, a recurring trait of effective professional development presented throughout the literature includes an aspect of ongoing teacher support in implementing new strategies in the classroom (Gulamhussein, 2013), and teacher coaching has consistently been included as an effective practice in supporting teachers (Gulamhussein, 2013; Croft et al., 2010; Odden & Picus, 2011; Kee, et al., 2010; Castillo, 2012; NRTA, 2010; Reeves, 2009; Knight, 2009; What Works Clearinghouse, 2008; Stoltzfus, 2008; Sschlosser, 2007; Killion & Kennedy, 2012; Brooks & Gibson, 2012).

Five of the survey items pertained to coaching activities (modeling, observations with feedback, co-planning lessons, prepping, an observing colleagues) and addressed the research

question, *What aspects of instructional coaching, when included in professional development models, most support implementation of change in the classroom from the teachers' perception?*

In terms of the coaching processes, teachers reported having a coach model a lesson or strategy in their own classroom with their students, or being able to watch another colleague model a lesson or strategy in another classroom to be the most helpful coaching activities ( $M = 3.57$ ,  $SD = .53$ , 98.2%;  $M = 3.53$ ,  $SD = .50$ , 100%). These are very similar activities, alluding to the fact that being able to see a lesson or strategy in action is beneficial to teachers. This activity was also described in the one-on-one interviews. This finding is consistent with discussions on the coaching practice of modeling lessons that is discussed across the literature. Gulamhussein (2013) for example, identifies modeling as the first step in coaching. Similarly, in Knight's (2009) coaching models, coaching cycles begin with the coach modeling a practice in the classroom or demonstrating a lesson.

Teachers also reported that they found it helpful to receive feedback from a coach after having been observed teaching a lesson ( $M = 3.48$ ,  $SD = .60$ ; 96.6%). This is consistent with what the Professional Learning Association (Killion & Crow, 2011) reports about the element of feedback as effectively accelerating implementation of practices. The results on modeling and feedback are promising in that these activities occur during classroom instruction.

On the other hand, receiving coaching support with lesson planning ( $M = 3.0$ ,  $SD = .84$ , 77.4%) and the preparing of materials for lessons ( $M = 2.54$ ;  $SD = .85$ , 47.8%) were comparatively the least helpful of the coaching. However, two interview participants identified co-planning as a beneficial aspect of coaching. Further discussion on this is presented in the qualitative section of this chapter. While co-planning has been reported as a helpful coaching strategy (Knight & Cornett, 2009), prepping of lesson materials is not a traditional coaching

activity. The lower results on coaches helping with lesson preparation are therefore promising because coaches should be working with teachers, and not doing work for teachers.

In comparing males and females, there was no significant difference in levels of satisfaction with coaching by teacher gender. However, there was a significant difference in the sample sizes between male ( $n = 8$ ) and female ( $n = 107$ ) survey respondents. This is of notable importance in regard to this study being limited to a predominately female teaching population.

Similarly, though an analysis of variance (ANOVA) indicated significant difference in the variance between age groups, upon conducting a Kruskal-Wallis test, there was not a significant difference found between coaching satisfaction across the age-range categories. However, there was a mentionable difference in mean satisfaction in the 60+ age group ( $M = 108.21$ ) as compared to all of the other age groups, which had a mean range of 114.11 to 115.44. Conversely, there were only three respondents in this age category, which is not a strong representation of that age population. This is another limitation of this study.

There was a very small positive correlation between coaching satisfaction and years of teaching experience, but it was not statistically significant. As this was an open-ended option on the survey, a wide range of specific years of teaching experience were reported. Based on the researcher's experience as a coach and professional development consultant, a significant difference between age and years of teaching experiences was anticipated. Killion (as cited in Knight, 2009) reported similar findings regarding resistance to coaching as being more likely to come from veteran teachers. It was surprising that the age or length of experience results of this study did not correlate with Killion's (2009) findings. Participants shared similar perceptions pertaining to age or length of teaching experience and resistance to coaching in the interviews as discussed in the qualitative section of this chapter.

In regard to coaching satisfaction and the education level of respondents as measured by their highest degree held, there was no statistically significant difference. This was surprising as the researcher was curious to see if more education equated to a more positive perception toward learning in general, perhaps indicating a love for learning or identifying as a lifelong learner. On the other hand, the researcher was also interested in seeing if more education equated to having an already “all knowing” attitude. There was a very small difference between participants who held a bachelor’s ( $M = 117.20$ ) and master’s ( $M = 113.57$ ). Yet, there was an obvious difference in mean for the two participants who reported having a doctorate ( $M = 138.5$ ). This is another area that is worthy of further investigation and could be accomplished by gaining more data from teachers with doctorates.

When it came to analyzing the relationship between the total perception score (as measured by the sum of all answers) for coaching satisfaction and total scores for questions within each principle of andragogy, there was a statistically significant large positive correlation between coaching satisfaction and each principle of andragogy, which confirms the hypothesis that there is a correlation between positive perceptions of coaching and the principles of andragogy. There was an overall positive correlation between positive perceptions of coaching and the principles of andragogy, but perceptions toward the readiness to learn principle and the orientation to learning principle were less positive.

To further investigate the second research question, *According to teachers’ perceptions, which of the six principles of andragogy, when applied to coaching, are most impactful in supporting changes to classroom instruction?*, descriptive statistics were used to further compare the mean scores of total scores for questions within each principle of andragogy as well as the

mean percentage of participants who agreed or strongly agreed for the questions in each category (see Table 6).

The principles with the highest satisfaction levels with a mean greater than three were need to know, learners' experience, motivation, and learners' self-concept, respectively. The need to know principle achieved the highest rating suggesting that establishing a rationale for coaching is important to teachers. As stated in the literature, adults learn better when both a context and purpose are established (Taylor & Kroth, 2003). Additionally, teachers seem to see the benefits of coaching.

This was followed by the principle of the learners' experience, which had the same mean response as the need to know principle ( $M = 3.36$ ), but with a slightly smaller percentage of those who agreed or strongly agreed (94.27 % and 93.55%, respectively). This suggests that the acknowledgement and respect of teachers' prior experiences and knowledge is important. Due to their vast experiences, adult learners have valuable resources to bring into the learning environment and, their experiences need to be considered. Under this principle, adults need to apply their existing knowledge and life experience to new learning opportunities (Fidishun, 2000).

Motivation showed the next highest level of satisfaction ( $M = 3.13$ ; 89.35%) indicating that teachers are motivated by their coaching experience. While motivation showed a high level of satisfaction, to further address the hypothesis that the principles of andragogy positively impact teacher motivation to implement change in the classroom, additional data analysis was conducted on the individual questions pertaining to the principle of motivation (see Table 7).

Three of the six survey items on motivation helped to address this hypothesis:

1. Coaching motivates me to try new things in my teaching practice.

2. The knowledge I gain from coaching can immediately be applied in my work.
3. Coaching motivates me to give my best effort at work.

Ninety-four percent of participants reported that coaching motivates them to try new things in their teaching practice; 92.2% indicated that the knowledge they gain from coaching could immediately be applied to their work; and 84.5% said that coaching motivates them to give their best effort at work. These results suggest that coaching motivates teachers.

Self-concept was the last principle to maintain a mean above three ( $M = 3.01$ ), but had a lower percentage of participants who agreed or strongly agreed (70.8%), indicating that having control, choice, and an element of self-directedness is being applied to some coaching experiences, but not consistently. More insight into this principle could be achieved by further analyzing correlations to age, years of teaching experience, and degrees held.

Readiness to learn and orientation to learning were the two principles that did not achieve a mean above three ( $M = 2.87$ ;  $2.96$ , respectively). Yet, orientation to learning had a notably larger percentage of participants who agreed or strongly agreed (84.1%) than the readiness to learn (70.58%). Adult learners are ready to engage in learning when they find the learning necessary to maintain and enhance their lives (Gould, 2010). These results reveal that teachers perceived that not enough was done ahead of time to prepare them for the learning that would take place through their coaching activities. Perhaps this lack of preparation causes feelings that coaching is being imposed on teachers. This would have an impact on the orientation to learning as well being that “adults have a self-concept of being responsible for their own decisions...” (Knowles et al., 1998, p. 65). Further, adults are driven by an orientation to learning that is problem-centered with a sense that the new knowledge being presented will help them perform a task or solve a real-life problem (Taylor & Kroth, 2009). This also includes a collaborative

orientation to learning (St. Clair, 2002), indicating that there was a perceived lack of flexibility in the coaching exchanges reported by participants.

Nonetheless, the overall survey results provide positive evidence that coaching is an effective form of support for implementing new learning in the classroom as part of their professional development. These findings are consistent with the body of literature on instructional coaching.

### **Qualitative**

The responses from the open-ended survey question resulted in a very large data set with many underlying themes. To help manage this sizeable data set, a frequency of key words was conducted using Text Fixer. The word “support” occurred the most frequently. Therefore, in reading and memoing the responses through the coding process, the researcher focused on what kind of support teachers reported, and a deeper theme was uncovered: coaching is meant to improve instruction. All of the beliefs that were shared are presented in Figure 8. Some of the various descriptors used in reference to improved instruction included, “fine-tune my instruction,” “enhance my teaching,” “work out the kinks in my instruction,” “be a better teacher,” “better their practice,” and “hone my craft.”

The themes from the open-ended survey item were also infused into the responses from the interview questions as discussed below. The first interview question asked, *Which aspects of coaching do you find to be the most beneficial to you in trying out new things in your classroom and why?* The information participants shared showed several themes that addressed the first research question, *What aspects of instructional coaching, when included in professional development models, most support implementation of change in the classroom from the teachers’ perception?* (see Figure 10).



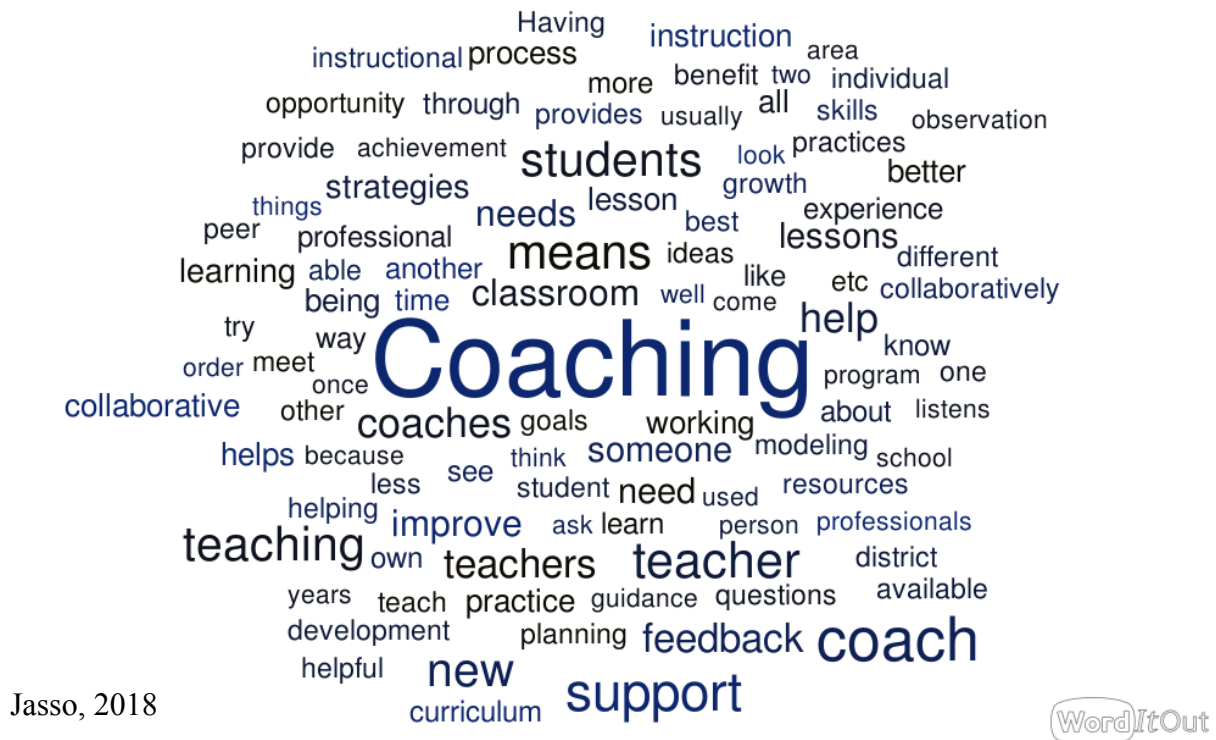
One theme that emerged referred to support with the actual implementation of strategies or curriculum in the classroom through coaching activities. The coaching activities that were mentioned across participants included planning, modeling, co-teaching, and being observed with feedback. Similar to the results gained from the survey, participants expressed the value of having a coach assist, model, and observe delivery, including co-taught lessons. It was interesting that planning scored comparatively lower as a coaching activity on the quantitative survey data, but that it recurred throughout the qualitative data. For example, Participant 1 stated, “I think a coaching cycle is more beneficial, being able to work one on one with my instructional coach as far as how to implement new strategies that support our EL students.”

Similarly, in the open-ended question responses, participants referred to how coaching helps to improve instruction. One participant wrote about how coaching assisted with the opportunity to, “fine tune my instruction.” Another participant described the value of being observed while implementing new strategies and receiving feedback on “what can improve or enhance my teaching.”

The first research question was also addressed during the interviews in describing the perfect coach. Participants continued to mention having a coach who helps with the actual implementation of strategies or curriculum in the classroom through various coaching activities, such as someone who “can help you teach or plan a lesson together.” Two additional themes (as shown in Figure 11) emerged, which included coaches who had a consistent, non-administrative presence in classrooms, which is consistent with Reeves’ (2009) recommendation on the importance of distinguishing the role of the coach as one that is separate from supervision and evaluation. The beauty about coaching is that in its truest form, coaches and teachers are equal partners (Knight & Cornett, 2009). Coaches should not be in a position to give directives.

One participant stated, “they don’t act like they’re admin, so they don’t boss you around.” Similarly, “it’s not just something that, ‘oh by the way you’re going to try this on’ and never see it again or retouch it again. So someone is consistent.” Another expressed, “I want a coach who is teacher friendly, not administration friendly.” The theme of non-administrative coaching also emerged in the open-ended survey response. One respondent stated, “Working with my coach helps me be more self-reflective in my instructional practices instead of feeling like my administrator is in charge of me.”

Several more descriptive words and phrases were voiced when describing the perfect coach in the interviews as well as the open-ended survey response. These words are captured in the word cloud displayed in Figure 19. The word cloud was generated using Word It Out (2018), an online service that transforms text into word clouds. Settings were applied to include the 100 most frequently occurring words, with a minimum frequency of 4. Size settings were also applied so that the most frequently occurring words appear the largest and the least occurring words display the smallest.



*Figure 19.* The Perfect Coach. This word cloud displays the most frequently used words to describe the perfect coach.

When reflecting on how having follow-up coaching support when trying out new learning in the classroom compares to not having it, comments on coaching activities persisted. Additionally, the theme of the importance of follow-up materialized as well and the need to do it right away.

If we get these trainings and they don't follow up, a lot of the things fall through the loop. A lot of the strategies that you know benefit our students are not being done correctly or they're just forgotten. So it's important that our coaches revisit that with us regularly and come in to observe. In the past, it's like do it one year and then the next year it falls through because they haven't really revisited it. So it's very important that they come back. (Participant 1)

Participants also commented on the hands-on engagement coaching brings to the learning situation unlike traditional “training, where sometimes they don’t get all of it or take it all in” (Participant 2). Recommendations outlined in the professional learning standards (Killon & Crow, 2011) include learning designs that engage adult learners in applying their learning as opposed to a surface-level presentation of new ideas. This offered additional insight into the first research question.

Resistance to coaching is an obvious problem realized by those in the field, yet there seems to be a hesitation to address this issue in the literature. In the researchers past experiences as a district coach, resistance typically came from the imposition of whatever new methods teachers were being asked to incorporate into their instruction. To inform this area of the field and contribute to the research, participants were asked to share their perceptions on this phenomenon. In doing so however, interestingly, none of the participants referred to themselves or spoke of their own resistance to coaching. Instead, they shared examples of their colleagues demonstrating resistance. The analysis of their responses came down to a few very clear themes, which were a resistance to change, a resistance to extra work, and a self-concept of already knowing. “They think they know it all,” one respondent stated. Another respondent brought in the factor of teachers’ experience, “older teachers have a harder time being critiqued because they’ve been doing it for so long. They’ve been doing this for so many years they don’t need somebody.”

One respondent really focused on the issues of extra work and a resistance of change they’ve observed.

They’re set in their ways. They don’t want extra work. Because I’ve had teachers say that, ‘I don’t want to do the extra work because it’s too much for me’. And I don’t think

they like the coaches because they don't want them to tell them to do something differently, and it's change. I see a lot of that. Teachers don't want to change. So that's why they don't want coaches" (Participant 3)

The fifth interview question moved on to ask participants to describe one of their most successful coaching experiences. And then what made it so successful? Insight into the first research question continued to develop. Each participant had a different situation to share, yet common themes emerged including experiences that were collaborative, facilitative, and reflective partnership.

Participant 1 stated, "it was just amazing to me how collaborative the work was and how much coaching and support that we get from our coaches." Similarly, Participant 5 expressed, "we had a partner-teaching situation." And Participant 2 shared, "they were facilitating PD work...and facilitating the conversation about, 'how did it go'."

Participants also described the coaching activities within a coaching cycle while sharing their stories of successful coaching experiences. For example, Participant 4 reflected on being able to observe their coach demonstrating a strategy in the classroom. "As I was observing [the coach] it just made me, reminded me, of things I should do that maybe I don't do enough." Participant 5 discussed several coaching activities. "As far as coaching, we did it all. [The coach] would model, but then would plan with me first and tell me what the kids were going to do. And then we talked after. Then [the coach] would come in and watch me and take notes and we would talk."

In contrast to coaching situations that went well, the sixth interview question asked, *Have you ever experienced a coaching situation that did not go well? What do you think made it unsuccessful?* Each participant had a very different story to tell.

Participant 1 told about an experience where they were actually in a coaching role in supporting a student teacher.

One of them if I can reflect, doesn't take constructive criticism well. So I have to acknowledge a personality that is a little more emotional about constructive feedback. So I think personalities come into gear and I have to understand that maybe letting them know this is something that you can improve on but at the same time being understanding of emotional needs. (Participant 1)

This response touches on the important aspect of relationships and balancing different personality types in coaching as described by Kee et al. (2010). Coaching is a leadership role that is based on building relationships in supporting professional growth. Similarly, the What Works Clearinghouse (2008) study reported trust, relationships with the coach, and the ability to communicate effectively about results as the most valued aspects of coaching.

The theme of follow through reemerged when Participant 2 shared a situation in which they were disappointed by a lack of follow through. "The coach never came and watched me do it and use it so that we could have that reflective conversation and so it was disappointing. That created a sense of, 'why am I going to bother?' I'm not going to ask for anything because there wasn't follow through."

A very similar sentiment was expressed in one of the open-ended survey responses as well. "It came towards the end of the year and there was no follow through. Promises to do more were not delivered. The school's response to coaching was very negative to hostile because of this.

Clearly, follow-through is an important factor for coaching to be seen as a positive element. Follow-through is a new theme that had not yet been discovered in the review of the literature.

Participant 3 shared their general frustration with their current coaching situation.

“I feel like I’m bossy to [the coach]. I’ll say what I need, and they get me whatever I need, but I feel like they should be doing it for me. I feel a coach should be there and come to me. It’s frustrating because it’s not beneficial for all my students. There are no check-ins. I don’t know if the coach is on the campus. I’m not informed of the days, or times. The coach doesn’t pop in unless I ask. If they watch a lesson, it’s very brief opposed to taking notes or offering feedback. Give me feedback! Give me an idea! If you have a different idea than I do, or if you see something that another teacher is doing, please tell me. I’m open to suggestions. Communication and not reaching out is an issue. I think that the coach doesn’t feel confident enough to or have enough knowledge to be able to offer suggestions.” (Participant 3)

Although their response focused on several things, this respondent really emphasized their frustration through the tone of their voice. This anecdote provides great insight into what coaches may otherwise be completely unaware of, something of critical consideration for those in a coaching role. This speaks to the delicate balance between providing teachers with choice versus coaching being imposed on teachers. Complete autonomy and a hands-off approach is clearly not the answer. Recommendations for addressing this phenomenon are addressed later on in this chapter.

Participant 4 did not reflect on an experience of their own, but talked about a colleague’s experience where they actually perceived the teacher to be the cause of the unsuccessful

coaching situation, not the coach. That teacher was “negative to anything new and likes to blame kids instead of taking accountability.”

Finally, Participant 5 talked about how they feel like [they are] “losing out on something because the coach thinks maybe [they] don’t need it”. Similar to Participant 3, they also talked about the coach not reaching out and feeling like they should not have to be the one to request services.

I could ask, but I don’t want to. I feel like it’s more work for me to have to ask because I have to think about it, the coaching. I really don’t want to spend my time with that. The coach should reach out. The partnership is not going well.” (Participant 5)

Interestingly, Participant 2 had many themes that were not addressed in the coding process. Yet, they offer a relevant perspective. Of all of the interview participants, this respondent was the eldest and had the most years of teaching experience. The responses from this participant were not more positive or negative than the other respondents. They were just different. One important idea shared by this participant included a systems approach where the coach was “...guiding with a greater vision that involved something we are moving towards as a whole school.” Also, “somebody who is looking at the global picture, like how to really help the school.” These comments stood out in that they coincide with Fullan’s (2010) research on systems-wide approaches to school improvement.

Due to the open-ended nature of the journals, it was not possible to only build upon the themes that emerged from the open-ended survey response and interviews, but to uncover other themes that emerged as well. Further, the two participants who participated in the month-long journaling activity had two very contrasting experiences. For example, in responding to the prompt *what worked well or was beneficial to your teaching?* Participant A responded n/a to all



five of their entries. In contrast, this participant provided input for suggestions that could have improved each exchange for each of their entries. On the other hand, Participant B provided input for each of their three journal entries. This is consistent with the overall tone expressed throughout the journal entries. Participant B seems to have had more positive coaching experiences in general in comparison to Participant A, who expressed some struggle with communicating with the coach. These contrasting experiences captured by the two participants through the journaling activity allude to inconsistencies in coaching services being offered among districts.

*It's [the coach's] lack of communication that makes me have to bug them. I feel that I should not be requesting the information, that my coach should be proactive with me.*

Conversely, in a similar situation Participant B suggested,

*I would still like them to come into my classroom. They could have offered. But I also know that all I need to do is ask them to come to they'll do it.*

Participant B also wrote a journal entry about a chance encounter with the coach in the lounge. This demonstrates that the coach has a visible present on the school campus. The importance of coaches being present and visible was a theme that emerged throughout the interviews too.

### **Implications for Practice**

In-service professional development in the field of education is guided by educational policy. However, policy alone does not ensure effectiveness. While there are policies in place, they are not always practiced. Although much of the policy-making around education for the last two decades, at both the national and state level, has focused directly on high-quality teaching and improving instruction, there exists a “disconnect between policy and what happens in the

classroom” (Woulfin, 2014, p. 2). A recurring characteristic of effective professional development throughout the literature includes sustained teacher support with implementing research-based strategies in the classroom (Gulamhussein, 2013) through ongoing modeling and coaching (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 2011). In fact, the professional development organization in which the researcher is employed requires partner school districts to commit to providing teacher support in their implementation plan knowing that sustainability is unlikely without the support (E.L. Achieve, 2018).

If districts are to invest in any professional development initiative, they cannot afford not to invest in coaches. To invest in professional learning where teachers are expected to change their practice, but not provide them with practical support is fiscally irresponsible. Professional development is typically a costly investment. The chances of teacher professional development actually impacting student achievement without support are unlikely. This puts districts at risk of unintentionally making irresponsible investments in teacher professional development paid for by funding from taxpayer dollars. Public schools are not only accountable to student achievement, but also to fiscal responsibility.

Therefore, districts cannot hire coaches without any structured plans for how the coaching will be carried out to support teachers in sustaining initiatives invested in. Coaching protocols need to be well developed and implemented. According to Fullan (2010), this should include a systems-wide plan for coaches’ roles and responsibilities, as well as for teacher responsibilities for utilizing coaching service. Within this plan, teachers should have choice in what coaching activities they engage in to support the implementation of their learning. As Knight and Cornett (2009) state, “an instructional coach’s goal is to meet teachers where they currently are in their practice and offer choices for learning” (p. 5). However, whether or not to

engage in coaching support should not be optional. One recommendation is to include communication about coaching services to teachers in actual professional development workshops. For purposes of accountability, a district-level administrator should share this information. Furthermore, the option for teachers to sign up for coaching services prior to leaving a workshop ought to be considered. For example, Participant 4 shared in their interview that it would be a great thing to be offered coaching support in a professional development workshop rather than having to seek out help after things become challenging. This proactive approach would not only support teachers, but also support coaches in being able to their work.

In terms of creating a systems-wide coaching plan, the results from this study show promising results for approaching coaching from an andragogical perspective, something that had yet to be presented in the literature. The findings from this research suggest that andragogy can serve as a worthy framework to consider in creating coaching plans that explore adult learning in the context of effective professional development support for teachers. Figure 20 displays some recommended questions for districts to consider in attending to each of the principles of andragogy.

Principle of Andragogy	Questions to Consider
Need to Know	What is the purpose of the professional development? What is the purpose for coaches supporting the initiative? How will this be articulated to teachers?
Readiness to Learn	How is coaching going to immediately and positively impact their instruction?
Self-concept	What choices will teachers have? What is non-negotiable? When and how will teachers sign up for coaching services?
Experience	How will you respect various levels of teacher experience? What prior knowledge do teachers have that can serve as a foundation for new learning?
Orientation to learning	How will you advertise coaching as a proactive approach to problem solving around the challenges of implementing something new in the classroom? How will you communicate that coaching is an equal partnership that is collaborative in nature? What will be done to support coaches in maintaining these relationships?
Motivation	What's in it for teachers?

*Figure 20.*

Recommended questions for districts to consider in attending to each principle of andragogy. This figure displays questions to support districts in addressing the principles of andragogy when planning for systems-wide coaching.

Adults are motivated to learn when they perceive that the new knowledge being presented will help them perform a task or solve a real-life problem (Taylor & Kroth, 2009). All of the questions in the above Figure actually encompass the principle of motivation.

Developing strong coaching plans and protocols can also address the issue of resistance to coaching whether by teachers, or perhaps a school board that does not support funding for coaches. The findings of this study can provide valuable guidance for districts engaging in this work.

### **Recommendations for Further Research**

Based on the findings of this investigation, there are several opportunities to extend the research, including:

1. The impact coaching has on student achievement.
2. An examination of individual districts' coaching systems.
3. A closer inspection of age categories and coaching satisfaction.
4. A deeper review of coaching satisfaction from doctorates.
5. An in depth analysis to condense open-ended descriptions defining coaching.

Studying student achievement was beyond the scope of this study, but additional studies can begin to investigate the relationship between teachers who receive coaching and their students' achievement. The National Reading Technical Assistance Center made a similar recommendation in their 2010 study on the effectiveness of K-3 literacy coaches. To begin with, it is worthwhile to investigate if teachers who receive coaching support continue to implement coached strategies in the classroom more so than those who do not have coaching support.

For example, Dutro and Thelander (2017) released an executive summary of a study that examined the relationship between English learner achievement and E.L. Achieve's capacity-building professional development model. In conducting this study, E.L. Achieve created a rigor index that measured the level of engagement of their partner districts. The study then looked at student achievement for five districts in California. What the study revealed was that there was a positive correlation between a district's rigor index and the acceleration of English learners' achievement in English Language Arts.

The factors included in the rigor index were:

1. Students received a full year of curriculum (6 *Systematic ELD* Units).
2. A sufficient number of teachers were trained in *Systematic ELD* to serve the district's English learner population.
3. Attendance of E.L. Achieve's annual symposia for continuous learning.

4. Two-year attendance of E.L. Achieve's annual leadership seminar for continuous support.
5. Administrator training days.
6. A district maintained certified leadership team large enough to support quality implementation.
7. Number of years the district had been implementing *Systematic ELD*.
8. E.L. Achieve's qualitative assessment of overall district engagement.

The above study could be expanded to include coaching as a factor in the rigor index. This could be easily accomplished by simply adding coaching support to the rigor index, indicating whether or not each district had some form of coaching support. More substantially, a separate coaching rigor index could be created to examine if there is a correlation between specific coaching systems and English learner achievement. Being that E.L. Achieve employs the researcher, the above research opportunities are feasible.

Although this study provided the valuable opportunity to capture a broad range of teachers' perceptions on coaching that were not limited to a single district's specific approach to coaching it would be worthwhile for individual districts to replicate this study to reflect on and inform their particular coaching systems. Furthermore, a smaller scale study within a single district that examines the correlation between coaching and student achievement is likely more achievable.

Further research opportunities also exist in the area of age and coaching satisfaction. Although there was not a significant difference in coaching satisfaction between age groups, there was a mentionable difference in the mean for the 60+ age group, as compared to all other age groups. However, there were only three respondents in this age category, which is not a

strong representation of this age population. Because interview participants referred to teacher age when discussing resistance to coaching, this is something worthy of further investigation. One solution would be to alter the survey design so that age categories are ranges of five years instead of ten.

There was also no significant difference in coaching satisfaction between degrees held by participants. Yet, there was an obvious difference in the mean for the two participants who reported having a Doctorate. This is another area that could benefit from further investigation that could be accomplished by gaining more data from doctorates. Redistributing the PCS to teachers who hold Doctorate degrees and combining the additional results with the existing results and reanalyzing them could easily accomplish this.

There was a very small positive correlation between coaching satisfaction and years of teaching experience, but it was not statistically significant. As this was an open-ended option on the survey, a wide range of specific years of teaching experience was reported. A future recommendation would be to change this feature on the PCS to a selected response with a range of years for teaching experience so as to analyze the data more deeply. As mentioned with age, in the interviews, respondents referred to “old” versus “new” teachers in the question pertaining to resistance to coaching. Therefore, the factor of years of experience would benefit from a deeper investigation. Based on insights gained from the categories for age range, it is recommended that years of teaching experience be examined in ranges of five years.

Additionally, in summarizing the themes from the two participants who documented their coaching experiences in the journaling activity (see Figure 17 and Figure 18) two very different experiences were captured. This suggests that there are likely inconsistencies in coaching effectiveness between one district and another. In terms of the implications for practice that

were discussed in the previous section, districts need to offer support in defining and communicating coaching roles to teachers. The findings from this study can help inform districts in this area.

Finally, 81 participants responded to the open-ended survey defining/describing what coaching means to them, which resulted in a very large data set with many emerging themes that went beyond the parameters of this study. It would be worthwhile to conduct a deeper analysis of these responses. Opportunities exist to summarize of these findings to be reported in future publication.

### **Conclusions**

The findings of this study expand on the work of previous researchers in the areas of coaching as a form of teacher professional development and andragogy as a theory of adult learning, for the first time analyzing the two areas together. This investigation revealed that teachers who receive instructional coaching support following professional development perceived coaching to have a positive impact in supporting them in implementing change in the classroom. This is in alignment with what has previously been presented in the literature. For example, in a study on the effectiveness of literacy coaches the National Reading Technical Assistance Center (2010) reported, “most educators agree that a qualified, experienced coach offers value-added support to teachers... and can improve teachers’ skillful delivery of instruction” (p. 37). Teacher perceptions were statistically consistent across gender, age, years of teaching experience, and degrees held.

A positive correlation between coaching satisfaction and the principles of andragogy was unveiled as well. Teacher perceptions revealed that the principles of andragogy positively impact teacher motivation to implement change in the classroom, which was examined more



deeply by focusing in on the results from the principle of motivation specifically. Although the literature had yet to present a correlation between andragogy and teacher professional development, the positive correlation was not surprising. As adult learners, it makes sense that there would be some common themes that are presented in the literature on teacher professional development and the literature on andragogy.

This brings forth new and exciting considerations to the design and delivery of teacher professional development. As Feuer and Gerber (1988) stated three decades ago, andragogy provides “a formal, theory-based body of knowledge to be nurtured and cultivated” for both educators and trainers of adults (p. 32). The results of this study shed light on andragogy as a theoretical framework for informing coaching practices.

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## APPENDIX A

### Perceptions of Coaching Survey (PCS)

#### **Introduction to the Study**

The study in which you are being asked to participate is designed to investigate teacher perceptions of effective instructional coaching practices in professional development support. This study is being conducted by Laura Jasso under the supervision of Dr. Stephanie Hartzell, Assistant Professor and Dissertation Chair, Concordia University, Irvine, School of Education. This study has been approved by the Institutional Review Board, Concordia University Irvine, in Irvine, CA.

#### **Definitions**

In teacher professional development, a coach is defined as a teacher partner who supports the implementation of research-based instructional practices in the classroom. (Knight, 2009) This may include providing support through lesson demonstrations, observations with feedback, collaborative planning, co-teaching, conversations with teachers as they implement new strategies and knowledge (Croft, et al., 2010).

#### **Participation, Confidentiality, and Anonymity**

Your participation is completely voluntary. Refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss and you may discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits.

This survey should take approximately 15 minutes to complete.

Confidentiality of your responses and as a participant in this study will remain secure. Faculty and administrators from your workplace will not have access to your survey. The researcher will not identify you by name in any reports using information obtained from this survey. Findings will be reported as general themes and individual identities will not be reported. Approximately

100 participants will be completing this survey. Your identity will not be attached to your survey responses on Survey Monkey. If you choose to provide your contact information for follow-up contact from the researcher for future data collection, only the researcher will have access to your information and it will only be used for contact purposes. The Survey Monkey account in which this survey is being completed is password protected.

You may become fatigued by the task of completing the survey. If you should become fatigued, you may wish to pause and complete the survey at a later time. No other foreseeable risks to your participation in this survey research are anticipated. A potential benefit as a byproduct of completing this survey is that you become more aware of, or reflective of your coaching experiences.

For answers to pertinent questions about the research and research subjects' rights, or in the event of a research-related injury to the subject please contact Dr. Stephanie Hartzell, Assistant Professor and Dissertation Chair at (949) 214-3540, or [Stephanie.Hartzell@cui.edu](mailto:Stephanie.Hartzell@cui.edu) .

Results can be obtained after the completion of the study by contacting the researcher at [Laura.Jasso@eagles.cui.edu](mailto:Laura.Jasso@eagles.cui.edu)

### Screening Questions

1) I have read and understand the explanation provided above. I have had all my questions answered to my satisfaction, and I voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

Yes No

2) Do the grades you primarily teach fall within Kindergarten through Grade 6?

Yes No

3) Does your district have coaches for professional development support?

Yes No

4) Do you have access to a coach to support you in your professional development?

Yes No

The next statements pertain to teachers' coaching experiences in their professional development.

Please respond to each question based on your own coaching experiences and professional development. Responses are based on a 4 point scale with:

1= Strongly Disagree; 2= Disagree; 3= Agree; 4= Strongly Agree

5) Coaching is helpful in implementing new strategies in my classroom.	1	2	3	4
6) I find it helpful when a coach models a lesson or strategy for me in my classroom with my students.	1	2	3	4
7) It's helpful when my coach provides feedback after watching me teach a lesson.	1	2	3	4
8) My coach helps me plan for instruction.	1	2	3	4
9) A coach should help with lesson preparation (copies, creating charts, etc.).	1	2	3	4
10) Being able to watch my colleagues model a lesson/strategy is beneficial to my teaching.	1	2	3	4

11) I am an active partner in my coaching experiences.	1	2	3	4
12) I understand the value of participating in professional development coaching activities.	1	2	3	4
13) I know why coaching is beneficial to me professionally	1	2	3	4
14) I feel that I have control over my learning in coaching.	1	2	3	4
15) Coaching motivates me to try new things in my practice.	1	2	3	4
16) As my interactions with my coach progress, I feel less dependent on them when implementing new things in my classroom.	1	2	3	4
17) Coaching has been just what I needed given the changes in my work life.	1	2	3	4
18) During my coaching experiences, my coach shows respect for me.	1	2	3	4
19) My life and work experiences are respected when working with a coach.	1	2	3	4
20) I've had important life/work issues that were ignored in my coaching experiences.	1	2	3	4
21) I feel better able to implement strategies in the classroom due to coaching support.	1	2	3	4
22) I feel energized about my teaching by being involved in coaching.	1	2	3	4
23) My professional learning needs have been met through my coaching experiences.	1	2	3	4
24) The knowledge I gain from coaching can be immediately applied in my work.	1	2	3	4
25) Coaching taps in to my inner drive to learn new things.	1	2	3	4

26) Coaching motivates me to give my best effort at work.	1	2	3	4
27) I feel that coaching makes a positive difference in my instruction	1	2	3	4
28) My past coaching experiences have motivated me to continue working with a coach.	1	2	3	4
29) The purpose of specific coaching activities has been made clear to me.	1	2	3	4
30) Sufficient steps are taken to prepare me for the coaching process.	1	2	3	4
31) Coaches have adequately worked with me on identifying my specific professional learning goals.	1	2	3	4
32) My coaching experiences can best be described as collaborative.	1	2	3	4
33) I have flexibility in designing my coaching activities.	1	2	3	4
34) The coaching activities that I have experienced have been collaboratively designed.	1	2	3	4
35) Coaches have been open to changing the design of my coaching experience based on my feedback.	1	2	3	4
36) I set the pace of the coaching activities I engage in, not the coach.	1	2	3	4
37) I wish more had been done to prepare me for the coaching methods used.	1	2	3	4
38) My coach solicits my feedback regarding my progress.	1	2	3	4

39) On a scale of 1 to 10, 1 being not satisfied at all, 10 being extremely satisfied, how satisfied are you with the coaching services you receive?

**1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10**

40) Briefly define/describe what coaching means to you in one paragraph or less.

## Participant Information

This information will only be used to report demographic trends, and your identity will remain confidential throughout the duration and publication of this study.

41) Gender: Male                  Female

42) Years of Teaching Experience: \_\_\_\_\_

43) Age Range:

20-29;

30-39;

40-49;

50-59;

60-69;

70-79;

80-89;

90+

44) Degree's and Credentials Held (Select all that apply):

Bachelor's Degree

Master's Degree

Doctoral Degree (Ph.D. or Ed.D.)

Multiple Subject Teaching Credential

Single Subject Teaching Credential

Administrated Credential

Specialist Credential/Certificate

Other (please specify):

45) Grade level(s) currently teaching:

PreK

K-2<sup>nd</sup>

3-5<sup>th</sup>

6-8<sup>th</sup>

9-12<sup>th</sup>

46) Are you interested in participating in this study further via a 20-30 minute interview about your coaching experiences? If so, please provide your contact information below (name, phone number, email, and school district). You will receive a \$10 gift card as compensation for participating in and completing the interview.

You have completed the survey. Thank you for participating in this study!



## APPENDIX B:

### Telephone Interview Protocol

#### **Part I. Opening Statement**

This interview aims to investigate the aspects and approaches of instructional coaching teachers find to be the most supportive in implementing change in the classroom as a component of their professional learning development. The data gained from this interview will be used in conjunction with other data sources in exploring the aspects of coaching that are most effective in teacher support. Confidentiality of your responses is assured. Findings will be reported as general themes and individual identities will remain anonymous.

This interview will take approximately 30 minutes. You have the option to pause or discontinue the interview at anytime. You are encouraged to answer freely and to provide specific examples. If any questions are unclear, please ask for clarification. If you are not comfortable answering any questions, you may decline to answer.

An audio recording of this interview will be captured on a password-protected iPhone 6. Your recording will only be used for the purposes of this study. Your name will not be identified in any part of the interview. Your recording will be transcribed and studied by the researcher. Transcriptions will be housed in the researcher's password protected Google Drive account. Your audio recording will be destroyed at the completion of this study or at anytime you request. You have the option to withdraw from the study at any time.

#### **Part II. Verbal Informed Consent**

- 1) Do you agree to this interview being audio recorded?
- 2) May the audio recording of this interview be studied by the researcher for use in the research project exploring the aspects of coaching that are most effective in teacher support?

- 3) May the researcher transcribe the audio recording of this interview?

**Part III. Interview Questions**

- 7) Which aspects of coaching do you find to be the most beneficial to you in trying out new things in your classroom and why?
- 8) If you could create the perfect coach, describe that person.
- 9) Thinking about your professional development experiences:
- a. How does having follow-up coaching support compare to not having it when it comes to actually trying out your new learning in your classroom?
  - b. Can you think of any specific examples?
- 10) Sometimes teachers are resistant to coaching. Why do you think this is?
- 11) Describe one of your most successful coaching experiences. What made it so successful?
- 12) Have you ever experienced a coaching situation that did not go well? What do you think made it unsuccessful?
- 13) Are you interested in participating in a month-long journaling activity in which you'll record and reflect on any coaching interactions you engage in over the course of that month? A \$20 gift card will be provided to compensate your time.

APPENDIX C:  
Journaling Protocol

**I. Email Message**

Dear Educator,

Thank you for participating in this study that aims to investigate the aspects and approaches of instructional coaching teachers find to be the most supportive in implementing change in the classroom as a component of their professional learning development. Here is a link to a password protected Google Drive document to record your journals: (links will be inserted individually).

The data gained from journal entries will be used in conjunction with other data sources in exploring the aspects of coaching that are most effective in teacher support. Confidentiality of your responses is assured. Findings will be reported as general themes and individual identities will remain anonymous.

This activity will last for one month. You have the option to pause or discontinue your journal at anytime. You are encouraged to answer freely and to provide specific examples. Your journal will be maintained in a password protected Google Drive account. Your journals will be destroyed at the completion of this study or at anytime you request. You have the option to withdraw from the study at any time.

If you agree, please copy and paste the following statement in a reply to this email:

*“I agree to my journal entries being used in the research project exploring the aspects of coaching that are most effective in teacher support”.*

## **II. Protocol**

This journal is an open-ended platform for you to freely reflect upon your coaching exchanges over a four-week period. Please record the date of each journal entry and reference the date of the coaching exchange and attempt to address the following:

- Form of coaching that took place (i.e., training, lesson demo, team teach, observation, communication)
- What worked well or was beneficial to your teaching practice?
- What suggestions do you have that could have improved the exchange?