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AN ANALYSIS OF TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF
THE CLASSROOM WALKTHROUGH

By

Jennifer Jay Warren

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FOR THE
DOCTOR'S DEGREE IN EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

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DISSERTATION

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ABSTRACT

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The purpose of this study was to analyze teachers' perceptions of classroom walkthrough observations to determine if teachers perceived walkthrough feedback to be beneficial in increasing their effectiveness. Walkthroughs are one of the multiple measures used in the teacher appraisal process to help give a complete picture of a teacher's effectiveness. Further, this study sought to ascertain if teachers utilize walkthrough feedback to help inform their professional development decisions and or improve their classroom instruction. Teachers' perceptions were analyzed through survey questions as part of a larger survey project that sought to study many aspects of walkthrough practices and walkthrough feedback.

This study included a sample of 397 elementary, middle, and high school teachers across the state of Texas who participated in the walkthrough survey underlying this study. The survey collected individual demographic data on the teachers themselves, walkthrough demographic data for the campus to which the teacher was assigned, as well as feedback demographic data.

Analysis of the responses revealed that beginning teachers who have $1-4$ years of teaching experience found walkthrough feedback to be helpful in increasing their effectiveness as a teacher. The number of walkthroughs that teachers received during the

school year was not perceived as being helpful in increasing their teacher effectiveness. Teachers perceived feedback from classroom walkthroughs to be somewhat helpful in providing input for professional development and in improving their classroom instruction.

The results of this study are intended to be beneficial in assisting districts, administrators, and policymakers in deciding on classroom walkthrough protocols and procedures in order to impact teacher effectiveness to improve overall instruction.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

As accountability for student achievement continues to increase, educational reform movements over the past several decades have focused on teacher effectiveness. The focus on continually increasing student achievement has created an increased pressure in school districts across America in regards to accountability (Rossi, 2007). Both the state and federal levels are demanding that schools ensure that students are meeting standards. Hence, the desire for renewing education continues to be at the forefront of the minds of policymakers, administrators, teachers, and parents throughout the United States (Glickman, Gordon, and Ross-Gordon, 2004). As schools continue to adapt to accountability measures, one area of focus is the improvement of teaching and learning in each classroom to ensure all students are in the presence of an effective teacher.

Teacher effectiveness can be measured by any number of teacher appraisal systems, such as the Teacher Advancement Program (TAP), the Framework for Teaching (FFT) Texas' approved Professional Development and Appraisal System (PDAS), and other locally adopted models. Teacher evaluation reform has become a controversial topic as Texas districts test new teacher evaluation systems for a different state model (Texas Association of School Boards [TASB], 2012). Lauded as an effective instructional tool to help gather classroom data on instructional practices (David, 2007/2008), classroom

walkthroughs have become an indispensable part of school culture. However, there is little empirical evidence concerning the efficacy of classroom walkthroughs, although walkthroughs are common practice in nearly all school districts.

Duffett, Farkas, Rotherham, and Silva (2008) reported although the walkthrough, part of the teacher evaluation process, is the most used technique to assess teacher quality during formal evaluation it is not doing the job. In fact, only 26% of teachers reported that their own most recent formal evaluation was "useful and effective." Forty-one percent stated it was "just a formality," while another 32% said, at best, it was "well-intentioned but not particularly helpful" to their teaching practice (Duffett, Farkas, Rotherham, & Silva, 2008).

A study by Rothberg and Fenner (1991) surveyed 200 teachers from the central Florida area to identify teachers' perceptions concerning observation and assessment. Rothberg and Fenner (1991) wished to discover which aspects about the current practices teachers liked, which they disliked, and what teachers would like changed or improved. One-half of the respondents were never observed except for a formal assessment (Rothberg & Fenner, 1991). Teachers reported 64% of the walkthroughs were less than 30 minutes in length, 52% only had one walkthrough per year, and two out of three never had a post-conference. Furthermore, 88% wanted to observe other classrooms, 33% said they needed more informal evaluations, and 28% wanted a pre- and post- conference.

In a RAND Corporation study, middle school teachers reported that observations were superficial and not relevant. Administrators who participated in walkthroughs as

observers reported the process as more valuable than the teachers who were observed. Results did not find conclusive evidence that walkthroughs influenced teacher practice (Marsh et al., 2005). Research studies, excluding the Marsh et al. (2005) study, have limited inclusion of teachers to a small percentage of teaching staffs in the participating schools; therefore teachers' perspectives have not been fully explored. This study will attempt to begin to close the information gap regarding teachers' perceptions of classroom walkthroughs.

Problem Statement

Classroom walkthroughs are one of the multiple measures used in the teacher appraisal process to help give a complete picture of a teacher's effectiveness. Walkthroughs have been a staple of most districts and schools for many years (Kachur, Stout, & Edwards, 2010). Throughout the years, there have been numerous walkthrough models developed and a plethora of presentations concerning the purpose, planning, observers, and implementation processes of walkthroughs. Practitioner articles are abundant in trade publications and educational journals, yet there is minimal research available regarding the efficacy of classroom walkthroughs.

Given the general concern over ensuring students are in the presence of effective teachers, the question of whether walkthrough feedback helps to increase teacher effectiveness needs to be investigated. Specifically, do the numbers of years service for teachers or the amount of walkthroughs received in a school year have any impact on teachers' perceptions of whether walkthrough feedback helps increase their effectiveness?

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to analyze teachers' perceptions of classroom walkthrough observations to determine if teachers perceived walkthrough feedback to be beneficial in increasing their effectiveness. Walkthroughs are one of the multiple measures used in the teacher appraisal process to help give a complete picture of a teacher's effectiveness. Further, this study sought to ascertain if teachers utilize walkthrough feedback to help inform their professional development decisions and or improve their classroom instruction. Teachers' perceptions were analyzed through survey questions as part of a larger survey project that sought to study many aspects of walkthrough practices and walkthrough feedback.

Significance of the Study

Specific research on walkthroughs is limited in terms of demonstrating a connection between walkthroughs as an instructional tool and actual school, teacher, and student improvement. The review of literature showed that schools use data gathered from walkthroughs for school improvement, identifying staff professional development needs, building collaboration among staff members, and improving teacher practices which ultimately should improve student achievement. However, walkthroughs are implemented throughout the nation with minimal research-based information. The little research that is available consists primarily of surveys, case studies, and action research examining the perceptions of school principals, not teachers. Furthermore, most studies

on walkthroughs that do take into account the perceptions of teachers are qualitative in nature.

Few studies have explored the efficacy of classroom walkthroughs, yet the universal acceptance of walkthroughs in the teacher appraisal process seems to imply validity. Lemons and Helsing (2009) cited action research in two school districts that decided to implement walkthroughs. In one of the school districts, both the teachers and administrators believed that the walkthroughs were successful, though "few can identify tangible improvements in teaching and learning because of the walkthroughs" (p. 479).

In their book *Classroom walkthroughs to improve teaching and learning*, Kachur, Stout, and Edwards (2010) cite nine perceptual studies on walkthroughs, however, all but two of the studies are based on principals' opinions. Furthermore, the findings from the two studies based on teachers' perceptions were not favorable. In a study of three urban schools by the RAND Corporation, David (2007/2008) found that the administrators deemed walkthroughs more useful and learned more during the process than did the teachers being observed. Research studies, excluding the RAND Corporation study (Marsh et al., 2005), have not fully explored classroom walkthroughs from teachers' perspectives. This study will attempt to begin to close the information gap regarding teachers' perceptions of classroom walkthroughs.

Definition of Terms

1. Administrator: The principal and vice or assistant principals.

2. Classroom walkthrough: Short, informal observations of classroom teachers and students conducted by administrators, coaches, mentors, peers, and others, followed by feedback, conversation, and or action (Kachur et al., 2010).

3. Formative classroom walkthrough: Many informal, short visits to each classroom to develop a picture of education in the classroom and in the school (Downey et al., 2004).

4. Feedback: Written or oral communication given after a walkthrough from an administrator to help teachers improve instruction.

5. Professional development: Professional development refers to skills and knowledge attained for both personal development and career advancement. Professional development encompasses all types of facilitated learning opportunities, ranging from college degrees to formal coursework, conferences and informal learning opportunities situated in practice.

6. Summative appraisal: An evaluation of a teacher's performance typically taken over the course the year through some formative evaluations and one longer classroom observation.

7. Rubric: A scoring tool that walkthrough observers use to assess a set of criteria and standards during a classroom observation.

8. Supervision: The process of assisting teachers to develop necessary skills in becoming a more effective teacher.

9. Clinical supervision: The formal process of conducting a pre-conference, formal observation and post-conference to evaluate a teacher for continuing employment (Cogan, 1973).

10. Differentiated supervision: The process in which supervision is differentiated to the needs of individuals or groups of teachers (Glatthorn, 1984).

11. Observation: The process of monitoring a teaching lesson.

12. Pre-conference: A conference prior to the formal observation in which the teacher and administrator create dialogue pertaining to the forthcoming lesson.

13. Post-conference: A conference after a formal observation in which dialogue is created between the evaluator and teacher pertaining to the lesson observed.

14. Reflective feedback: Feedback provided to teachers through oral, written or numerical communication for the purpose of teacher reflection.

15. Teacher Evaluation: The formal process conducted by school administrators to determine the continuing status of teachers.

16. Value-added measures: A measure used to evaluate teachers on the basis of how much academic growth their students experience over the course of the school year (Braun, 2005).

Theoretical Framework

The conceptual framework, as shown in Figure 1, illustrates how informal and or formal classroom observation data gathered through walkthroughs provide feedback, which teachers may perceive as helpful in increasing teacher effectiveness, providing

input for professional development, or improving classroom instruction. This study will analyze the perceptions of elementary, middle, and high school teachers towards walkthroughs in Texas. Perceptions will be determined by the survey data from teachers.

Figure 1. Conceptual framework.

Research Questions

To analyze teachers' perceptions of walkthroughs, the following four research questions will be examined.

1. Do teachers' perceptions of whether classroom walkthrough feedback improves teacher effectiveness differ based on years of service?

2. Do teachers' perceptions of whether classroom walkthrough feedback improves teacher effectiveness differ based on the frequency of walkthroughs?

3. Do teachers perceive that classroom walkthrough feedback provides input for professional development?

4. Do teachers perceive that classroom walkthrough feedback improves their classroom instruction?

Limitations and Delimitations

The ability to generalize the results from this study may be limited in the following

ways:

1. The participating districts were limited to the state of Texas.

2. Only 13 Texas school districts participated in the survey.

3. The participating districts were limited to those with 20 or fewer schools.

4. Teachers were contacted based on emails found on district websites.

5. The participating schools were limited to public schools.

6. The participating schools excluded charter, alternative, and those

   specializing in adult education.

Organization of the Study

This study is presented in five chapters. Chapter I is an introduction to the study

and presents a statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, the significance of the

study, definition of terms, the theoretical framework, the research questions that framed

the inquiry, and the limitations and delimitations of the study. Chapter II reviews relevant

literature in the field that forms the foundation upon which this study was developed as

well as the context within which the results of this study find their significance. Chapter

III details the design, variables, participants, instruments and procedures of the study. In

addition, the use of emerging themes is explained, and integrity and limitations of the

study are presented. Chapter IV is focused on presenting the results of the analysis in

terms of the research questions that were framed by the study. Chapter V discusses the

researcher's interpretation of the results within the context of the research questions.

Implications for practice and recommendations for future research are also explored.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The purpose of this study was to analyze teachers' perceptions of classroom walkthrough observations to determine if teachers perceived walkthrough feedback to be beneficial in increasing their effectiveness. The literature review addresses several major themes related to walkthroughs: teacher supervision, teacher effectiveness, teacher evaluation, and walkthroughs. The literature review also contains results from empirical research to document previous studies.

Supervision

When looking at the literature surrounding education, there is no universally accepted definition of supervision. Supervision has been bestowed with terms such as supervision, collegial supervision, developmental supervision, clinical supervision, instructional supervision, differentiated supervision, peer supervision, and cognitive coaching (Mandell, 2006). Over the years, the myriad of names and definitions for supervision has caused confusion in reference to the true meaning of supervision.

Another reason for much of the debate is due to the fact that numerous supervision models have been introduced over the years, each with its own definitions and distinct language. The study of supervision lacks focus largely due to the "lack of research and continuing disagreement on the definition and purposes of supervision" (Alfonso & Firth, 1990, p. 188). Krajewski (1997) indicated that each time a supervision model is

developed, so is a new supervisory philosophy. Because of this, none of the philosophies have garnered complete acceptance and understanding by the majority. Defining the diverse field of supervision in the education world has been a source of much debate for years (Bolin, 1987).

The term supervision has Medieval Latin origins and was defined originally as "a process of perusing or scanning a text for errors or deviations from the original text" (Smyth, 1991, p. 30). Cogan (1973) saw supervision as the development of professionally responsible teachers, who are self-directing, capable of analyzing their own performance, and open to the assistance of others. Alfonso and Firth (1990) defined supervision as the process of engaging teachers in instructional dialogue for the purpose of improving teaching and increasing student achievement. Glickman, Gordon, and Ross-Gordon (2007) likened supervision to being the "glue" of a successful school. In this analogy, the administrator is the "glue" in the sense that he or she is responsible for molding the numerous elements of instructional effectiveness into action in order to produce high quality instruction to maximize student achievement (Glickman, Gordon, and Ross-Gordon, 2004).

Glanz (2000) noted that although many authors have attempted to chart the important aspects of supervision's history, the history of supervision continues to remain ambiguous. Over the years, supervisory approaches have varied depending on the expectations of the times. The role of the supervisor has changed and morphed as education practitioners have rethought and reinvented the purpose of schools and

education. Educational leaders who are cognizant of the history of supervision are best able to comprehend how current issues tie back to history, thus giving these educational leaders a better understanding of how to tackle technological, social, political, and moral issues today (Sullivan & Glanz, 2005). Supervisory theories and beliefs from the past continue to influence our current supervisory behaviors and ideas.

Colonial America through the 18th Century. In the 1700s, education was not considered a particular professional discipline or field of study. When hiring teachers and making judgments about their teaching, early towns in the United States looked to the local government and the clergy. Early records from the colonial period showed that school supervisors were given the term inspectors (Tanner & Tanner, 1987). Ministers, schoolmasters, selectmen, or other distinguished citizens were often chosen for the role of inspector. Clergy were considered sensible choices for inspectors because of their staunch moral beliefs and their vast education and history of guiding religious instruction in schools (Marzano, Frontier, & Livingston, 2011). There was a strict moral code at the time and teachers were held to high community standards.

Colonial teachers were considered servants of their community. During supervisory visits, the teachers' instructional skills were not the object of the observation. Instead, teachers' personal lives were often under strict scrutiny. Supervision during this time period was less concerned with quality instruction and more focused on the teachers' adherence to strict moral and religious values, and loyalty to the government (Anderson, 1993).

Individual inspectors or committees supervised teachers with almost unlimited power when making personnel decisions or establishing the criteria for effective instruction (Burke & Krey, 2005). Any feedback concerning instruction was highly varied and non-specific because there was no necessary agreement as to the importance or nature of pedagogical expertise. In sum, colonial period supervisory practices were primarily carried out by laypeople to inspect and to look for deficiencies in teachers, with little to no focus on effective instruction. Through early colonial America and the 18th century, authority and control were the omnipresent themes regarding teacher supervision.

Nineteenth Century. American schooling during the better part of the 19th century continued to be rural and in the hands of local authorities (Rossi, 2007). The prototypical 19th-century school was a small, one-room schoolhouse. Teachers were "young, poorly paid, and rarely educated beyond the elementary subjects" (Tyack & Hansot, 1982, p. 17). Local lay trustees, sometimes referred to as ward boards, supervised schools. Like the inspectors from the 18th century, lay trustees were not professionally trained or especially focused on the improvement of instruction.

As the 19th century progressed, the growth rate in America continued to increase. This growth trickled into the education arena and the nation began to see a need for more elementary schools. Horace Mann, whom Tanner and Tanner (1987) characterized as the "first professional supervisor," campaigned for public schools and created the first school in the United States for training teachers (Olivia & Pawlas, 2004). As awareness about

public education increased, the task of teacher supervision eventually shifted from clergy and laypeople to superintendents and principals (Olivia & Pawlas, 2004).

The second half of the 19th century welcomed the industrial revolution. With the industrial revolution came a multitude of manufacturing processes which affected almost every aspect of daily life (Rossi, 2007). Additionally, the population began to show an unprecedented amount of sustained growth. The increased number of children meant a greater need for more complex school systems (Marzano et al., 2011). In urban school districts, there was a demand for teachers who held more instructional expertise and for administrators who could handle what was becoming an increasingly complex supervisory role. As a result, the role of the building principal grew out of the need for a teacher within the school who could also assume some administrative duties.

The role of the superintendent also evolved in the latter decades of the 19th century. As school districts grew, the need for trained people to supervise teachers and to manage schools increased. Schoolmen, specifically superintendents, began shaping schools in the larger cities into more organized, educational networks. By the end of the 19th century, schools were becoming streamlined, central administrative bureaucracies with superintendents as supervisors in charge. Like the inspectors of the past, superintendents in the 19th century also lacked trust in the teachers' ability to educate the students and essentially viewed teachers as incompetent and in need of direct monitoring (Glanz, 2000). Supervision as inspection was the dominant supervisory method in schools. Due to the strong perception that a high level of supervision was needed to

control unskilled teachers, superintendents were able to legitimize their existence in the school system (Sullivan & Glanz, 2005).

Twentieth Century. In the first two decades of the 20th century, school districts continued to grow in size and complexity. As schools continued to grow, so did the supervisor's responsibilities and authority. At the school level, two new groups of administrative supervisors emerged to help building principals with classroom supervision (Sullivan & Glanz, 2005). One type of administrator was a special supervisor. The special supervisor, usually female, was chosen by the building principal to assist less experienced teachers in content specific areas. These special supervisors had no formal training, however, they served as mentors to other teachers. The second type of administrator, a general supervisor, was typically male. They were also selected to help with subjects such as mathematics and science, however, the general supervisors were also tasked to help the principal with the more administrative, logistical operations of the school (Sullivan & Glanz, 2005). The general supervisor, subsequently called vice principal or assistant principal, prepared attendance reports, collected data for evaluation purposes, coordinated special school programs, and helped with many other administrative duties (Sullivan & Glanz, 2005).

The differences in the authoritative roles given to general supervisors as compared to special supervisors were reflective of prevalent notions at that time of male-female role relationships (Sullivan & Glanz, 2005). Special supervisors portrayed a useful, mentoring sort of role by assisting teachers in practical, content areas such as

spelling, penmanship, and art. These special supervisors did not have any independent authority and did not evaluate teachers in any way, whereas the general supervisors were given some authority to evaluate instruction in the classroom (Sullivan & Glanz, 2005).

The position of the special supervisor did not endure for long in schools (Sullivan & Glanz, 2005). The general supervisors gradually absorbed the special supervisor's duties and responsibilities. Special supervisors were usually females and during this time, females were not viewed as equals. General supervisors, principals, assistant superintendents, and superintendents were mostly male (Sullivan & Glanz, 2005). Thus, increasing gender discrimination in education could have attributed to the decline of special supervisors after the early 1920s.

Scientific Management and the Business Age. Numerous technological advances continued to greatly influence American education in the 1900s. The era of scientific management occurred around 1910-1930, with efficiency of the worker being the main tenant during this time. The idea of job efficiency can be attributed to the work of Frederick Taylor, who published a book titled *The principles of scientific management: Taking a scientific view of management* (Taylor, 1911). Taylor (1911) studied factory workers in order to measure their behaviors for the most efficient way to perform a task. In time, Taylor's ideas of efficiency, termed "Taylorism", began to trickle into schools as a supervisory method (Sullivan & Glanz, 2005). Public school administrators believed Taylor's supervisory model would help to maximize goals and more efficiently implement objectives (Sullivan & Glanz, 2005).

Franklin Bobbitt (1913), a professor at the University of Chicago and an advocate of Taylor's ideas, tried to apply Taylor's theory to the "problems of educational management and supervision" (p. 8). Bobbitt (1913) called his supervisory methods "scientific and professional" (p. 9). Many supervisors were ready to adopt Bobbitt's ideas of scientific management for use in schools with the thought that their work would become more clearly defined and accepted. Supervision during this time was often measured and rated, which is why in time supervision became synonymous with teacher rating (Sullivan & Glanz, 2005).

Human Relations Supervision and Behavior Science. During the 1920s, teachers began to have a growing distain for the autocratic supervisory methods in favor at the time (Sullivan & Glanz, 2005). As a result, a more democratic and improvement-based supervisory style began to emerge as supervisors worked to change their authoritarian image. The human relations supervision period, commonly known as the business age, began to emerge in the late 1930s to the late 1950s (Glickman, et al., 2004). Supervision started to move away from traditional supervisory practices of inspection and control when supervisors began to see how personal connections with teachers could help improve classroom instruction (Glickman, et al., 2004). Supervisory practices became more cooperative in nature and school supervisors began adopting a more democratic style of leadership (Alfonso & Firth, 1990; Wiles & Bondi, 1980). Olivia and Pawlas (2004) indicated during this time that technical skills began to take a second seat as supervisors began focusing on the importance of interpersonal skills.

Democratic supervision was a cooperative model in which all educators, including teachers, curriculum specialists, and supervisors, would work together to improve instruction (Sullivan & Glanz, 2005). John Dewey (1938), the "father of education," was an ardent supporter of democracy. Dewey (1938) argued that even students should have the opportunity to work on democratic skills and practice citizenship in student-centered learning environments that furthered their understanding of democracy. Progressive ideas such as student-centered education, connecting the classroom to the real world, differentiation, and integration of content areas were viewed as avenues for students to prepare for the active role they would need to play as citizens instead of being passive participants as they had in the past (Dewey, 1938).

Throughout the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s, the democratic idea that supervision involves collaboration to improve instruction continued, however, Glanz (2000) described supervision in the late 1960s and early 1970s as "lacking focus, a sound conceptual base, and purpose, supervision explored alternative notions to guide theory and practice in the field" (p. 5). A social awakening was taking place in the nation concerning racism, equality, and views on war and this upheaval had a profound effect on education and supervision (Sullivan & Glanz, 2005). As a result, supervisors began looking differently at the teaching and learning processes (Wiles & Bondi, 1980).

Clinical Supervision. Clinical supervision grew out of a general displeasure with prior educational practices and unfocused supervisory methods. Morris Cogan, and later Robert Goldhammer, formulated the concept of clinical supervision (Sullivan & Glanz,

2005). The clinical supervision model developed by Goldhammer consisted of five steps:
the pre-observation conference, observation, analysis and strategy, supervision
conference, and post-conference analysis (Goldhammer, 1969). Cogan later developed
his own clinical supervision model, which was an enhanced version of Goldhammer's
previous work (Cogan, 1973). Cogan's eight step clinical supervision model consisted of
the following: establishing the teacher-supervision relationship, planning with the
teacher, planning the strategy of observation, observing instruction, analyzing the
teaching- learning process, planning the strategy of the conference, the conference, and
renewed planning (Cogan, 1973). Acheson and Gall (1987) simplified their clinical
supervision model to just three steps: a planning conference, classroom observation, and
a feedback conference.

Keeping with the collaborative theme of democratic supervision, the theory
behind clinical supervision was that teaching could be improved by formalizing the
collaborative process by utilizing a more prescribed process between the teacher and their
supervisor. The theory behind clinical supervision spread quickly (Marzano et al., 2011),
however, Sullivan and Glanz (2005) noted clinical supervision did not garner a wide
acceptance in schools, even though it was advocated by many professors and authors at
the time. Throughout the 1970s, educators continued to advocate for the return of the
more democratic methods of previous supervisory models (Sullivan & Glanz, 2005),
since clinical supervision felt similar to bureaucratic supervision.

Late 20th Century. During the 1980s, researchers and theorists in supervision began to campaign for other supervisory perspectives in reaction to the highly prescriptive nature of clinical supervision. Early in the decade there was a barrage of criticism concerning how educational practices had become bureaucratic and unresponsive to the needs of teachers, parents, and children (Sullivan & Glanz, 2005). Teachers preferred a more collaborative approach to supervision where teachers were able to partake in the decision-making process and have more responsibility for school policies (Dunlap & Goldman, 1991; Sullivan & Glanz, 2005). As a result, the empowerment of teachers gained popularity. During this time, peer supervision first appeared in the literature as an alternative to traditional supervision (Willerman, McNeely, & Koffman, 1991; Smyth, 1991).

Another supervision model that gained notoriety in the 1980s was developmental supervision. With developmental supervision, supervisory methods consisted of three phases and varied based on the teacher's level of ability (Glickman, Gordon, and Ross-Gordon, 2004). In the initial diagnostic phase, the developmental supervisor's objective was to diagnose the level at which a teacher was functioning in regards to a particular instructional concern(Glickman, Gordon, and Ross-Gordon, 2004). In the tactical phase, the supervisor would match the supervisory approach depending on the teacher's ability to solve the concern. For example, a directive supervisory approach would be used when working with a teacher that exhibited a low ability to solve problems, whereas a more collaborative approach would work with teachers who were able to contribute ideas when

addressing concerns. A nondirective approach could be used with effective teachers. The last phase of developmental supervision was the strategic phase. Supervisors in the strategic phase focused on developing the teacher's ability to be more autonomous (Glickman, Gordon, and Ross-Gordon, 2004).

William Glatthorn (1984) promoted supervisory models that differentiated the supervisory approach only after considering the teacher's career goals. Glatthorn (1984) explained that as professionals, teachers should have input and some sense of control over their development. Moreover, professional development should be based on the individual needs of teachers (Marzano et al., 2011).

By the end of the decade, transformational leadership, which advocated that supervisors serve as change agents, became a popular supervisory style. Transformational leaders worked at sharing leadership in a collaborative way in order to build a school culture where all staff were stakeholders in the decision making process (Leithwood & Jantzi, 1990). One of Leithwood and Jantzi's (1990) studies suggested that when supervisors were collaborative, there was an increase in teacher's commitment to the school mission. This increased commitment deepened teachers' motivation for professional development by virtue of their internalized goals for professional growth (Leithwood & Jantzi, 1990).

In the mid-1980s, a report titled *A nation at risk: The imperative for educational reform* (1983) was published by the National Commission on Excellence in Education. The report noted that American schools were not educating students as well as some

international countries. After the publication, there was a call for increased accountability and evaluation of schools and programs. As a result, increasing accountability and evaluation became the main tenets of the next two decades (Rossi, 2007). Many supervisors began focusing on the evaluation of teaching performance and the measurement of teaching behavior. Specific, stringent teacher evaluation guidelines were developed and there was a heightened focus on implementing teacher professional development. The lack of focus on this professional development, however, resulted in a lack of consistency in teacher professional growth (Iwanicki, 2001).

Beginning of the 21st Century. Since the turn of the new century, standards-based education, including high-stakes testing, continued to gain national momentum. The increased attention on accountability and evaluation has steered supervisory practices towards raising standards and creating a more uniformed curriculum (Seguel, 1966). Standards-based reform has impacted supervision so greatly that a new supervisory model, called standards-based supervision, has been developed (Sullivan & Glanz, 2005). Sullivan and Glanz (2005) stated "principals and assistant principals are more accountable than ever to address prescribed core curriculum standards, promote teaching to the standards, and ensure higher student academic performance on standardized tests" (p. 24). Increased accountability has lead supervisors to ensure that the technical competence of teachers is addressed in the implementation of supervisory practices (Sullivan, 2009). Supervisors often relied on checklists to ascertain the extent to which teachers were meeting various curricular and instructional objectives embedded in core

curriculum standards at various grade levels. Consequently, standards-based supervision has been likened to the supervisory practices that were popular during the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s (Sullivan & Glanz, 2005).

Instructional Supervision

Supervision as a means of improving instruction has continued to be the primary concern of supervisors and other educational leaders well into the 21st century (Alfonso & Firth, 1990). The terms instructional leadership and instructional leader were originally coined by Carl Glickman. Glickman (1992) felt the term supervision suggested a distasteful, even disgusting metaphor for school improvement. Instead of using the words supervision or supervisor, Glickman (1992) proposed that the terms instructional leadership and instructional leader be used.

In this era of high expectations and accountability for student achievement, principals must demonstrate proficient skills in providing instructional leadership to teachers. Less management and more mentoring, coaching, and collaborating with teachers is now an expectation for principals. Schon (1998) believed true instructional leaders must support, guide, and foster reflective teaching practices. Ultimately, instructional supervision has to be an essential element of any supervision model today (Iwanicki, 2001).

If effective teaching is the most important element in student learning and instructional leadership, then it would behoove principals to spend considerable amounts of time in classrooms. Unfortunately, many principals are unable to devote enough time

in classrooms to supervise instructional practices. One study reported that elementary school principals spent less than 2% of their time attending to their instructional leadership responsibilities (Howell, 1981). Frase, Downey, and Canciamilla (1999) found that teacher performance increased when principals spent more time in classrooms coaching and conferencing with teachers. Blasé and Blasé (1998) reported teachers had more positive views of principals when they spend time in their classrooms (Blasé & Blasé, 1998). Hence, time spent on instructional tasks is crucial if principals want to improve teaching and learning. Blasé and Blasé (1998) believed that instructional supervision entailed engaging teachers in meaningful, ongoing conversations for the purpose of improving teaching and learning since there is a link between instructional supervision and teacher improvement (Blasé & Blasé, 1998; Sullivan & Glanz, 2005).

Teacher Effectiveness

During the past decade, there has been considerable attention devoted to teacher quality and its impact on student achievement. Research indicated that teacher effectiveness has a profound influence on student achievement (Waters, Marzano, & McNulty 2003; Frase, & Hertzel, 2002; English, 2011). Sanders and Horn (1998) asserted that the quality of the teacher is the most important factor regarding student achievement. In their Tennessee Value-Added study, Sanders and Horn (1998) found that elementary students who had three continuous years of ineffective teaching scored considerably lower on standardized tests compared to students who had effective teachers during the same period. Furthermore, the least effective teachers produced gains of about 14

percentile points with low achieving students, whereas effective teachers demonstrated gains that averaged around 53 percentile points.

Ferguson and Ladd (1996) examined the effects of teacher proficiency with student test scores in Texas. Teachers accounted for nearly 40% of the "measured variance in students' reading and mathematics achievement at grades 1-11, more than any other single factor" (Darling-Hammond, 1997, p.8). Ferguson and Ladd (1996) conducted a similar study in Alabama with 690 schools. The findings in Alabama supported the Texas study in that 31% of the differences in students scoring in reading and math were attributed to teacher qualifications and class size, whereas 29.5% was explained by race, poverty and parent education (Darling-Hammond, 1997). Teachers' competencies are essential to student achievement (Ferguson & Ladd, 1996).

Defining an Effective Teacher. Stronge (2007) noted that teaching is a complex craft and trying to define what an effective teacher looks like is not an easy feat. Teacher effectiveness can be an elusive concept. Strong (2007) stated while the specific characteristics of effective teachers may be debatable, one cannot ignore the fact that the teacher is the primary influencer in determining the educational outcomes for students each year.

Some researchers defined teacher effectiveness in terms of student achievement. Others focused on high performance ratings from supervisors. Still others relied on comments from students, administrators, and other interested stakeholders. Cruickshank and Haefele (2001) stated that "good teachers, at various times, have been called ideal,

analytical, dutiful, competent expert, reflective, satisfying, diversity-responsive, and respected" (p. 29). There is much debate concerning what outcomes might show effectiveness and how those outcomes should be measured (Stronge, 2007).

The latest issue concerning teacher effectiveness is whether a teacher's effectiveness can be measured using student test scores. Ferguson and Ladd (1996) argued that test scores cannot capture all that it means to be an effective teacher. Test scores are unable to prove whether a teacher is caring, motivating, engaging, demanding, or has high expectations. Furthermore, there are many uncontrollable student variables outside of a teacher's control that have the ability to impact each of the potential measures of effectiveness (Darling-Hammond, 2000). Whether or not test scores eventually play a part of measuring teacher effectiveness, the teacher remains the most important factor when it comes to impacting student achievement (Stronge, 2007). Hence, researchers have begun to focus on the specific characteristics and processes used by the most effective teachers.

Characteristics of Effective Teachers. Over several decades, researchers have investigated relationships between teacher ability and the achievement of students (Stronge, 2007). The results linking teacher ability and student achievement have been mixed, however, research has supported a link between teachers' verbal ability and student performance (Strauss & Sawyer, 1986). Teachers with high verbal ability have better communication skills in which to more effectively explain ideas and communicate in a clear, understandable manner (Stronge, 2007).

Hanushek (1971) evaluated teacher characteristics for their effect on student achievement in a California school with large Mexican American and Caucasian populations. Verbal ability significantly affected the achievement for a specific population of white students, however, verbal ability did not contribute to gains in student achievement for the Mexican American students (Hanushek, 1971). Darling-Hammond (2000) studied data from a 50-state study of policies on teacher education, licensing, hiring, and professional development to investigate if there was a relationship between teacher quality and student achievement. Teacher's verbal ability seemed to affect student achievement positively (Darling-Hammond, 2000).

Teachers who have strong content knowledge have consistently been identified as effective teachers (Stronge, 2007). In a survey of educational stakeholders, Johnson (2004) found that competence in content knowledge was a high priority as it relates to teacher effectiveness. If a teacher was highly knowledgeable about the content that was being taught, they were better able to teach concepts without having to depend on the use of a textbook in order to involve students in meaningful discussions and student-directed activities (Wenglinsky, 2000). Goldhaber and Brewer (2000) studied the impact of teacher certification on student performance. Of the teachers studied, 86% had a standard certification in math and 82% had a standard certification in science. Students who had teachers that were certified in math showed a 7 to 10 point gain on math test scores (Goldhaber & Brewer, 2000). Additionally, teachers with higher scores on the state certification exam had students with higher scores on math examinations. Goldhaber and

Brewer (2000) concluded that students whose teachers were teaching outside their field performed more poorly than students who were placed with teachers that were instructing classes in the same content area as they are certified.

To a certain degree, teaching experience had been shown to matter in relation to teacher effectiveness (Stronge, 2007). Research indicated that most master teachers had spent approximately five to eight years in the classroom (Darling-Hammond, 2000). Experienced teachers were better able to utilize the encounters they had obtained through real-life experiences and years in the classroom in order to enrich lessons or make instructional adjustments as compared to beginning teachers (Stronge, 2007). Stronge (2007) wrote experienced teachers usually understood there were multiple ways to monitor students and to create meaningful lessons that were tied to instructional standards. Additionally, experienced and effective teachers were better at managing transitions and maximizing the actual time spent on instruction (Stronge, 2007). Through time and life experiences, master teachers were better able to improvise and adapt when unplanned situations arose, whereas beginning teachers were less apt to deviate from the planned lesson (Stronge, 2007). Betts, Reuben, and Danenberg (2000) found that schools with more beginning teachers tended to have lower student achievement.

Stronge (2007) wrote there are numerous studies relating teacher behaviors to student achievement. In relation to student achievement, a teacher's affective characteristics may have more influence as compared to actual pedagogical practices. Noddings (2005) explained that if a teacher was not happy, the climate in the classroom

could be negatively impacted. Furthermore, teachers who created a positive and supportive classroom climate tended to be more effective with all students (Peart & Campbell, 1999). Weiss and Pasley (2004) observed 350 math and science lessons over a year and a half period in order to examine the decisions that teachers made throughout the day. Weiss and Pasley (2004) found effective teachers had a climate that was both rigorous and respectful. Additionally, effective teachers engaged all students in the lesson, not just volunteers (Weiss & Pasley, 2004).

Stronge (2007) emphasized effective teachers built relationships with their students. Caring teachers created relationships that enhanced student learning and ensured the classroom was a place of trust, tact, honesty, and care. Students highly valued teachers who took time to understand their concerns and built a relationship with mutual respect (Stronge, 2007). Teachers who knew their students were better at understanding individual learning styles, likes and dislikes, and maintaining an awareness of behaviors that may affect achievement in school (Stronge, 2007). Students interviewed at all school levels for their views on effective teachers consistently mentioned the importance of fairness and respect (Stronge, 2007). Teachers who were able to relate to students by making personal, caring connections were more apt to have a positive learning environment (Stronge, 2007).

Pert and Campbell (1999) interviewed 47 African American adults about teacher characteristics that enhance or inhibit student success. Overall, teacher effectiveness was ranked fourth in factors affecting student achievement (Pert & Campbell, 1999). More

specifically, participants responded that positive student-teacher relationships based on a genuine interest in students was important to be effective in the classroom (Pert & Campbell, 1999). Fostering productive, positive interactions entailed giving students responsibility, respect, and if applicable, treating secondary students as adults (National Association of Secondary School Principals [NASSP], 1997). Having a good sense of humor and being able to share jokes were also traits of effective teachers ([NASSP], 1997).

Classroom management and organization were vital components to effective teaching. Organizational planning of a classroom included the room arrangement, discipline management, establishing routines, and teaching students how their learning environment is organized (Stronge, 2007). Established routines for all daily tasks and needs minimized disruptive behaviors (Bain & Jacobs, 1990). A survey by Johnson (2004) indicated superintendents and principals felt a major challenge for new teachers was their inability to maintain control in the classroom. One of the most important organizational skills an effective teacher possessed was the ability to prevent negative behavior by being proactive when it came to classroom management. Setting high expectations for behavior was just as important to learning as setting high expectations for academic performance (Covino & Iwanicki, 1996) and when needed, effective teachers linked consequences to behaviors as appropriate (Wentzel, 2002).

Emphasis on organization and routines has been shown to contribute to effective teaching by freeing up as much as an extra hour per week that could be used for

instruction (Stronge, 2007). Wang, Haertel, and Walberg (1993/1994) conducted a meta-analysis of 331 sources, which resulted in 11,000 statistical findings related to influences on learning. Time spent teaching a specific topic had more effect on student learning than the implementation of policies (Wang, Haertel & Walberg, 1993/1994). In an exploratory study of effective versus ineffective teachers, Stronge, Tucker, and Ward (2003) found that teachers who had more routines for everyday tasks had higher student achievement scores than teachers who did not use routines effectively.

Corbett and Wilson (2002) interviewed approximately 400 urban, low-income middle school students over a three-year period to examine the students' views of good teaching. The first attribute students identified as key to their success was an effective teacher. Traits such as pushing students to be successful, maintaining control of behavior, determining the type of help students need, finding different ways to explain the content, using a variety of instructional activities, and understanding the students as people and not just students, were listed as being important to students (Corbett & Wilson, 2002). Corbett and Wilson (2002) found that students did care about their own learning and they viewed an effective teacher as the central element to their own success.

Implementing Effective Instruction. Beyond all of the inherent characteristics of effective teachers, the single most important factor to consider when assessing a teacher's real effectiveness was the actual art of teaching (Stronge, 2007). Stronge (2007) believed a teacher's repertoire of teaching strategies was a significant element to their overall effectiveness. Because students came with a variety of needs and learning styles,

an array of instructional strategies were needed for effective instruction to take place.

Teachers were better equipped to successfully reach more students when learning

preferences and styles were taken into consideration (Tomlinson, 2000). Students who

used hands-on learning strategies typically outperformed their peers on the National

Assessment of Educational Progress in the areas of science and mathematics

(Wenglinsky, 2000). Additionally, effective teachers routinely included techniques that

involved individual, small-group, and whole-group instruction that included modeling

and coaching (Allington, 2002).

Recognizing the individual and group differences among students and

accommodating for those differences improved student learning (Tomlinson, 2000).

Effective teachers made instructional adjustments to account for students' ability levels

and needs, in order to maximize student engagement and achievement (Covino &

Iwanicki, 1996). Studies indicated high-level questioning techniques were imperative for

teachers who desired to increase their ability in assessing student learning (Covino &

Iwanicki, 1996). Additionally, when students struggled with previously taught concepts,

Peart and Campbell (1999) found effective teachers utilized small group instruction or

one-on-one tutoring to fill in gaps and improve student achievement.

For instruction to be effective, students, like teachers, must be able to reflect on

their work (Johnson, 2004). Effective teachers provided feedback during instruction that

was primarily corrective (Black & William, 1998; Marzano, Pickering, & Pollock, 2001),

but also specific in nature. Effective teachers provided specific feedback about what

students were doing right, what needed improvement, and ways to fix any instructional mistakes (Chappius & Stiggins, 2002). Additionally, effective teachers helped students learn how to take and give constructive criticism in the classroom.

Implementing effective instruction involved monitoring student learning before, during, and after instruction. Effective teachers accessed student knowledge of content and skills before instruction to guide instructional practices to meet the needs of their students (Chappius & Stiggins, 2002; Walberg, 1984). After instruction, effective teachers used assessments to monitor student progress and to plan further instruction (Mitchell, 1998). Walberg (1984) reported student achievement drastically improved when teachers used diagnostic and prescriptive methods for assessing and teaching.

Teacher Evaluation

For the most part, teacher evaluation models have been designed with effective teacher characteristics in mind (Manning, 1988). Often, these characteristics were noted by observers with the use of a checklist (Manning, 1988). Manning (1988) wrote while the latest research on effective teaching practices should be incorporated into the evaluation system, the traditional once- or twice-a-year checklist evaluations tended to offer limited opportunity for the improvement of teaching.

Marzano (2012) asserted that before designing and implementing a teacher evaluation model, one must understand the purpose of the system, be it to measure teachers or develop teachers. Teacher evaluation has traditionally focused on staffing issues, such as tenure decisions, pay increases, and removing incompetent teachers

(Manning, 1988). Both measurement and development are important criteria for any teacher evaluation system, but the evaluation selected for use should look different depending on whether the focus of the evaluation is on measurement or development (Marzano, 2012). Evaluation systems that are developed for measurement reasons will need a fewer set of criteria in order to determine a teacher's skill, however, if the emphasis is on teacher development, the model needs to focus on the teacher's growth in various instructional strategies (Marzano, 2012). Discerning between a measurement or development model is imperative to effectively designing and implementing any evaluation system (Marzano, 2012).

Marzano (2012) surveyed more than 3,000 teachers concerning their opinions about whether teacher evaluation should be used to measure teachers, develop teachers, or do both. None of the teachers surveyed believed measurement should be the focus of teacher evaluation. Two percent believed both should be evaluated, with measurement being the dominant purpose. Twenty percent believed teacher evaluation should equally include measurement and development, however, 76% responded that evaluation should be duel purposed with development being dominant. Finally, 2% reported teacher evaluation should only be used for teacher development. In other words, an overwhelming majority of the teachers surveyed indicated that teacher evaluation could be utilized for both measurement and development, however, teacher development should be the primary focus of an evaluation tool (Marzano 2012).

A study conducted by Frase (1998) focused on teacher appraisal and principal walkthroughs in classrooms. Frase (1998) found that when principals conducted classroom walkthroughs focused primarily on instruction and curriculum teachers regarded the appraisal process positively. Those teachers who valued the appraisal process stated that the principal had an understanding and an interest in the learning process. Principals who conduct regular walkthroughs in classrooms are able to help the teacher by removing obstacles that hinder instruction (Frase, 1998). As a result, Frase (1998) believed this was the reason teachers whose principals conduct regular walkthroughs hold teacher appraisal in a higher regard.

While walkthroughs are held in high esteem as a valuable instructional leadership tool, administrators often have difficulty finding time to get into classrooms. Finding time or having content expertise to evaluate all of the teachers administrators supervise can be challenging when providing instructional support (Darling-Hammond, 2013). Many principals have not had access to the professional development and support needed to become expert instructional leaders and evaluators of teaching (Darling-Hammond, 2013). Ultimately, the primary purpose of evaluation must be to improve teaching in order to maximize student achievement.

The Current State of Teacher Evaluation. Driven by the requirements of Race to the Top grants and federal waivers from No Child Left Behind (NCLB), states and districts across the United States are changing their policies toward teacher evaluation (Darling-Hammond, 2013). All 50 states require teacher and supervisor evaluation of

some sort, but Weiss (2012) reported that throughout the Unites States supervisors were conducting ineffective supervision and professional development practices. The National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ) has studied teacher evaluation in all 50 states. The NCTQ concurred that while improvements in teacher evaluation have been made, there is much more work to be done in the area of improving evaluations to ensure that all students have the opportunity to be taught by effective teachers (Texas Association of School Boards, 2013).

Frase and Streshly (1994) found teachers across the United States held teacher appraisal in low esteem, however, teacher evaluation is not going away and districts must find ways to improve the process to make it more effective. Weiss (2012) argued that supervisors must devise a better system to improve classroom instruction. Teacher evaluation systems in their current form do not adequately discern between those exceeding expectations from those who are struggling and teachers rarely improve as a result of their evaluation (Darling-Hammond, 2012). The NCTQ reported many states were working on new teacher evaluation models that tied important personnel decisions such as tenure, compensation, and layoffs, along with professional development decisions to their evaluation tool.

Teacher Evaluation Systems in Texas. Texas teachers are appraised by their district on a regular basis. All Texas classroom teachers, regardless of content area, must be appraised on their classroom teaching performance (Association of Texas Professional Educators [ATPE], n.d.). In 1985, Texas developed the Texas Teacher Appraisal System

(TTAS). The TTAS drew from the work of Madeline Hunter, who used mastery teaching correlates to indicate which teacher behaviors were commonly found in classrooms of high student achievement (Vier, 1991). A decade later in 1995, Texas Senate Bill 1 passed requiring the state Commissioner of Education to develop and recommend an improved and updated appraisal system for Texas teachers. As a result, the Professional Development and Appraisal System (PDAS) was developed.

The PDAS was designed to improve on the TTAS by allowing teachers to be more flexible in their teaching styles and to redirect the appraisers' attention toward student behaviors and achievement rather than on the behaviors of teachers (Robinson, 2009). Moreover, the PDAS was intended to encourage teachers to engage in meaningful and relevant professional development as an embedded part of their teaching practice by giving them opportunities to reflect and collaborate on their success (Robinson, 2009). Robinson (2009) wrote under the new PDAS model, teachers were now encouraged to consider their own practice as individuals and to reflect on the academic performance of the entire campus. Campus performance with regard to student achievement was also integrated for the first time via the PDAS (Texas Education Agency [TEA], 2005), although the link to student achievement was not strong.

Most school districts in Texas use the PDAS model, which is the state-approved evaluation system. In the 2010-2011 Teacher Evaluation Report, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) reported 1086 districts, or 86%, used PDAS as their evaluation tool (Texas Education Agency, 2010).

Professional Development and Appraisal System (PDAS). The PDAS model has 51 evaluation criteria, organized into eight domains, each of which is independently assessed through the PDAS instrument, and draws from learner-centered proficiencies as a foundation (TAC § 150.1002 (a)). Each of the eight domains is assessed using one of four descriptors. In order from highest to lowest, these descriptors are: *Exceeds Expectations*; *Proficient*; *Below Expectations*; and *Unsatisfactory* (TAC §150.1002 (d)). The eight domains are: (1) active, successful student participation in the learning process, (2) learner-centered instruction, (3) evaluation and feedback on student progress, (4) management of student discipline, instructional strategies, time and materials, (5) professional communication, (6) professional development, (7) compliance with policies, operating procedures, and requirements, and (8) improvement of academic performance of all students on the campus (based on indicators included in the Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS)) (TAC § 150.1002 (b)).

Each domain contains a subset of criteria, the number of which varies by domain. Each of the eight domains is scored independently of the others and is based on a comprehensive collection of data from a variety of sources throughout the school year. Data sources for PDAS scoring include classroom observations, unannounced walk-through observations, and information provided by the teacher on the Teacher Self-Report, Parts I - III (TSR) (TAC §150.1002 (c)).

Teacher performance is appraised under PDAS within the context of at least one

45-minute observation per year, supplemented by additional walkthroughs and other observations conducted by the appraiser or other PDAS certified administrator. A summative conference is mandated unless otherwise waived by request of the teacher. Teachers who disagree with the content of their appraisal have the right to request a second appraisal, which is administered by another PDAS-qualified administrator in the district. An annual summative report on each teacher's performance, based on the 45-minute observation and classroom walkthroughs that the supervisor may have conducted is due no later than fifteen days prior to the last day of instruction for the year.

Robinson (2009) surveyed a convenience sample of 310 principals from a large, metropolitan area in Texas. Given in a cognitive interview setting, the survey instrument covered several topics including principals' beliefs, attitudes, values, and practices regarding teacher supervision within the context of the PDAS. Analysis of the responses revealed that principals do not hold strong, central beliefs as to the purpose of teacher supervision, the efficacy of the PDAS system, or even who is the best person to conduct teacher supervision (Robinson, 2009). Further, there is widespread inconsistency in the practices of principals in their formal documentation of teacher performance appraisals (Robinson, 2009).

Local Appraisal Models. Texas school districts may also choose to appraise teachers using a locally developed instrument and protocol as long as the locally developed system supports certain framework requirements contained in the PDAS (Robinson, 2009). Any modification to the commissioner-recommended appraisal

process, the PDAS, creates a local appraisal process. About 173 districts, or 14% of Texas school districts, including several large urban districts, use locally developed and approved appraisal instruments and processes instead of the PDAS (Texas Education Agency, 2010). Local appraisal instruments must also be submitted to the state education agency for approval and adhere to the following:

- Be developed by district- and campus-level committees;

- Contain criteria relating to discipline management and student performance;

- Be adopted by the local school board (Robinson, 2009).

Districts opting to develop their own teacher appraisal process must ensure their model provides for annual appraisals, and that the district maintains a written record of the appraisal in teachers' personnel files (TEC §21.352 (c)). Locally developed teacher appraisal systems also must provide a means for teachers to contest or rebut their appraisal, as well as request another appraisal from a qualified appraiser different from the one conducting the initial appraisal. In other words, the provisions of the state developed PDAS were mirrored as mandates for locally developed systems (Robinson, 2009).

Texas Evaluation Pilot Studies. The teacher evaluation system in Texas is currently undergoing an overhaul. There have been numerous reports and initiatives to address two important shortcomings with the PDAS (Texas Association of School Boards, 2012). First, the PDAS has not been helpful in deciphering the difference between an effective or ineffective teacher. Secondly, the PDAS has failed to adequately

aid in guiding professional development efforts in order to increase the level of skill in the teaching workforce (Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, 2011; Marzano, 2012).

Texas has used the PDAS to evaluate teachers since 1997 and even though there are four ranking categories, nearly all teachers get good ratings on the PDAS (Texas Association of School Boards, 2012). In a 2010-2011 Teacher Evaluation report, the Texas Education Agency (2010) reported that the state's teacher appraisal system does a poor job of distinguishing effective from ineffective teachers. The report showed that only 4 % of Texas teachers were rated below "proficient" in their performance (Texas Education Agency, 2010). Although 96% of teachers were evaluated as proficient, the 2010 Annual Report on Texas Public Schools revealed that only 77% of students met passing standards on state achievement tests (Texas Education Agency, 2010). Weiss (2012) reported earlier this year that state education officials directed school districts to stop sending in the PDAS results considering the data gathered since the 2010-2011 school year has indicated there was little variation in teacher appraisal results across Texas.

Back in 2010, PDAS reviewers concluded that the current model should be revised to include current research and data surrounding teacher effectiveness (Texas Association of School Boards, 2012). At the beginning of the 2012-2013 school year, 100 schools volunteered to participate in a pilot study using one of two teacher evaluation models, with TEA providing ongoing training and evaluation support services (Texas Association of School Boards [TASB], 2011). TEA and Region 13 Education Service

Center decided to use two well-know evaluation models to save time. One model was developed by the National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (NIET) and used by the Teacher Advancement Program (TAP). The second model was the Framework for Teaching Proficiency System (FFT) developed by Teachscape in partnership with education researcher Charlotte Danielson and the Educational Testing Service.

Like PDAS, both systems have evaluation domains with numerous subtopics to be evaluated. In contrast to PDAS, both the TAP and FFT models involve multiple walkthroughs by evaluators as compared to the one 45-minute visit currently mandated with the PDAS. Both the TAP and FFT models also include a component to assess the growth of student improvement (Weiss, 2012). The two new models also provide more detail than PDAS as to what is expected from the teachers and evaluators. Finally, Weiss (2012) reported both TAP and FFT have a history of producing evaluation scores that are more like a bell curve as compared to what emerges from the PDAS.

The Texas teacher evaluation pilot study to test both the TAP and FFT models was originally going to end after the initial 2012-2013 study year with an appraisal model being approved and adopted for the 2013-2014 school year (N. Torres-Martinez, E. Vara, L. Pankonien, A. Rodriguez, & C. Green, personal communication, January 28, 2013). TEA, however, decided to continue with the pilot study for another year. In the first year, the infrastructure was established and training for appraisers took place. In the second year, the full evaluation process began taking place and teachers will receive job-

embedded training at the end of the evaluation process (Texas Association of School Boards, 2013).

The Texas Association of School Boards (2013) reported while the outcomes from both pilot models were positive, TEA has opted to not use either system as the new Texas teacher evaluation model. While some elements from the TAP and FFT may be included, the state will develop its own unique model based on the standards developed by Texas educators (Texas Association of School Boards, 2013). The new Texas evaluation model, the Texas Educator Evaluation and Support System, will launch in the 2015-2016 school year (Texas Association of School Boards, 2013).

Walkthroughs

Although walkthroughs are an integral component of teacher evaluation systems, they have also become increasingly popular as a valued tool for the continuous improvement of schools. Walkthroughs have been referred to as "learning walks, instructional walks, focus walks, walk-abouts, data walks, data snaps, learning visits, quick visits, mini-observations, rounds , instructionally focused walkthroughs, administrative walkthroughs, supervisory walkthroughs, collegial walkthroughs, reflective walkthroughs, classroom walkthroughs, and just walkthroughs" (Kachur, Stout, & Edwards, 2010, p. 1). Just as there are numerous variations of walkthrough names, there are also common characteristics, which can be identified by considering what defines a classroom walkthrough.

Kachur, Stout, and Edwards (2013) defined classroom walkthroughs as brief, frequent, informal, and focused visits to classrooms by observers for the purposes of gathering data on educational practices and engaging in some type of follow-up. Because of the quick, short snapshots that walkthroughs offer, walkthroughs are different from full, longer summative observation for evaluative purposes (Kachur, Stout, & Edwards, 2010). Both offer information on what is happening in the classroom concerning elements of the classroom and instruction. Elements of the classroom include such things as materials, lesson objectives, level of rigor, classroom management, and the physical environment (Kachur, Stout, & Edwards, 2013). When conducting a walkthrough, observers have a particular focus and set of look-fors in mind.

According to Berube and Dexter (2006), a classroom walkthrough is a short visit in the classroom, with the specific purposes of focusing on instruction and student learning, promoting the use of reflective dialogue between the observer and the teacher, increasing the visibility of the principal in classrooms, and promoting teacher collegiality. Walkthroughs give administrators the chance to gain information about what is taking place in the areas of teaching, learning, and assessment in classrooms.

Downey, Steffy, English, Frase, and Poston (2004) described classroom walkthroughs as short, focused and informal visits to the classroom that are not formal data-gathering situations, but instead to be used by the observer to better know the teacher's decision making approach to curricular and instructional decisions. The Center for Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement defined the walkthrough as a brief,

structured, non-evaluative classroom observation by the principal that is followed by a conversation between the principal and the teacher about what was observed (David, 2007/2008). Similarly, the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development defines classroom walkthroughs as brief visits to classrooms throughout the school, two to five minutes long, conducted on a frequent basis that are informal and non-evaluative and designed to collect patterns of data that can help members of the professional learning community to continually improve their teaching practices (David, 2007/2008).

History of Walkthroughs. The use of the classroom walkthrough is not a new educational concept. In many districts, school administrators, and other instructional leaders have been conducting walkthroughs as part of their instructional practice for years. Like many of our school practices and ideas, the walkthrough concept began its roots in the business world.

In 1982, Peters and Waterman published a business book that became a best seller. *In search of excellence: Lessons from America's best-run companies* shared some of the management techniques of the best-managed companies of that time (Peters & Waterman, 1982). A common thread shared by all of the well-performing companies was the practice of having managers leave their offices to walk around and engage with employees in an informal manner. Peters and Waterman (1982) reported that the most highly successful companies were staying close to their employees and customers instead of isolating their managers from where the work was being done. Managers were involved in the daily routines of their workers (Peters and Waterman, 1982).

American Airlines was one of the featured companies with a practice called both "visible management" and "management by walking about." Hewlett-Packard had a similar management style which they trademarked as "Management by Wandering Around" (MBWA) (Peters & Waterman, 1982, p. 122). Hewlett Packard executives introduced MBWA in the 1970s as a means to get their managers out into the work areas in their organization. Hewlett Packard wanted their managers to be close to the workers and engage them in communication about their work. In contrast to the more formal management approaches at the time, MBWA was an unstructured, informal way for managers to build relationships and gather feedback from employees (Peters & Waterman, 1982).

Frase and Hetzel (2002) asserted there are three fundamental values from MBWA that are applicable to schools: caring, openness, and trust. Caring about people, an important value throughout schools, was the hallmark of this leadership approach. In caring schools, principals and teachers put the organization above the individual, they reached out to others, and they listened to other's needs (Frase & Hetzel, 2002). Openness was another important value for principals because it was the job of the leader to create an environment where the teachers' views and input were respected and significantly valued (Frase and Hetzel, 2002). The third value of MBWA was trust. Teachers must have complete and unwavering confidence with their leader and supervisors must understand that their words, actions, and promises can communicate an attitude of trust or one of mistrust (Frase and Hetzel, 2002).

Caring, openness, and trust were the key values in employing MBWA, but being visible was the cornerstone to the MBWA approach (Peters & Waterman, 1982). Frase and Hetzel (2002) wrote that visibility alone, however, would do little for an organization's productivity unless it was coupled with a "well-focused visit" (p. 75). For educators, the classroom walkthrough addressed this component of MBWA. Classroom walkthrough observations were imitations and by-products of the business practice of MBWA. Two educational pioneers of the MBWA concept were Superintendent Tony Alvarado and Deputy Superintendent Elaine Fink from New York's Community School District Number 2 (Kachur, Stout, & Edwards, 2010). During the 1980s, Alvarado and Fink implemented walkthroughs for the district's principals, teachers, and central office leaders. Thereafter, a number of walkthrough models were developed.

Characteristics of Walkthroughs. While walkthroughs have been in practice for years, the increased attention placed on administrators to become instructional leaders has contributed to a renewed focus on walkthroughs as an instructional tool. This focus has lead to a plethora of workshops, articles, books, and presentations regarding the topic. One would assume there would be a high degree of similarity amongst authors and presenters, however, that is not the case. Classroom walkthroughs vary in what they are named, purposes for their use, steps for implementation, length of time for observations, and means for collecting and providing follow-up from the observations (Kachur et al., 2010).

The number of ways to conduct a walkthrough is astonishing (David, 2007/2008). Walkthroughs can last from 2 to 45 minutes. The group observing may range from 2 to 12 people and may include teachers, administrators, community members, and students. Furthermore, walkthroughs can center on one teacher, a whole grade level, or other instructional groups within the school (Kachur et al., 2010).

The focus, or "look-fors," of the walkthrough will vary depending on many factors. Observers may question students to find out whether they understand the learning objective. Other times, observers may focus on a particular instructional challenge raised by the teachers under observation or a look-for that was predetermined before the visit. In contrast, other walkthroughs may have observers check off how the classroom is arranged or whether the teacher has the learning objectives posted (Kachur et al., 2010). Regardless of the focus, Fink and Resnick (2001) believed supervision through classroom walkthrough observations should center on the essential elements of brevity, focus and dialogue.

Benefits of Walkthroughs. Many trade publications have reported the benefits that have evolved from classroom walkthrough observations. Keruskin (2005) wrote that used well, the walkthrough could be an instructional tool that yielded valuable information about the current level of instruction within a classroom or a school. Frequent visits to classrooms could provide principals with valuable data that could be shared with teachers in order to guide future instruction. Frequent visits also gave principals an overview of what was happening in classrooms (Kachur et al., 2010). The

classroom walkthrough allowed principals to serve as instructional leaders and to be active, collaborative participants in order to improve student achievement (Kachur et al., 2010).

Frequent walkthroughs are advantageous to principals because the data gathered during observations can be used to gauge how well improvement efforts are being implemented. These walkthroughs would evaluate how well a program or set of instructional practices that the district or school has adopted are being implemented (David, 2007/2008). Walkthroughs to multiple classrooms provide an overview of the strengths and limitations of staff so that professional development is meaningful (Kachur et al., 2010). Ginsberg and Murphy (2002) found administrators reported that these classroom visits also contributed to their own knowledge about teaching and learning.

Ginsberg and Murphy (2002) felt teachers benefited from frequent walkthroughs if timely feedback was given and that in most cases teachers welcomed the opportunities for feedback and discussion that walkthroughs provided. When teachers were offered timely, specific feedback they were able to learn more about their own teaching and they had the opportunity to be recognized for their instructional efforts (Kachur et al., 2010).

Kachur et al. (2010) found when walkthroughs are implemented, the school gained by:

- Acquired additional data about teaching and student learning

- Determine if incorporation of new curriculum & instructional initiatives

- Promotion of collegial and collaborative conversations

The observer gains by:

- Establishing a role as an instructional leader

- Maintaining visibility and accessibility

- Becoming aware of teaching and learning

The teacher gains by:

- Reflecting on their own instructional and curricular practices

- Engaging in collegial and reflective conversations

- Identifying their own professional development needs

The students gains by:

- Sharing with observers what they are learning

- Participating in school improvement

- Teaching being targeted to meet needs (p. 7-8).

Purposes of Walkthroughs. Traditionally, walkthroughs were viewed as a supplement to formal observations with almost no teacher involvement, however, many walkthrough models are designed to evaluate the process of teaching and learning, not to evaluate teachers (Kachur et al., 2010). Most instructional leaders employ some form of walkthroughs in order to either evaluate teachers or get an understanding of instructional practices taking place on campus. Many instructional leaders, however, are not aware of the varied uses of walkthroughs. There are many walkthrough models to choose from depending on the unique needs of each school. In just one book, *Engaging teachers in*

classroom walkthroughs, Kachur et al. (2013) described eighteen different walkthrough models sponsored by profit and non-profit companies and organizations.

Kachur et al. (2013) explained walkthroughs can take numerous different forms depending on their purpose. For some school leaders, the purpose of walkthroughs is to be in touch with what instructional practices are occurring in their schools on a daily basis. For others, the purposes may be more detailed and focused on particular look-fors. Before implementing a walkthrough model, school leaders must decide which walkthrough model will best suit the needs of their campus. Some schools choose a specific walkthrough model, but adjust it to better meet the needs of their school (Kachur et al., 2010). Kachur et al. (2013) described three categories of walkthrough models based on various purposes: models for research, models for instructional and curricular practices, and models for student performance and opportunities.

Models for Research. Research-based models provide professional development opportunities for the staff based on those research-based instructional practices (Kachur et al., 2013). Examples of research-based walkthrough models are the LearningWalk[SM], the Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL) Power Walkthrough[®], and the Teachscape Classroom Walkthrough (CWT).

LearningWalk[SM]. The LearningWalk[SM] was initially inspired by leadership practices observed in New York City's Community School District Number 2 as part of the High Performance Learning Communities Project (Fink & Resnick, 2001). In 1997, The Institute for Learning, a subsidiary of the Learning and Research Development

Center of the University of Pittsburgh (ILUP), adapted walkthroughs for use in its partner

districts (David, 2007/2008). The ILUP's first model, originally called the Walkthrough

model, focused on improving instruction and learning. However, in 2001 the ILUP

changed the name from the Walkthrough to the LearningWalk[SM] (Karuskin, 2005). In

comparison to the previous Walkthrough model, the LearningWalk[SM] is more of a

supervisory tool.

The ILUP describes their LearningWalk[SM] model as a tool to conduct organized

visits through classrooms, looking at teaching and learning through the Principles of

Learning (POL) (Keruskin, 2005). The goal for the POL is for schools to examine

effective instructional practices. The POL includes the following components:

- Organizing the effort

- Clear expectations

- Fair and credible evaluations

- Recognition of accomplishment

- Academic rigor in a thinking curriculum

- Accountable talk

- Socializing intelligence

- Self-management of learning

- Learner as apprenticeship (Marsh et al., 2005).

Administrators and teachers observe individually or as teams for 5 to 25 minutes in

each of several classrooms looking at student work and classroom artifacts and talking

with students and teachers (Kachur et al., 2013). The focus is on one or more of the nine

POLs. Observers record their observation on an open-ended form that enables them to

record any type of evidence. Observers do not draw conclusions on what was observed,

but rather record the wonderings and thought-provoking question for reflection and

action (Kachur et al., 2013).

After visiting a class, the group may quickly debrief before moving to another

class. The purpose of the debriefing is to synthesize the data that were gathered and to

generate questions to ask teachers. Upon completion of the LearningWalk[SM],

administration facilitates a group debriefing session with the teachers to pose questions

and to plan for subsequent visits (Marsh et al., 2005). Observation data are shared with

the staff so they can analyze, reflect, and plan for enhancement of their instructional

expertise (Kachur et al., 2013).

The Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning Power Walkthrough[®].

The Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL) Power Walkthrough[®]

uses McREL research as its foundation. This research led to the publication of *Classroom*

instruction that works: Research-based strategies for increasing student achievement

(Marzano et al., 2001). The purpose of the Power Walkthrough[®] is to allow trained

observers to observe and evaluate using a handheld device to record the extent to which

teachers are using the strategies outlined in the book. Results also include information

about teacher and student use of technology in the classroom.

Administrators and teachers may observe individually or as teams (Kachur et al., 2013). Focus and look-fors center on the extent to which teachers use the instructional strategies from Marzano, Pinkering, and Pollock's (2001) book *Classroom instruction that works: Research-based strategies for increasing student achievement* and how much technology in integrated into the classroom. Software-created reports enable observers in a school to share observations with teachers individually or as a group (Kachur et al., 2013).

The Teachscape Classroom Walkthrough. The Teachscape Classroom Walkthrough (CWT) is a technology-enabled walkthrough model with the purpose of improving student achievement by improving the instructional practices that affect student learning (Kachur et al., 2013). The CWT begins by examining student achievement data to identify areas of concern. The walks then focus on collection and analysis of data about classroom practices that impact student achievement.

Principals, assistant principals, and teachers may conduct observations (Kachur et al., 2013). Observers use the Teachscape Reflect Classroom Walkthrough, a data collection, analysis, and reporting system for brief, targeted classroom observations (Kachur et al., 2013). Feedback may be given in professional learning communities (PLCs) or during grade levels meetings with the idea to review the classroom walkthrough data in order to reflect on what is happening in the classroom (Kachur et al., 2013).

Models for Instructional and Curricular Practices. The protocols in some walkthrough models are primarily driven by the desire to examine classroom practices and study the relationship between instructional practices and student performance (Kachur et al., 2013). Some examples of models for instructional and curricular practices are the Downey Three-Minute Classroom Walk-Through, the Walkthrough Observation Tool (WOT), and Data-in-a-Day (DIAD).

The Downey Three-Minute Classroom Walkthrough. Carolyn Downey, the developer of the Three-Minute Classroom Walkthrough and an administrator during the 1960s, was asked by a teacher to start being more visible in classrooms (Rossi, 2007). As a result, she began spending time in classrooms, hoping that this would send a message that she knew their jobs were important (Downey, Steffy, English, Frase, & Poston, 2004). These visits were well received by staff, which indicated to Downey the potential of these frequent visits to classrooms. A few years later, she adopted the Madeline Hunter model for teacher evaluation (Downey et al., 2004). Later, Downey incorporated a reflective piece into her own walkthrough model (Downey et al., 2004).

The Downey Walkthrough is intended to take 2 to 3 minutes for the observer to gain information about the curriculum and instructional practices, not to evaluate or judge the teacher (Downey, et al., 2004). Additionally, Downey et al. (2004) asserts that "through frequent, short observations, you become familiar with the teaching patterns and decisions teachers are making on a daily basis. Over time, you will obtain far more

information about teachers and the school when you stay in each classroom for just a few minutes per visit" (p. 2).

The goal of the Downey walkthrough is to collect data in a brief, focused, and informal manner. To accomplish this, Downey, et al. (2004), outlined a five-step structure that suggests ways for principals to respond to the observation. The first step is for the principal to observe what the students are doing. The second step is to look at what the learning objective is and see if the objective matches the district's scope and sequence. The third step is to observe if the instructional practices the teacher has chosen for the students is going to help students achieve the learning objective. The fourth step is to "walk-the-walls" for proof of student learning. The fifth step is to see if there are any health or safety issues in the classroom.

Walkthrough Observation Tool. The Walkthrough Observation Tool (WOT), developed by Otto Graf and Joseph Werlinich, is a means for looking at the process of teaching and learning (Graf & Werlinich, 2002). Developed through the Western Pennsylvania Principals Academy, the purpose of this model is to see the entire school as a system in operation and to begin to gather baseline data around a range of effective instructional practices (Kachur et al., 2010).

WOT observations may be conducted by principals, teachers and others. Look-fors include students' learning behaviors and work, level of engagement, and quality of work. The number of visitations may vary, however, 8 to 12 classroom visits of approximately five minutes each are usually conducted throughout the year. A variety of

strategies are used for debriefing with teachers and in some instances with students (Kachur et al., 2010).

According to Graf and Werlinich (2002), the implementation of their WOT is a development process. The first step to implementing the WOT is for the principal to become visible in the classrooms and to reinforce effective teaching practices and positive efforts, while collecting data around instructional practices. The second step is for the principal is to work with the staff to establish clear expectations for the walkthrough. The next step is for the principal to establish a focus with the teachers centered on key elements of effective instruction to improve student achievement (Graff & Werlinich, 2002).

Data-in-a-Day. Data-in-a-Day (DIAD) is an early walkthrough model that appeared around 1998 (Kachur et al., 2010). DIAD was originally developed by representatives from the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory in Portland, Oregon. DIAD is a walkthrough tool that provides a short, but intensive opportunity for a school to gather data about issues that both students and staff view as important (Kachur et al., 2010). Staff members, or a combination of staff and students, collectively observe and summarize data organized around themes that are identified in advance and then reported to the school leadership. Observers, called "research teams," conduct morning walkthroughs and then convene over lunch into "analysis groups" to discuss findings (Kachur et al., 2010). DIAD is unique in that it allows for students to participate as active

members of the research teams, thus enabling a school to listen to students' voices about their own learning.

In the DIAD model, walkthroughs typically occur three times annually. Four focus questions from the Motivation Framework for Culturally Responsive Teaching are used to help guide the observed look-fors (Kachur et al., 2010). Data from the walkthroughs are then used to create a common school culture that is acceptable to all adults (Ginsberg & Wlodkowski, 2009). The framework represents four conditions, which include inclusion, attitude, meaning, and competence with the goal to provide a culture that has a continuous intrinsic motivation to learn (Ginsberg & Wlodkowski, 2009).

Teams are provided with rubrics that are centered around the Motivation Framework so they can note what to observe across classrooms (Kachur et al., 2010). Each team visits six classrooms for 20 minutes each before summarizing and analyzing their observation data. Teams then share their observations and recommendations with building staff for further reflection and action.

Models for Student Performance and Opportunities. Some walkthrough models focus specifically on student performance and opportunity (Kachur et al., 2013). Examples of student performance and opportunity models are the Equity Learning Walk (ELW), the Instructional Practices Inventory (IPI) Process, and Look 2 Learning (L2L).

The Equity Learning Walk. The Equity Learning Walk (ELW) is a grass-roots model used in the Kansas City, Kansas Public Schools. The purpose ELW is to provide a

school profile that would reveal equity in terms of instructional and opportunities for all students in the school (Kachur et al., 2010). The ELW is designed to be used by team members, such as the principal, instructional coach teachers, and others. Visits are conducted to host schools once a semester or scheduled when changes in a school or district have been initiated. Visits last ten minutes at most and observations are only recorded when concrete examples of evidence revealing equity are observed. Each member of the touring team discusses what he or she learned from the process and offers warm and cool feedback to the host school team (Kachur et al., 2010). The principal of the host school then decides how to share feedback with teachers.

The Instructional Practices Inventory Process. The Instructional Practices Inventory (IPI) Process was developed by Jerry Valentine and Bryan Painter of the University of Missouri in Columbia, Missouri, in 1996 (Kachur et al., 2010). The IPI was initially designed to be used in a multi-year, comprehensive, systemic school reform of the Missouri Center for School Improvement. Later refined by Valentine in 2002, the IPI became a walkthrough system for codifying student engagement during instruction.

Three broad categories associated with student engagement were identified as the foundation for the IPI (Valentine, 2005). They were characterized as student-engaged instruction, teacher-directed instruction, and student disengagement (Valentine, 2005). Valentine (2005) found that more detailed categories were needed that would provide specific data about student engagement and learning experiences with the focus primarily on what the students were doing and secondarily to what teachers were doing.

IPI Teams use an observation rubric for recording data on observed student engagement (Kachur et al., 2013). The observer travels from classroom to classroom collecting snapshots of student engagement using observation protocols. A typical observation day can result in approximately 125 to 150 observations of one to three minutes each, and with a minimum of 100 observations expected (Kachur et al., 2010). The observer then constructs a school-wide profile of engagement.

The Look 2 Learning Walkthrough Model. The Look 2 Learning (L2L) walkthrough model, formerly called SMART Walks, was developed by Colleagues on Call in Phoenix, Arizona (Kachur et al., 2010). The L2L model allows the principal, coaches, or teachers to visit classrooms with the purpose to improve student achievement by generating and analyzing data on rigor, relevance, and student engagement (Kachur et al., 2010). The L2L model focuses on student learning, not what the teacher is doing in the classroom. Rather than focusing on the teacher's classroom practices, L2L captures information about and from the learners on either simple recording forms or the Look 2 Learning software (Kachur et al., 2010).

The data collected through walkthroughs is anonymous. Principals and teachers collaborate to analyze data and reflect on classroom patterns. These patterns help identify how to strengthen practices school-wide to improve student learning and target professional development (Kachur et al., 2010).

Involving Teachers in Walkthroughs

In relation to walkthroughs, teachers can be somewhat reluctant to open their classroom door to observers. Involving teachers in the classroom walkthrough process, however, can help foster an environment where professional conversations about teaching and learning are the norm (Kachur et al., 2013). In schools that are highly successful, teachers are involved in every level when it comes to improvement efforts (Kachur et al., 2010). Helping teachers feel comfortable with any new process is imperative to gaining support and engagement in new school initiatives.

Kachur et al. (2013) discovered successful schools actively involved teacher leaders to increase teacher advocacy when introducing a new walkthrough protocol as part of continuous school improvement. Before actual implementation, the walkthrough plan needs to be thought out and gradually introduced so teachers have time to process and adjust (Kachur et al., 2013). When the process is transparent, all stakeholders know the purpose, the protocols, and what to expect. The stakeholders who will be participating in the walkthrough process should be aware of norms and procedures before engaging in observations (Kachur et al., 2013). Teacher training must also take place so teachers understand the processes, such as how to observe in classrooms, what to look for, how to use the forms or software, how to record data in a nonjudgmental manner, and how to summarize and discuss trends in practices (Kachur et al., 2013).

Kachur, Stout, and Edwards (2013) advocated that anytime teachers are able to volunteer versus being mandated to comply in a new mandate, there is better chance of

buy-in and participation. Additionally, when teachers understand the walkthrough focus is on student learning, rather than their teaching, some of the nervousness teachers may feel during observations can be alleviated. Observation data should be shared without any trace of evaluative or judgmental comments (Kachur et al., 2013).

Ginsberg and Murphy (2002) recommended that teachers and administrators work together to create the walkthrough process. After a walkthrough model is decided upon, the walkthrough process should be revaluated after the initial trial period to ensure participants are conducting the walkthroughs with fidelity, otherwise the process can be useless or even detrimental to the process (Kachur et al., 2010). David (2007/2008) stated that when the purpose of the walkthrough is unclear or when trust in low, walkthroughs are likely to be perceived as compliance checks, further increasing distrust and tension. Valli and Buese (2007) reported an increase of teacher anxiety in their four-year study of 150 teachers in a district that instituted walkthroughs. Valli and Buese (2007) found participants had a difficult time believing that walkthrough data would not be use for evaluative purposes, even when told that was not the intent. In one urban district where principals were surveyed, more than one-half of the principals felt they were being judged by district observers conducting school walkthroughs (Supovitz & Weathers, 2004).

Manning (1998) believed the fact that teachers have little contact with other adults at work creates a problem of morale and a problem for growth. Kachur et al. (2013) stated that teachers who are involved in classroom walkthroughs have increased

opportunities to talk with each other about instruction, challenges, strengths, and needs. Additionally, teachers and administrators have more opportunities to work together to improve instruction when walkthroughs are a collaborative process.

The use of teachers as part of walkthroughs can also help transform walkthroughs from being a seen as an evaluative process into a tool for overall school improvement. Including teachers in walkthroughs increases staff morale, collegiality, and communication (Manning, 1988). The more teachers are involved in the walkthrough process, the more trust and support they will have, allowing everyone to benefit (Kachur et al., 2010). Involving teachers as observers in the walkthrough process can also transform the entire school into a learning community and help build a culture that values the engagement of teachers in continuous and sustained professional growth. Walkthroughs provide an avenue for teachers to become responsible for their own professional growth and are an excellent complement to traditional professional development practices (Kachur et al., 2013).

Walkthroughs as a Basis for Professional Development

Walkthrough feedback is a valuable resource to help guide professional development opportunities for either individual or groups of teachers. The Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) (2002) described professional development as any activity that is focused on helping teachers improve instruction or classroom practices with student achievement and the support of learning needs in mind. Fullan (1991) asserted that professional development is "the sum total of formal and

informal learning experiences throughout one's career from pre-service teacher education to retirement" (p. 326).

Spicer (2008) noted that the professional development plans of schools have been under fire for years. As school leaders are faced with the inevitable NCLB and high-stakes testing, determining the content, context, and process to implement professional development becomes crucial to the success of professional development (Spicer, 2008). The U.S. Department of Education's Professional Development Team stated professional development assists teachers in moving from where they are now to where they need to be to meet the differentiated needs of all students (Culbertson, 1996). Further, if professional development practices are inadequately designed, teachers will fail to meet the challenge of guiding all students in achieving higher standards of development and learning (Culbertson, 1996). ASCD conducted a survey in 2012 at their annual conference and 68% of respondents indicated that ongoing, job-embedded professional development was the only way to ensure alignment of instructional practices (Kachur et al., 2013).

The purpose of professional development is to improve a teacher's ability to teach, however, many teachers feel that the usual professional development days are a waste of time and have little impact on their improvement (Annunziata, 1997). According to Annunziata (1997), teachers indicated that professional development days are typically one-day deals that hype the latest faddish program or professional development time is spent making foldables or listening to a hired consultant of some sort. Just as students

come with a variety of needs, so do teachers. Church (2009) maintained that professional development programs should strive to meet the diverse needs of teachers while supporting effective professional development practices. Guskey (1995) warned that a one-size-fits-all approach to professional development is not effective and can no longer be applied. McLaughlin and Yee (1988) believe that the traditional top-down teaching strategies will not improve student achievement. When thinking about the design, implementation, and evaluation of professional development practices, the diverse and unique needs of teachers should be kept in mind.

According to Annunziata (1997), effective supervision and staff development must be meld together to improve instruction, thus ultimately improving student achievement. Student achievement data and classroom walkthroughs should guide the kind of professional development needed in order to build teacher's capacity to make necessary instructional adjustments (Kachur et al., 2010). Professional development and the walkthrough process need to be meaningful to teachers in order to further their instructional expertise (Keruskin, 2005). When walkthrough feedback is purposeful, it can be a catalyst to improve teachers' attitudes toward professional development (Downey et.al, 2004).

Walkthroughs alone, however, will not improve practice. Meaningful feedback should trigger areas for continual growth and goal-setting, an awareness of strengths and areas for improvement, followed by opportunities to learn. Darling-Hammond (2013) states walkthroughs can spark meaningful professional learning as teachers set goals and

pursue them with the assistance of administrator and colleagues. Walkthroughs also flag areas for further support that are made available through a cycle of ongoing professional development (Darling-Hammond, 2013).

Supovitz and Weathers (2004) reported district leaders and principals from a large, urban district found that data from walkthroughs offered a clear understanding of how well teachers were able to identify and move students in and out of instructional support programs. This finding led leaders and principals to make adjustments in the professional development provided for the district (Supovitz & Weathers, 2004). A study conducted by Frase (1998) focused on principal walkthroughs and professional development. Frase (1998) found that the frequency of principal classroom visits predicted teachers' perception of teacher evaluation and professional development. As the number of walkthroughs increased, so did the teachers' perceived value for professional development practices. The study by Frase (1998) supports the notion that walkthroughs may improve the teacher's attitude regarding professional development, which may in turn improve student achievement.

Conclusion

Classroom walkthroughs have been an instructional strategy that has been employed since the initial days of the one-room schoolhouse. Proclaimed as a systematic and efficient way to gather helpful data on instructional practices (David, 2007/2008), classroom walkthroughs have become an indispensable part of school culture. Additionally, feedback from walkthroughs has been reported to impact student

achievement through the monitoring of instruction. Moreover, data gathered from walkthroughs is ideally utilized to guide teacher professional development, since professional development should be strategic and specific to the individual needs of the teacher and school. The amount of literature and trade articles concerning walkthroughs is abundant, however, there is little empirical research concerning the teachers' perceptions of the walkthrough as it pertains to teacher effectiveness, classroom instructional guidance, or input for professional development.

In Chapter II, the researcher reviewed research and literature relevant to the study. The methodology of the study will be presented in Chapter III, which will include a description of the research questions, the research design, identification and description of participating subjects, instrumentation, data collection, and data analysis.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Classroom walkthroughs are a common tool used to observe classrooms. The review of literature demonstrated numerous walkthrough models and practitioner articles, but minimal empirical research concerning classroom walkthroughs, especially as it relates to teacher effectiveness. The purpose of this study was to analyze teachers' perceptions of classroom walkthrough observations to determine if teachers perceived walkthrough feedback to be beneficial in increasing their effectiveness. Classroom walkthroughs are one of the multiple measures used in the teacher appraisal process to help give a complete picture of a teacher's effectiveness. Further, this study sought to ascertain if teachers utilize walkthrough feedback to help inform their professional development decisions and or improve their classroom instruction. Teachers' perceptions were analyzed through survey questions as part of a larger survey project that sought to study many aspects of walkthrough practices and walkthrough feedback.

Research Questions

In an effort to successfully gather data concerning teacher perceptions about walkthrough feedback, four research questions were formulated.

1. Do teachers' perceptions of whether classroom walkthrough feedback improves teacher effectiveness differ based on years of service?

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2. Do teachers' perceptions of whether classroom walkthrough feedback improves teacher effectiveness differ based on the frequency of walkthroughs?

3. Do teachers perceive that classroom walkthrough feedback provides input for professional development?

4. Do teachers perceive that classroom walkthrough feedback improves their classroom instruction?

Research Design

The study sought to explore the relationship between the number of years service (independent variable) and teachers' perceptions of classroom walkthrough feedback's influence on teacher effectiveness (dependent variable) as indicated in research question one by conducting an ANOVA statistical test. Teachers' experience was an appropriate mediating variable because past research indicated experienced teachers with tenure develop increased negative attitudes toward staff development (Torff, Sessions, & Byrne, 2005). Additionally, the researcher conducted an ANOVA statistical test to analyze whether the frequency of walkthroughs (independent variable) influenced teachers' perceptions of classroom walkthrough feedback's impact on teacher effectiveness (dependent variable), as indicated in research questions two. Descriptive statistics were utilized to analyze the data gathered for research question three and four. Question three explored whether feedback from classroom walkthroughs helped teachers inform their professional development decisions. Question four explored whether feedback from

classroom walkthroughs helped teachers improve their classroom instruction. Quantitative design was suitable for finding evidence supporting or challenging research questions and for quantifying the results to remove any bias.

Identification and Description of Participating Subjects

A power analysis for ANOVA designs was conducted using a Statistical Analysis Software (SAS) program that calculates power or sample size needed to attain a given power for one effect in a factorial ANOVA design. The program is based on specifying effect size in terms of the range of treatment means, and calculating the minimum power, or maximum required sample size. To design a study at a level of 80% power with a significance level of .05 and an effect size of .75, the minimum number of participants needed for the study was 65.

Next, a list of all Texas Public School Districts was compiled using the AskTED District Directory database on the Texas Education Agency's website. A search to include all Texas, public school districts in each of the 20 Region Service Centers was conducted. The search revealed 1032 school districts with a total of 9,311 elementary, middle, or high schools.

A list of the 1032 school districts was compiled and only those districts with 20 or fewer schools were included in the study. The researcher excluded larger school districts to help manage time spent searching individual school websites for teacher emails. Additionally, only public schools that provide regular instruction in grades prekindergarten through twelve were considered and all charter, residential, alternative,

and magnet schools were excluded. There are 939 Texas school districts with 20 or fewer schools.

The Statistical Package for the Service Solutions Version 17.0 (SPSS 17.0) statistical software program was used to garner a randomized sample of the 939 school districts to select 10% of the cases. There were 95 randomly selected districts. The researcher conducted the initial random sample to reduce the number of districts into a more manageable number before the district websites were checked to see if teachers' email accounts were accessible from school web sites. There were 61 districts with accessible teacher email addresses. The researcher then used SPSS 17.0 to garner a 20% random sample from the 61 districts. The final participation count included 13 districts and 2425 teachers across the state of Texas. A total of 397 respondents replied to the survey for a 16% response rate.

Instrumentation

A total of 397 Texas teachers participated in the walkthrough survey underlying this study. The survey collected individual demographic data on the teachers themselves, walkthrough demographic data for the campus to which the teacher is assigned, as well as feedback demographic data. Individual demographic data selected for use in this study included:

- Gender;
- School level for current teaching assignment; and
- Years of service as a public school teacher.

Walkthrough demographic data used in this study included:

- Number of walkthroughs received on average during the school year;

- Optimal number of walkthroughs teachers should receive during the school year;

- Average length of time for a walkthrough; and

- Walkthroughs as part of the formal teacher appraisal process.

Feedback demographic data used in this study included:

- Frequency of walkthrough feedback;

- Method of walkthrough feedback;

- Feedback to increase teacher effectiveness;

- Feedback to provide input for professional development;

- Feedback to improve classroom instruction.

The 12 question survey instrument for this study was developed by the researcher. Questions one, two, and three are demographic in nature. Questions four through nine were developed by the researcher based on input and feedback from the dissertation committee. The researcher utilized the research questions from the study to develop the last three survey questions.

Once the survey instrument was developed, the researcher submitted the instrument to a validating jury. Twenty of the 29 teachers asked to participate on the validation jury responded to the request. The 20 jury members consisted of Texas public school teachers currently teaching at the elementary, middle, or high school level in the researcher's school district. The jury reviewed the survey and offered recommendations pertaining to

the clarity of the questions and instructions. Six of the validating jury members stated that a comment area should be added. The researcher added a comment section, although the information from the comment section will not be analyzed for the purposes of the research. No other questions were reduced or added.

The validating jury approved of the survey instrument and found the tool to clear and well-organized with all of the questions falling within the scope of the study. Once finalized, the survey was sent electronically to teachers via email with a link to the Survey Monkey® website.

Procedures for the Collection of Data

To assure a randomized sample, a list of all Texas public school districts was made. From this list, schools at the elementary, middle or junior high, and high school levels were randomly selected. Only districts with employee websites were considered for the project. Once school districts were identified, all teachers in each district were invited by email to participate in the study. The body of the email contained an explanation of the study and a link to connect participants to the survey instrument. To protect the privacy and confidentiality of respondents, a code was assigned to each survey. Surveys were emailed to respondents in October. After a one week period, the researcher emailed a reminder to those respondents who had not yet completed the survey. The survey was closed after a two week period because the sample size criterion was met based on the power analysis.

Procedures for the Analysis of Data

The data were analyzed using SPSS 17.0. A one-way ANOVA was applied to analyze differences between group means for research questions one and two with the statistical significance level being set at 0.05. Descriptive statistics were utilized to analyze the data from research questions three and four. Descriptive statistics was an appropriate analysis method for research questions three and four in order to describe and summarize data in a meaningful way to identify any patterns that might emerge from the data.

Summary

This chapter restated the purpose of the study and the four research questions. A description of the participating subjects along with a demographic analysis was provided. The development and validation of the survey instrument were discussed. Procedures for the selection of the 397 survey participants were explained. The study design and rationale for the use of a one-way ANOVA test for questions one and two and descriptive statistics for questions three and four were stated. Procedures for the collection and analyses of data were also presented as part of the explanation of the methodology used in the study.

In Chapter III, the researcher reviewed the methodology of the study. The presentation and analysis of data will be presented in Chapter IV, which will include a description of the participants and the response rate, a demographic analysis, and an analysis of the research questions and the hypotheses testing.

CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

The purpose of this study was to analyze teachers' perceptions of classroom walkthrough observations to determine if teachers perceived walkthrough feedback to be beneficial in increasing their effectiveness. Walkthroughs are one of the multiple measures used in the teacher appraisal process to help give a complete picture of a teacher's effectiveness. Further, this study sought to ascertain if teachers utilize walkthrough feedback to help inform their professional development decisions and or improve their classroom instruction. Teachers' perceptions were analyzed through survey questions as part of a larger survey project that sought to study many aspects of walkthrough practices and feedback.

Permission to conduct the study was granted by the Institutional Review Board of Tarleton State University on June 11, 2013. A survey instrument developed by the researcher was used to collect data from 397 elementary, middle, and high school teachers across the state of Texas (See Appendix E). Data collection occurred in October, 2013 and the analysis was carried out following the procedures outlined in Chapter III.

Participants and Response Rate

As displayed in Table 1, a total of 2,425 surveys were emailed to participants in 13 independent school districts (ISD) across the state of Texas.

Table 1

Participating School Districts

District	Student Enrollment	County	Emails Sent
Bridgeport ISD	2205	Wise	154
Cherokee ISD	123	San Saba	18
Chireno ISD	378	Nacogdoches	32
Clint ISD	11,762	El Paso	467
Ector ISD	275	Fannin	24
Gainesville ISD	2,788	Cooke	147
Gunter ISD	805	Grayson	59
Hays CISD	16,568	Hays	1,068
Louise ISD	483	Wharton	38
Milford ISD	230	Ellis	24
New Braunfels ISD	8,104	Comal	332
Texline ISD	146	Dallam	17
Thorndale ISD	580	Milam	45
Total Emails Sent			2,425

Teachers included all elementary, middle and high school levels, teaching at tested or non-tested subject areas, representing the diversity of Texas. A total of 397 respondents replied to the survey for a 16% response rate.

Demographic Analysis

The survey collected individual demographic data on the teachers themselves, classroom walkthrough demographic data for the campus to which the teacher is assigned, as well as classroom walkthrough feedback demographic data. The following tables present a detailed description of each of the above-listed demographics. Information for the following set of tables was derived using a frequency analysis function provided as part of the computer software package SPSS 17.0.

Gender of teachers surveyed. The gender distribution of the teachers surveyed for this study was a percentage split of 20.4% male and 79.6% female, and is detailed in Table 2.

Table 2

Gender of Teachers

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative %
Valid	Male	81	20.4	20.4	20.4
	Female	316	79.6	79.6	100.0
	Total	397	100.0	100.0	

School level for current teaching assignment. Texas independent school districts are not uniform in how school levels and feeder patterns are structured. Some districts differentiate the K – 12 grades into three levels (elementary-middle-high), with middle school also being termed junior high school or intermediate school. There are also districts with high school variations between the two models of 9 – 12, and 10 – 12 with a segregated 9th grade. To accurately and efficiently organize these data in a manner that could be meaningfully and consistently manipulated with statistical software tools, categories were established based on the most prevalent trends and patterns from the randomly selected districts. The three categories developed, proposed, and approved for use in this study were: "Elementary," "Middle or Junior High," and "High." In Table 3, the analysis shows that 46.6% of the respondents were teaching elementary school children.

Table 3

School Level for Current Teaching Assignment

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative %
Valid	Elementary school	185	46.6	46.6	46.6
	Middle school or Junior high school	80	20.2	20.2	66.8
	High school	131	33.0	33.0	99.7
	Other	1	.3	.3	100.0
	Total	397	100.0	100.0	

One respondent recorded "Other" as their current teaching assignment, however, only teachers in elementary, middle, and high school teachers were emailed and asked to participate.

Years of service as a public school teacher. Teachers were asked to self-report their years of service as a public school teacher. Table 4 reflects the years of experience as a public school teacher for the 397 responding teachers in this study. Thirty-one percent of the respondents have been teaching in public school setting for 10 – 20 years.

Table 4

Years of Service as a Public School Teacher

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative %
Valid	1 – 4 years	95	23.9	23.9	23.9
	5 – 9 years	118	29.7	29.7	53.7
	10 – 20 years	123	31.0	31.0	84.6
	21 years or more	61	15.4	15.4	100.0
	Total	397	100.0	100.0	

Number of walkthroughs during the school year. As reported by approximately one third or 34.3% of teachers, the average number of walkthroughs received during the school year is 4 – 6. The results of this question are summarized in Table 5.

Table 5

Number of Walkthroughs Received on Average During the School Year

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative %
Valid	1 – 3	108	27.2	27.2	27.2
	4 – 6	136	34.3	34.3	61.5
	7 – 9	40	10.1	10.1	71.5
	10 or more	113	28.5	28.5	100.0
	Total	397	100.0	100.0	

Number of walkthroughs teachers should receive. Participating teachers were asked to give an opinion as to how many walkthroughs teachers should receive during the school year. According to data in Table 6, 38.5% of the respondents responded 4 – 6 was the optimal number of walkthroughs teachers should receive during the school year.

Table 6

Optimal Number of Walkthroughs Teachers Should Receive During the School Year

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative %
Valid	0	8	2.0	2.0	2.0
	1 – 3	88	22.2	22.2	24.2
	4 – 6	153	38.5	38.5	62.7
	7 – 9	56	14.1	14.1	76.8
	10 or more	92	23.2	23.2	100.0
	Total	397	100.0	100.0	

Average length of time for a walkthrough. Walkthroughs may vary in length depending on the participants, reason for the walkthrough, or the walkthrough model adopted by individual schools or districts. Teachers were asked to mark how long their walkthroughs generally averaged. As shown in Table 7, 43.8% of teachers reported that walkthrough observers spent an average of 5 – 9 minutes in their classroom.

Table 7

Average Length of Time for a Walkthrough

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative %
Valid	1 – 4 minutes	60	15.1	15.1	15.1
	5 – 9 minutes	174	43.8	43.8	58.9
	10 or more minutes	163	41.1	41.1	100.0
	Total	397	100.0	100.0	

Walkthroughs as part of the teacher appraisal process. Classroom walkthroughs are one of the multiple measures used in the teacher appraisal process. Teachers were asked whether walkthroughs were a part of their school's teacher appraisal system. Out of the 397 respondents, 88.7% responded that walkthroughs were a part of their school's teacher appraisal process, 6.5% responded that walkthroughs were not a part of their school's teacher appraisal process, and 4.8% were unsure. Table 8 contains the statistics from this question.

Table 8

Walkthroughs as Part of the Formal Teacher Appraisal Process

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative %
Valid	Yes	352	88.7	88.7	88.7
	No	26	6.5	6.5	95.2
	Unsure	19	4.8	4.8	100.0
	Total	397	100.0	100.0	

Frequency of walkthrough feedback. After a walkthrough, an administrator may provide the teacher feedback based on observations noted during a visit. Teachers were surveyed in regards to whether feedback is provided after walkthroughs. Table 9 shows 62.7% of the respondents expressed that they always receive feedback after walkthroughs.

Table 9

Frequency of Walkthrough Feedback

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative %
Valid	Never	2	.5	.5	.5
	Rarely	10	2.5	2.5	3.0
	Sometimes	65	16.4	16.4	19.4
	Often	71	17.9	17.9	37.3
	Always	249	62.7	62.7	100.0
	Total	397	100.0	100.0	

Method of walkthrough feedback. If feedback is received, the survey

questionnaire asked teachers to report how that feedback is most often given.

Respondents were asked to indicate if feedback was most often given in a verbal, written,

or electronic format. Electronic format included email correspondence or feedback sent

through a classroom walkthrough or teacher appraisal software program. As shown in

Table 10, 86.9% of the respondents expressed that feedback is most commonly received

electronically through a software program.

Table 10

Method of Walkthrough Feedback

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative %
Valid	Verbal feedback	15	3.8	3.8	3.8
	Written feedback	35	8.8	8.8	12.6
	Electronic feedback through software program	345	86.9	86.9	99.5
	I do not receive feedback	2	.5	.5	100.0
	Total	397	100.0	100.0	

Feedback to increase teacher effectiveness. Survey respondents were asked to

rate whether feedback from walkthroughs helped to increase their effectiveness as a

teacher. Table 11 indicates that over half, or 52.4% of the respondents, somewhat agreed

that feedback after a walkthrough helps to increase their effectiveness in the classroom.

Ten of the 397 respondents did not answer question 10 on the survey. During the survey, participants had to click on a tab to get to the next screen containing the last three questions. These 10 missing responses account for 2.5% of the total responses and are noted as missing from the system in Table 11. Thus, 387 respondents completed question 10 of the survey.

Table 11

Walkthrough Feedback Helps Increase Your Effectiveness

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative %
Valid	Strongly Agree	79	19.9	20.4	20.4
	Somewhat Agree	208	52.4	53.7	74.2
	Somewhat Disagree	57	14.4	14.7	88.9
	Strongly Disagree	32	8.1	8.3	97.2
	Not Sure	11	2.8	2.8	100.0
	Total	387	97.5	100.0	
Missing	System	10	2.5		
Total		397	100.0		

Feedback to provide input for professional development. Survey respondents were asked to rate whether feedback from walkthroughs helped to provide input for their professional development. Findings from Table 12 show that 44.6% of the respondents somewhat agreed that feedback after a walkthrough influences their decisions when it comes to choosing professional development. Ten of the 397 respondents did not answer

question 11 on the survey. During the survey, participants had to click on a tab to get to the next screen containing the last three questions. These 10 missing responses account for 2.5% of the total responses and are noted as missing from the system in Table 12. Thus, 387 respondents completed question 11 of the survey.

Table 12

Walkthrough Feedback Helps Provide Input for Professional Development

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative %
Valid	Strongly Agree	60	15.1	15.5	15.5
	Somewhat Agree	177	44.6	45.7	61.2
	Somewhat Disagree	82	20.7	21.2	82.4
	Strongly Disagree	49	12.3	12.7	95.1
	Not Sure	19	4.8	4.9	100.0
	Total	387	97.5	100.0	
Missing	System	10	2.5		
Total		397	100.0		

Feedback to improve classroom instruction. Survey respondents were asked to rate whether feedback from walkthroughs helped to improve their classroom instruction. As shown in Table 13, 48.6% of the respondents somewhat agreed that feedback after a walkthrough helps them to improve their classroom instruction. Ten of the 397 respondents did not answer question 12 on the survey. During the survey, participants

had to click on a tab to get to the next screen containing the last three questions. These 10

missing responses account for 2.5% of the total responses and are noted as missing from

the system in Table 13. Thus, 387 respondents completed question 12 of the survey.

Table 13

Walkthrough Feedback Helps Improve Your Classroom Instruction

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative %
Valid	Strongly Agree	79	19.9	20.4	20.4
	Somewhat Agree	193	48.6	49.9	70.3
	Somewhat Disagree	61	15.4	15.8	86.0
	Strongly Disagree	43	10.8	11.1	97.2
	Not Sure	11	2.8	2.8	100.0
	Total	387	97.5	100.0	
Missing	System	10	2.5		
Total		397	100.0		

Research Questions and Hypotheses Testing

To analyze teachers' perceptions of walkthroughs, the following four research

questions were examined.

1. Do teachers' perceptions of whether classroom walkthrough feedback

   improves teacher effectiveness differ based on years of service?

2. Do teachers' perceptions of whether classroom walkthrough feedback improves teacher effectiveness differ based on the frequency of walkthroughs?

3. Do teachers perceive that classroom walkthrough feedback provides input for professional development?

4. Do teachers perceive that classroom walkthrough feedback improves their classroom instruction?

The data were analyzed using the SPSS 17.0 statistic software program. A one-way ANOVA was applied to analyze differences between group means for research questions one and two with the statistical significance level being set at 0.05. Descriptive statistics were utilized to analyze the data and identify any patterns that might emerge from research questions three and four. The findings from the data analyses are presented by research question. The research questions, null hypotheses, and results of the data analysis are presented in the numerical order in which the questions were presented in the study.

Research Question 1. Do teachers' perceptions of whether classroom walkthrough feedback improves teacher effectiveness differ based on years of service?

$H_0 1$: There is no significant difference in the perceptions of teachers toward classroom walkthrough feedback's improvement of teacher effectiveness based on the number of years service.

As displayed in Table 14, the grouping variable (independent variable) represented numbers of years service. A Likert scale was used to measure the perceptions of teachers with five choices representing the degree of agreement each respondent had on the given question. The scale of *Strongly Disagree* (1), *Somewhat Disagree* (2), *Not Sure* (3), *Somewhat Agree* (4), and *Strongly Agree* (5) was used to interpret the total responses of all the respondents by computing the weighted mean. The mean score for the teachers who had 1 – 4 years service was 3.89, 5 – 9 years was 3.72, 3.38 for teachers 10 – 20 years and those who had taught for more than 21 years was 3.57 for walkthrough feedback helps to increase teacher effectiveness.

Table 14

Descriptive Statistics for Walkthrough Feedback Helps Increase Teacher Effectiveness Based on Number of Years Service

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean Lower Bound	95% Confidence Interval for Mean Upper Bound	Minimum	Maximum
1 – 4 years	93	3.8925	1.11767	.11590	3.6623	4.1227	1.00	5.00
5 – 9 years	115	3.7217	1.09663	.10226	3.5192	3.9243	1.00	5.00
10 – 20 years	121	3.3802	1.28618	.11693	3.1487	3.6117	1.00	5.00
21 years or more	58	3.5690	1.24410	.16336	3.2418	3.8961	1.00	5.00
Total	387	3.6331	1.19790	.06089	3.5134	3.7528	1.00	5.00

To test the null hypothesis of no differences in the perceptions of teachers toward classroom walkthrough feedback's influence on teacher effectiveness based on the number of years service, a one-way ANOVA was performed. The level of significance (alpha level) for statistical testing was set at the 0.05 level of probability. Table 15 shows that there is a statistically significant difference between the means of feedback of the four groups at a 0.014 significance level with 3 degrees of freedom and 383 for within group mean squares (variance estimate). Hence, perceptions for whether feedback from walkthroughs improved teacher effectiveness differed significantly across the four groups, $F(3,383) = 3.588$, $p = .014$.

Table 15

Test Statistics for the ANOVA Test for Walkthrough Feedback Helps You Increase Your Effectiveness Based on Number of Years Service

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	15.140	3	5.047	3.588	.014
Within Groups	538.757	383	1.407		
Total	553.897	386			

To determine where the difference lies in the means, a Tukey post-hoc test was applied. As revealed in Table 16, Tukey post-hoc comparisons of the four groups indicated that teachers with 1 – 4 years of service ($M = 3.89$, 95% CI [3.66, 4.12]) perceived feedback from walkthroughs helped to increase their effectiveness at a significantly higher preference rating than teachers with 10 – 20 years of service ($M =$

3.38, 95% CI [3.15, 3.61]), *p* = .010. Comparisons between teachers with 5 – 9 years of

service (*M* = 3.72, 95% CI [3.52, 3.92]) and teachers with 21 years or more of service (*M*

= 3.57, 95% CI [3.24, 3.90]) and the other two groups were not statistically significant at

p < .05.

Table 16

Tukey HSD Comparisons for Walkthrough Feedback Helps You Increase Your
Effectiveness Based on Number of Years Service

(I) For how many years have you been a PUBLIC school teacher?	(J) For how many years have you been a PUBLIC school teacher?	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1-4 years	5-9 years	.17073	.16540	.731	-.2561	.5975
	10-20 years	.51231*	.16356	.010	.0903	.9343
	21+ years	.32351	.19844	.363	-.1885	.8356
5-9 years	1-4 years	-.17073	.16540	.731	-.5975	.2561
	10-20 years	.34157	.15446	.122	-.0570	.7401
	21+ years	.15277	.19101	.854	-.3401	.6456
10-20 years	1-4 years	-.51231*	.16356	.010	-.9343	-.0903
	5-9 years	-.34157	.15446	.122	-.7401	.0570
	21+ years	-.18880	.18942	.751	-.6776	.3000
21+ years	1-4 years	-.32351	.19844	.363	-.8356	.1885
	5-9 years	-.15277	.19101	.854	-.6456	.3401
	10-20 years	.18880	.18942	.751	-.3000	.6776

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

The one-way ANOVA test performed to determine if a significant difference

existed between the perceptions of teachers toward walkthrough feedback and an increase

in teacher effectiveness supported a rejection of the null hypothesis [F (3,383) = 3.588, p = .014]. Following the finding of a statistically significant difference between teachers with 1 - 4 years of service and teachers with 10 – 20 years of service, the between groups effect size was manually calculated using the Eta-squared formula by dividing the between groups sum of squares (SS = 15.140) by the total sum of squares (SS$_T$ = 553.897). This calculation resulted in a η² value of 0.027 which demonstrated a small Cohen's effect size difference (Cohen, 1988).

Research Question 2. Do teachers' perceptions of whether classroom walkthrough feedback improves teacher effectiveness differ based on the frequency of walkthroughs?

H$_0$2: There is no significant difference in the perceptions of teachers toward classroom walkthrough feedback's influence on teacher effectiveness based on the frequency of walkthroughs.

As displayed in Table 17, the grouping variable (independent variable) represented frequency or number of classroom walkthroughs conducted on average in a school year. A Likert scale was used to measure the perceptions of teachers with five choices representing the degree of agreement each respondent had on the given question. The scale of the scale of *Strongly Disagree (1), Somewhat Disagree (2), Not Sure (3), Somewhat Agree (4), and Strongly Agree (5)* was used to interpret the total responses of all the respondents by computing the weighted mean. The mean score for the teachers who had 1 – 3 walkthroughs in an academic year was 3.52, 4 – 6 walkthroughs in an

academic year was 3.57, 3.74 for teachers with 7 – 9 walkthroughs and the mean for

those who had more than 10 walkthroughs in an academic year was 3.78.

Table 17

Descriptive Statistics for Walkthrough Feedback Helps You Increase Your Effectiveness
Based on Number of Walkthroughs in an Academic Year

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
1-3	102	3.5196	1.25651	.12441	3.2728	3.5134	1.00	5.00
4-6	134	3.5672	1.24120	.10722	3.3551	3.7792	1.00	5.00
7-9	39	3.7436	1.11728	.17891	3.3814	4.1058	1.00	4.00
10 +	112	3.7768	1.11266	.10514	3.5685	3.9851	1.00	5.00
Total	387	3.6331	1.19790	.06089	3.5134	3.7528	1.00	5.00

To test the null hypothesis of no differences in the perceptions of teachers toward

walkthrough feedback's influence on teacher effectiveness based on the number of

walkthroughs conducted in an academic year, a one-way ANOVA was applied. The level

of significance (alpha level) for statistical testing was set at the 0.05 level of probability.

Table 18 shows the results of the one-way ANOVA.

Table 18

Test Statistics for the ANOVA Test for Walkthrough Feedback Helps You Increase Your
Effectiveness in the Classroom Based on Number of Walkthroughs in an Academic Year

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	4.685	3	1.562	1.089	.354
Within Groups	549.212	383	1.434		
Total	553.897	386			

There is no statistically significant difference between the means of the four

groups due to a 0.354 significance level with 3 degrees of freedom and 383 for within

group mean squares (variance estimate). There were no statistically significant

differences between group means as determined by the one-way ANOVA F (3,383) =

1.089, p = .354. Since p = .354 the null hypothesis was retained.

Research Question 3. Do teachers perceive that classroom walkthrough feedback

provides input for professional development?

Teachers were asked to respond as to whether feedback from walkthroughs

provided input for their professional development choices. The scale of *Strongly*

Disagree (1), *Somewhat Disagree* (2), *Not Sure* (3), *Somewhat Agree* (4), and *Strongly*

Agree (5) was used to interpret the total responses of all the respondents by computing

the weighted mean.

Ten of the 397 respondents did not answer question 11 on the survey. During the

survey, participants had to click on a tab to get to the next screen containing the last three

questions. These 10 missing responses account for 2.5% of the total responses and are noted as missing from the system in Table 19. Thus, 387 respondents completed question 11 of the survey.

Out of the 387 respondents that responded to the question regarding classroom walkthrough feedback providing input for their professional development, 15.5% strongly agreed, 45.7% somewhat agreed, 21.2% somewhat disagreed, 12.7% strongly disagreed, and 4.9% were not sure.

Table 19

Descriptive Statistics for Walkthrough Feedback Helps Provide Input for Professional Development

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	60	15.1	15.5	15.5
	Somewhat Agree	177	44.6	45.7	61.2
	Somewhat Disagree	82	20.7	21.2	82.4
	Strongly Disagree	49	12.3	12.7	95.1
	Not Sure	19	4.8	4.9	100.0
	Total	387	97.5	100.0	
Missing	System	10	2.5		
Total		397	100.0		

Figure 2 shows the distribution of teacher responses toward classroom walkthrough feedback providing input for professional development. Approximately half or 47.5% of teachers surveyed somewhat agreed classroom walkthrough feedback helped inform their professional development decisions.
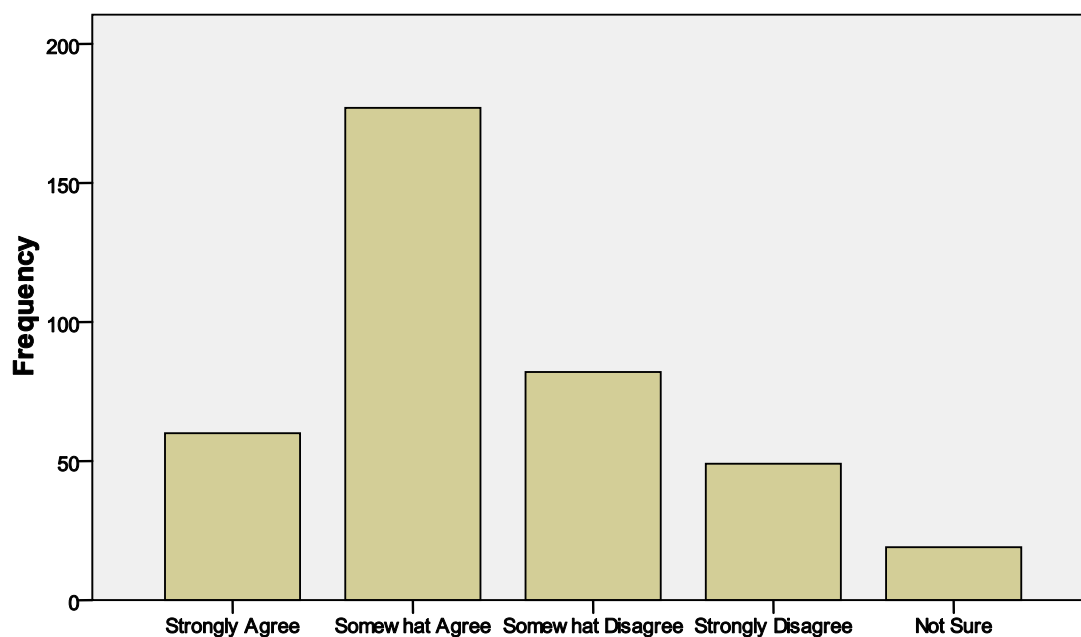
Figure 2. Teachers' perception towards walkthrough feedback providing input for their professional development.

Research Question 4. Do teachers perceive that classroom walkthrough feedback improves their classroom instruction?

Teachers were asked to respond as to whether feedback from walkthroughs helped them improve classroom instruction. The scale of *Strongly Disagree* (1), *Somewhat Disagree* (2), *Not Sure* (3), *Somewhat Agree* (4), and *Strongly Agree* (5) was

used to interpret the total responses of all the respondents by computing the weighted mean.

Ten of the 397 respondents did not answer question 12 on the survey. During the survey, participants had to click on a tab to get to the next screen containing the last three questions. These 10 missing responses account for 2.5% of the total responses and are noted as missing from the system in Table 20. Thus, 387 respondents completed question 12 of the survey.

Out of the 387 respondents that responded to the question regarding classroom walkthrough feedback improving classroom instruction, 20.4% strongly agreed, 49.9% somewhat agreed, 15.8% somewhat disagreed, 11.1% strongly disagreed, and 2.8% were not sure.

Table 20

Descriptive Statistics for Walkthrough Feedback Helps Improve Classroom Instruction

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	79	19.9	20.4	20.4
	Somewhat Agree	193	48.6	49.9	70.3
	Somewhat Disagree	61	15.4	15.8	86.0
	Strongly Disagree	43	10.8	11.1	97.2
	Not Sure	11	2.8	2.8	100.0
	Total	387	97.5	100.0	
Missing	System	10	2.5		
Total		397	100.0		

Figure 3 shows the distribution of teacher responses toward classroom walkthrough feedback helping to improve their classroom instruction. Almost half, or 49.9% of teachers surveyed somewhat agreed that classroom walkthrough feedback helped them improve their classroom instruction.
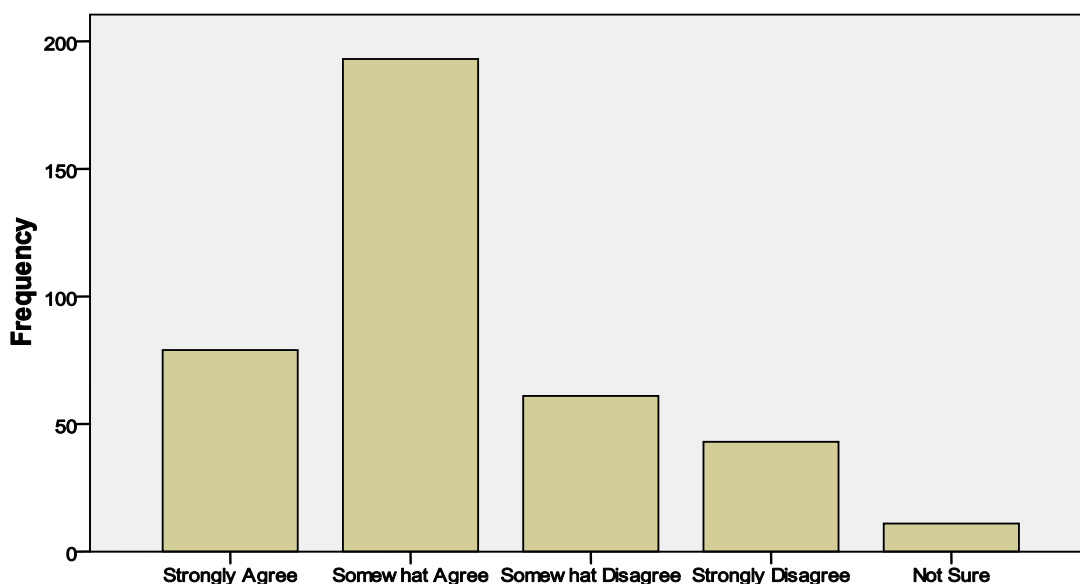
Figure 3. Teachers' perception towards walkthrough feedback helping to improve classroom instruction.

Serendipitous Findings

When the validation jury validated the survey instrument, there was a recommendation to add a comment section. The researcher added an optional comment section at the end of the survey instrument. The comment section was not intended to be included as part of the dissertation, however, the findings from the comment section raised some questions with the researcher that warranted further study.

Out of the 397 returned surveys, 117 or 29% of the respondents left comments. The researcher organized the comments by teaching assignment (elementary, middle or junior high, and high school) and informally coded the comments as being positive, negative, both positive and negative, or neutral. Comments were considered to be neutral if they were factual in nature with no positive or negative opinions. The results were as follows:

- *52 elementary school level teachers = 43%*
    - Negative – 27 comments (52%)
    - Positive – 17 comments (33%)
    - Negative and Positive – 6 comments (12%)
    - Neutral – 2 comments (4%)
- *24 middle school level teachers = 20%*
    - Negative – 13 comments (54%)
    - Positive – 5 comments (21%)
    - Negative and Positive – 5 comments (21%)
    - Neutral – 1 comment (4%)
- *41 high school level teachers = 37%*
    - Negative – 33 comments (80%)
    - Positive – 4 comments (10%)
    - Negative and Positive – 3 comments (7%)
    - Neutral – 1 comment (2%)

Based on the differences in comments between the three teaching assignment levels, the researcher chose to apply a two-way ANOVA statistical test using SPSS 17.0. Table 21 contains the descriptive statistics.

Table 21

Descriptive Statistics for Numbers of Years Service and Current Teaching Assignment

Do you currently teach at:	For how many years have you been a PUBLIC school teacher?	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Elementary school	1-4 years	4.1622	.83378	37
	5-9 years	3.9074	.95697	54
	10-20 years	3.7308	1.06854	52
	21 years or more	3.8286	1.12422	35
	Total	3.8933	1.00555	178
Middle school or Junior high school	1-4 years	3.6250	1.27901	24
	5-9 years	3.6000	1.22474	25
	10-20 years	3.5833	1.31601	24
	21 years or more	3.8333	.98319	6
	Total	3.6203	1.23313	79
High school	1-4 years	3.7419	1.23741	31
	5-9 years	3.5278	1.18288	36
	10-20 years	2.8667	1.35848	45
	21 years or more	2.9412	1.39062	17
	Total	3.2713	1.32731	129
Other	1-4 years	5.0000	.	1
	Total	5.0000	.	1
Total	1-4 years	3.8925	1.11767	93
	5-9 years	3.7217	1.09663	115
	10-20 years	3.3802	1.28618	121
	21 years or more	3.5690	1.24410	58
	Total	3.6331	1.19790	387

As shown in Table 22, there was a significant main effect for level of current teaching assignment F (3, 374) = 7.242, p = .000. Additionally, there was a significant main effect for years of service F (3, 374) = 2.641, p = .049. There was no significant interaction effect of level of current teaching assignment and years of service F (6, 374) = 1.057, p = .338.

Table 22

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	53.790[a]	12	4.482	3.352	.000
Intercept	508.955	1	508.955	380.617	.000
Level	29.051	3	9.684	7.242	.000
Years	10.593	3	3.531	2.641	.049
Level * Years	8.477	6	1.413	1.057	.388
Error	500.107	374	1.337		
Total	5662.000	387			
Corrected Total	553.897	386			

a. R Squared = .097 (Adjusted R Squared = .068)

Significance was set at 0.05. Because the p-value for level of current teaching assignment is less than .05, the null hypothesis for current teaching assignment is rejected. Because the p-value for years of service is less than .05, the null hypothesis for

years of service is rejected. Finally, because the p-value for the level of current teaching assignment and years of service interaction is greater than .05, the null hypothesis was retained. Post hoc tests were not performed for level of current teaching assignment because at least one group had fewer than two cases. Post hoc tests for years of service were previously reported (see Table 16).

Summary

The purpose of this study was to analyze teachers' perceptions of classroom walkthrough observations to determine if teachers perceived walkthrough feedback to be beneficial in increasing their effectiveness, helpful in providing input for their professional development decisions, and helpful in improving their classroom instruction. This researcher utilized a 12 question survey instrument to gather demographic data in order to examine four different research questions. A one-way ANOVA was performed with $\alpha = 0.05$ to determine if a difference existed between the number of years service or the frequency of walkthroughs and teachers' perceived impact classroom walkthrough feedback had on increasing their effectiveness. Descriptive statistics were utilized to analyze the data regarding teachers' perceptions of classroom walkthrough feedback providing input for professional development and or helping to increase classroom instruction. The serendipitous findings were added and analyzed. The implications of these findings are discussed further in Chapter V.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The focus on continually increasing student achievement has created an increased pressure in school districts across America in regards to accountability (Rossi, 2007). As accountability for student achievement continues to increase, educational reform movements over the past several decades have focused on teacher effectiveness. Teacher effectiveness can be measured by any number of teacher appraisal systems and walkthroughs appear to be a tool through which monitoring of instructional practices is occurring in schools across the nation. While walkthrough practitioner articles have been pervasive in education journals, there is minimal research available. Perceptions of teachers appear to demonstrate that walkthroughs can be effective tools in improving teaching practices. Findings from the study will add to the growing research on walkthroughs and assist with filling gaps in information regarding teacher perspectives.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to analyze teachers' perceptions of classroom walkthrough observations to determine if teachers perceived walkthrough feedback to be beneficial in increasing their effectiveness. Walkthroughs are one of the multiple measures used in the teacher appraisal process to help give a complete picture of a teacher's effectiveness. Further, this study sought to ascertain if teachers utilize walkthrough feedback to help inform their professional development decisions and or

improve their classroom instruction. Teachers' perceptions were analyzed through survey questions as part of a larger survey project that sought to study many aspects of walkthrough practices and feedback.

Research Questions

To analyze teachers' perceptions of walkthroughs, the following four research questions were examined.

1. Do teachers' perceptions of whether classroom walkthrough feedback improves teacher effectiveness differ based on years of service?

2. Do teachers' perceptions of whether classroom walkthrough feedback improves teacher effectiveness differ based on the frequency of walkthroughs?

3. Do teachers perceive that classroom walkthrough feedback provides input for professional development?

4. Do teachers perceive that classroom walkthrough feedback improves their classroom instruction?

Summary of Data Collection Procedure

A list of all Texas Public School Districts was compiled using the AskTED District Directory database on the Texas Education Agency's website. A search to include all Texas, public school districts in each of the 20 Region Service Centers was conducted. The search revealed 1032 school districts with a total of 9,311 elementary, middle, or high schools. Only those districts with 20 or fewer schools were included in

the study. The researcher excluded larger school districts to help manage time spent searching individual school websites for teacher emails. There are 939 Texas school districts with 20 or fewer schools.

The SPSS 17.0 statistic software program was used to garner a randomized sample of the 939 school districts to select 10% of the cases. There were 95 randomly selected districts. The researcher conducted the initial random sample to reduce the number of districts into a more manageable number before the district websites were checked to see if teachers' email accounts were accessible from school web sites. There were 61 districts with accessible teacher email addresses. The researcher then used SPSS 17.0 to garner a 20% random sample from the 61 districts. The final participation count included 13 districts and 2425 teachers across the state of Texas.

Once school districts were identified, all teachers in each district were invited by email to participate in the study. The body of the email contained an explanation of the study and a link to connect participants to the survey instrument. A total of 397 Texas teachers participated in the walkthrough survey underlying this study. The survey collected individual demographic data on the teachers themselves, walkthrough demographic data for the campus to which the teacher is assigned, as well as feedback demographic data.

Analysis of Data

The data were analyzed using the SPSS 17.0 statistic software program. A one-way ANOVA was applied to analyze differences between group means for research questions

one and two with the statistical significance level being set at 0.05. Descriptive statistics were utilized to analyze the data from research questions three and four. The use of descriptive statistics was an appropriate analysis method for research questions three and four in order to describe and summarize data in a meaningful way to identify any patterns that might emerge from the data.

Results of Data Analysis

This study examined four different research questions. The data analysis resulted in the following findings:

Research question 1. Do teachers' perceptions of whether classroom walkthrough feedback improves teacher effectiveness differ based on years of service? A statistically significant difference was found between the four subgroups of 1 – 4 years of experience, 5 – 9 years of experience, 10 – 20 years of experience, and 21 years or more of experience. The difference exists between the groups of teachers with 1 – 4 years of service and teachers with 10 – 20 years of service. While the effect size was small, newer teachers perceived feedback from walkthroughs helped to increase their effectiveness at a significantly higher preference rating than teachers with 10 – 20 years of experience. Comparisons between teachers with 5 – 9 years of service and teachers with 21 years or more of service were not statistically significant. In sum, these results suggest teachers with 1 – 4 years of experience perceive feedback from walkthroughs to be helpful in improving their effectiveness.

Research question 2. Do teachers' perceptions of whether classroom walkthrough feedback improves teacher effectiveness differ based on the frequency of walkthroughs? No statistical difference was found between teachers' perceptions of feedback from walkthroughs improving their effectiveness as it pertains to the frequency of walkthroughs during the school year. In sum, the number of walkthroughs administered during the school year had no bearing on teachers' perceptions of feedback from walkthroughs increasing their effectiveness.

Research question 3. Do teachers perceive that classroom walkthrough feedback helps to provide input for professional development? When the strongly agree and somewhat agree answers are collapsed and combined, 61.2% of teachers responded positively toward walkthrough feedback helping to inform their decisions about professional development. Combined, the somewhat disagree and strongly disagree categories totaled 33.9% of the responses. In sum, the data suggests that the majority of the respondents are using classroom walkthrough feedback when making decisions concerning professional development.

Research question 4. Do teachers perceive that walkthrough feedback improves their classroom instruction? When the strongly agree and somewhat agree answers are collapsed and combined, 70.3% of teachers responded positively toward walkthrough feedback helping to improve their classroom instruction. Combined, the somewhat disagree and strongly disagree categories totaled 26.9% of the responses. In sum, the

results suggest that the majority of the respondents perceive that feedback given after a classroom walkthrough helps to improve their classroom instruction.

Discussion of Findings

The study analyzed teachers' perceptions of walkthrough observations to determine if teachers perceived walkthrough feedback to be beneficial in increasing their effectiveness.

Participant Demographics. A total of 397 Texas public school teachers working in elementary, middle or junior high, or high school levels participated in this study. Of the respondents, 81 were male and 316 were female. Teachers were asked to identify their current teaching assignment. There were 185 elementary teachers, 80 middle school or junior high school teachers, and 131 high school teachers participating in the study. One participant selected "other" as their teaching assignment, however, only teachers in elementary, middle or junior high, or high school received an email with the survey link. Additionally, teachers were asked to self-report their years of service as a public school teacher. There were 95 teachers with 1 – 4 years of experience, 118 teachers with 5 – 9 years of experience, 123 teachers with 10 – 20 years of experience, and 61 teachers with 21 or more years of experience.

Walkthrough Demographics. Survey question four analyzed the number of walkthroughs teachers averaged throughout the year. On average, 27.2% of teachers surveyed received 1 – 3 walkthroughs per year, 34.3% received 4-6 walkthroughs per year, 10.1% received 7 – 9 walkthroughs per year, and 28.5% received 10 or more

walkthroughs per year. Although 27.2% of teachers are only getting 1 – 3 walkthroughs, data from this study seems to contradict the predominant theme in walkthrough literature regarding the low number of walkthroughs by administrators due to time spent on managerial tasks. Almost the same percentage, 28.5% of teachers, is receiving 10 or more walkthroughs per year. This increase in classroom walkthroughs could be due to the more wide-spread use of walkthrough software programs, which track the number of walkthroughs conducted. Additionally, the focus on improving student achievement has created increased pressure on instructional leaders and walkthroughs are one way to gather data about instructional practices.

Survey question five inquired if teachers had an optimal number of walkthroughs they would like to receive during the school year. According to the research, 38.5% of the respondents felt 4 – 6 was the optimal number of walkthroughs teachers should receive during the school year. This number corresponded to the data from the study regarding the number of walkthroughs teachers are actually receiving on average during the school year. The highest reporting category for the number of actual walkthroughs conducted on average was 4 – 6 walkthroughs per year, which represented 34.3% of the respondents.

Survey question six addressed the amount of time walkthrough participants spent in classrooms. According to the research, 15.1% of teachers had walkthrough visits lasting between 1 – 4 minutes, 43.8% had visits lasting 5 – 9 minutes, and 41.1% had visits lasting 10 or more minutes. Although there are numerous walkthrough models which have varying observation times, one of the most well know is the Three-Minute

Classroom Walkthrough model. The data from the study indicates the majority of administrators are spending more than just three minutes in classrooms. Walkthrough observations may be longer in duration due to the fact that many walkthrough observations take place to meet the requirements for teacher evaluation systems, which typically call for longer observation times. Another reason for longer visits may be due to the implementation of the Instructional Rounds model, which is being implemented in some districts. Each instructional round is 20 minutes in duration.

Question seven analyzed whether walkthroughs were a part of their school's formal teacher appraisal process. Overwhelmingly, 88.7% of teachers responded that walkthroughs were a part of their teacher appraisal. Only 6.5% responded that walkthroughs were not a part of their teacher appraisal and 4.8% were unsure as to whether walkthroughs were a component of the teacher appraisal process at their school.

Walkthrough Feedback Demographics. Survey questions eight and nine analyzed walkthrough feedback. At the end of a walkthrough, 62.7% of teachers indicated they always receive feedback. Three percent indicated they rarely (2.5%) or never (0.5%) receive walkthrough feedback. Administrators may need to be more transparent in their reason for classroom visits. There could be some confusion as to why an administrator is making a classroom visit. Feedback, when given, is most commonly received electronically through a software program. The data showed 345 of the 397 teachers surveyed receive electronic feedback. Written feedback accounted for 8.8% and verbal feedback accounted for 3.8%.

Research Questions. The first research question pertaining to this study was, "Do teachers' perceptions of whether classroom walkthrough feedback improves teacher effectiveness differ based on years of service?" Results suggest feedback from walkthroughs has a perceived positive impact in increasing teacher's confidence levels in their abilities to be an effective teacher. Specific indicators had varying impacts depending on the years of experience of the teacher. Teachers with 1 – 4 years of experience indicate feedback from walkthroughs was helpful in increasing their effectiveness.

The researcher suggests that the professional growth needs of teachers at this stage of development can be effectively met through walkthrough feedback. The findings pertaining to the affects of the classroom walkthroughs on teachers with varying years of experience has affirmed some common perceptions pertaining to new and experience teachers. Teachers are expected to be continual, life-long learners, however, the data indicates there is a continued need for the teaching profession to continue to find strategic ways to foster the continuing growth of teachers who are in the later stages of their career.

The second research question pertaining to this study was, "Do teachers' perceptions of whether classroom walkthrough feedback improves teacher effectiveness differ based on the frequency of walkthroughs?" The lack of statistical significance in teachers' responses regarding walkthrough feedback improving their effectiveness based on the number of walkthroughs they receive in a school year indicates that at least

according to teachers, there is no "magic number" of walkthroughs that will have a positive impact on their teacher effectiveness. This leads the researcher to conclude that more walkthroughs may not equate to improved teacher effectiveness.

The review of literature confirmed that administrators have difficulty finding time to conduct walkthroughs. In the researcher's teaching experience, the only time classroom observations occurred was for the purposes of evaluation, which meant an average of 2-4 visits during an appraisal year, but 1-2 visits on non-appraisal years. Findings from this study may be helpful to schools or districts that are in the process of redesigning their teacher evaluation system or adopting a new teacher evaluation model.

The third research question pertaining to this study was, "Do teachers perceive that walkthrough feedback provides input for professional development?" Results suggest feedback from walkthroughs has an impact on the type of professional development teachers choose. What is unclear, however, is how teachers use walkthrough feedback to guide their professional development decisions. While walkthroughs can provide a tool for teachers to reflect on areas in need of growth, professional development given at the campus level is typically based on student achievement data, not on the individual growth needs of specific teachers. Texas' state teacher appraisal model, the Professional Development and Appraisal System (PDAS), contains some provisions for the professional development of teachers, however, the two components of PDAS that are oriented toward professional development are the annual Teacher Self-Report, in which teachers list their professional development activities for review by the appraiser, and the

remediative course of action that is triggered by unfavorable documentation of classroom teaching that results in a teacher being identified as a teacher in need of assistance. Furthermore, professional development opportunities at the district level typically provide learning opportunities for or reinforcement of district-wide initiatives or purchased programs. Professional development as it pertains to walkthrough feedback is an area that needs further research.

The fourth research question pertaining to this study was, "Do teachers perceive that walkthrough feedback improves their classroom instruction?" Results indicate feedback from walkthroughs has a perceived positive impact on classroom instruction. Walkthrough feedback appears to have the potential to guide teachers to become better at their instruction.

This study identifies teachers in their first four years of teaching as those who respond the most favorably to walkthrough feedback. Teachers new to the field of education will likely need the classroom walkthrough support with reflective feedback in order to gain awareness of the administrator's expectation pertaining to their classroom instruction. Teachers with five or more years of experience did not find walkthrough feedback to be significantly helpful in improving their effectiveness. Administrators will have to work on buy-in strategies to ensure veteran teachers continue to improve in their instruction.

Serendipitous Findings. Out of the 397 returned surveys, 117 or 29% of the respondents left comments. The researcher organized the comments by teaching

assignment (elementary, middle or junior high, and high school) and informally coded the comments as being positive, negative, both positive and negative, or neutral. Comments were considered to be neutral if they were factual in nature with no positive or negative opinions.

Of the 117 total comments, 62% of the comments were negative, 22% were positive, 12% of the respondents left both negative and positive comments, and 4% were neutral. While the comments varied in content, there were overwhelming themes that emerged. Administrators should try to conduct longer observations in classrooms and visits to classrooms should be conducted more frequently. Teachers responded that administrators were not spending enough time in classrooms to get a true vision of what was actually taking place. Teachers wrote that administrators made assumptions during classroom walkthroughs without understanding the particulars about the lesson or student behaviors. Teachers perceived that short visits did not enable administrators to see the full picture of what was taking place in the classroom. Many teachers commented that more frequent visits would help ease their nervousness, help them feel less threatened, and make them more comfortable receiving observers in the classroom.

Walkthrough feedback was a topic of many of the comments. Teachers wrote favorably about electronic software because the feedback was timely, however, many responded negatively about the feedback being in the form of a checklist. Teachers implied that comments were more valued than feedback from checklist. Administrators who use software programs should consider this when sending teachers feedback.

Teachers indicated that positive, critical, and specific feedback was welcomed. Middle and high school teachers responded more frequently that classroom walkthrough feedback was negative and a "gotcha." Perhaps administrators would benefit from ongoing professional development regarding how to give walkthrough feedback. Training on feedback is not part of the current PDAS appraisal system. This type of training should be incorporated during teacher evaluation training for administrators.

Teachers acknowledged that classroom walkthroughs help administrators stay informed about teaching and instruction. Specialized teachers, such as those teaching music or foreign languages, suggested classroom walkthroughs would be more meaningful if the administrator doing the observing had more specialized content knowledge. This trend became more evident in the middle and high school comments, likely because teachers in these teaching assignments tend to become more specialized in their instructional roles. Teachers recommended having walkthroughs by content experts, like department chairs, who may offer more insightful feedback. Walkthroughs by generalist campus administrators were not deemed as particularly useful. While classroom walkthroughs for appraisal purposes must be conducted by trained administrators, teachers in more specialized content areas may benefit from a peer observation program.

Limitations and Delimitations

The ability to generalize the results from this study may be limited in the following ways:

1. The participating districts were limited to the state of Texas.

2. Only 13 Texas school districts participated in the survey.

3. The participating districts were limited to those with 20 or fewer schools.

4. Teachers were contacted based on emails found on district websites.

5. The participating schools were limited to public schools.

6. The participating schools excluded charter, alternative, and those specializing in adult education.

Recommendations for Further Research

Due to the minor amount of research regarding walkthroughs, further research is needed. The following recommendations for research in the area walkthroughs are offered:

1. This study was administered to a random sample of teachers in 13 districts across the state of the Texas. To gain a fuller understanding of teachers' perceptions of walkthroughs, studies similar to this but conducted in other parts of Texas, or in other states would yield valuable additions to the knowledge base.

2. Districts that took part of the study had 20 or fewer schools. To add to the research base from this study, a similar study could be conducted with districts containing more than 20 schools across Texas, or in other states.

3. Additional research might include a longitudinal study in Texas to compare teachers' perceptions of walkthroughs under the PDAS teacher appraisal model and teachers' perceptions of walkthroughs after the implementation of the new

Texas evaluation model, the Texas Educator Evaluation and Support System (TEESS), which will launch in the 2015-2016 school year.

4. A fourth opportunity for study is to compare schools of similar demographics and student achievement levels, one that conducts walkthroughs with only administrators, one that conducts walkthroughs with other stakeholders, such as teachers or students.

5. This study did not analyze teachers' perceptions based on their current teaching assignment. A recommendation for study is to compare teachers' perceptions of walkthroughs based on the teacher's school level assignment across all school assignments (elementary, middle, and high). Another option is to conduct a more in depth study analyzing teachers' perceptions at the same school level.

6. Specific research needs to be conducted on the various ranges of years of experience and how the progression of teacher development can be nurtured throughout their teaching careers to ensure that every child has the highest quality teacher each year.

7. More research is needed in the area of professional development and the impact walkthroughs have on guiding or supporting professional development choices.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

IRB APPROVAL

From: Williamson, Ms. Nona
Sent: Tuesday, June 11, 2013 10:57 AM
To: Littleton, Dr. Mark
Subject: IRB application

Your IRB application "An Analysis of Teachers' Perceptions Toward the Walkthrough" has been approved "Exempt". Thank you for submitting your application and we wish you success in your research.

Your IRB No. 2013-061113-13033

Thanks,

Nona Williamson

Project Coordinator

Box T-0055

254 918-███ office

254 968-███ fax

APPENDIX B

EMAIL TO PRINCIPALS

Dear Principal,

I am a doctoral student under the direction of my dissertation committee chair, Dr. Mark Littleton, at Tarleton State University in Stephenville, Texas. The purpose of my research is to analyze the perceptions of teachers towards classroom walkthroughs.

Sometime in the next two weeks, your teachers will receive an email inviting participation in a 12 question survey. The survey should take no more than five minutes to complete and will in no way identify the district, school, or any teachers participating in the research. Responses are kept strictly confidential and participants will be coded with a number to ensure confidentiality. Participation is voluntary and causes no possible foreseeable psychological, emotional, physical, or other social risks to you, your teachers, or your organization. Teachers may opt out at any time.

Upon completion of the study, I will share the findings with you at your request. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me by phone or email. Thank you in advance for your support.

Yours in education,
Jennifer Jay Warren
Tarleton State University
Doctoral Student
(254) 681-8873
jennifer.martin@go.tarleton.edu

APPENDIX C

INITIAL EMAIL TO TEACHERS

Dear Educator,

This is a formal invitation to participate in my doctoral dissertation study through Tarleton State University in Stephenville, Texas. The study is being conducted under the supervision of Dr. Mark Littleton. The purpose of my study is to analyze the perceptions of teachers towards classroom walkthroughs. If you are not a classroom teacher, please disregard this email.

Participation involves completing a 12 question survey. If you elect to participate, the survey should take no more than five minutes to complete and will in no way identify the district, school, or any teachers participating in the research. Responses are kept strictly confidential and participants will be coded with a number to ensure confidentiality. Participation is voluntary and causes no possible foreseeable psychological, emotional, physical, or other social risks. You can opt out at any time.

Upon completion of the study, I will share the findings with you at your request. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me by phone or email. Thank you in advance for your participation.

Please click on the link below to begin:

https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/teachersperceptionsofwalkthroughs

Yours in education,
Jennifer Jay Warren
Tarleton State University
Doctoral Student
(254) 681-8873
jennifer.martin@go.tarleton.edu

APPENDIX D

FOLLOW UP EMAIL TO TEACHERS

Dear Educator,

Thank you to all of y'all who took the time to answer the survey I sent last week on Teachers' Perceptions of Walkthroughs. I know it is "crunch time" with the end of the first nine weeks, so I truly appreciate you!

If you would still like to participate and you have not yet completed the survey, it will be open until Friday evening. It is averaging around two minutes to complete, so if you can spare a couple of minutes I would love to have your input.

The link is as follows:

https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/teachersperceptionsofwalkthroughs

Sincerely,

Jennifer Jay Warren
Doctoral Student
Tarleton State University
(254) 681-8873
jennifer.martin@go.tarleton.edu

APPENDIX E

SURVEY INSTRUMENT

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE CLASSROOM WALKTHROUGH

Classroom walkthroughs can be defined as short, informal observations of classroom teachers and students conducted by administrators, coaches, mentors, peers, and others, followed by feedback, conversation, and/or action (Kachur, Stout, & Edwards, 2010).

For the purpose of this study, feedback is defined as written or oral communication given after a walkthrough from an administrator to help teachers improve instruction. Please answer the following survey questions regarding the practice of classroom walkthroughs.

1. **Are you:**
   Male
   Female

2. **Do you currently teach at:**
   Elementary school
   Middle school or Junior high school
   High school
   Other

3. **For how many years have you been a PUBLIC school teacher?**
   1-4 years
   5-9 years
   10-20 years
   21 years or more

4. **How many walkthroughs do you receive on average during the school year?**
   0
   1-3
   4-6
   7-9
   10 or more

5. **What is the optimal number of walkthroughs teachers should receive during the school year?**
0
1-3
4-6
7-9
10 or more

6. **What is the average length of time an administrator is in your classroom during a walkthrough?**
1-4 minutes
5-9 minutes
10 or more minutes

7. **Are walkthroughs part of your school's formal teacher appraisal process?**
Yes
No
Unsure

8. **Do you receive feedback after walkthroughs?**
Never
Rarely
Sometimes
Often
Always

9. **If you receive feedback, how is that feedback *most often* given?**
Verbal feedback
Written feedback
Electronic feedback through software program
I do not receive feedback

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about walkthroughs as part of teacher evaluation? [Questions 10-12]

10. **Feedback after a walkthrough helps you increase your effectiveness in the classroom.**
Strongly Agree
Somewhat Agree
Somewhat Disagree
Strongly Disagree
Not Sure

11. Feedback after a walkthrough helps provide input for your professional development.
Strongly Agree
Somewhat Agree
Somewhat Disagree
Strongly Disagree
Not Sure

12. Feedback after a walkthrough helps you improve your classroom instruction.
Strongly Agree
Somewhat Agree
Somewhat Disagree
Strongly Disagree
Not Sure