A STATEWIDE EXAMINATION OF THE TRAINING SATISFACTION OF INSTRUCTIONAL COACHES

by

Susanne L. Lubbers

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Dissertation Committee:
Catherine Gillespie, Ph.D., Chair
Lindsay Woodward, Ph.D.
Barb Niemeyer, Ed.D.
Robyn Cooper, Ph.D.

Dean of the School of Education:
Janet M. McMahill, Ph.D.

Drake University

Des Moines, Iowa

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ABSTRACT

As the roles of instructional coaches are expanding in school districts, little research exists about how instructional coaches are initially trained for their positions. Much of the research base of teachers coach peers shows it is a strong method of helping teachers improve their classroom effectiveness, but little is known about an instructional coach's learning overall, specifically their satisfaction with their initial training and their continued professional development.

Using Vygotsky Space as a framework, the purpose of this study was to determine to if instructional coaches are satisfied with both their initial training as they move from classroom teachers to teacher leaders and their continued professional development after they assume their roles. This study used a quantitative approach and survey research methodology. Participants were instructional coaches in their first, second, and third years in school districts. Four research questions guided this research into the satisfaction of instructional coaches.

Results from independent samples *t*-tests, correlations, and a multiple regression found that instructional coaches who have more years of classroom teaching experience and perceive support from building and district level administration identified perceived benefits of initial training and continued professional development. Implications for instructional coaches and administration are discussed, as well as topics for future research.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

At a fundamental level, a coach is someone who helps others attain goals. We see and think of coaches mostly in the athletic arena. In NCAA Division I college basketball, Duke men's coach Mike Krzyzewski has more wins than any other coach in history at this level. Krzyzewski, a former NCAA Division I player himself at Army, understands what it means to play the game and has the skills to teach younger players. He is as invested in winning games as his players are; their collective goals drive the Duke basketball program with Coach K leading the charge.

Coaching is about connecting with people and inspiring them to do their best and to grow as well as challenging them to come up with answers they need on their own (Batista, 2015). The metaphor of coaching in sports transcends into the education realm, as well. Former classroom teachers coaching teachers to improve classroom teaching is a concept that has gained traction in many school districts across the United States. The aim of instructional coaching is to help educators to reflect and improve their theory and practice, to get them to think about what they used to do and be open to changing how they teach. By helping teachers learn from one another, coaching can increase teacher effectiveness and enhance student learning (Scherer, 2011). It can be a powerful form of professional development.

Continued professional development in education is essential. As the landscape of education evolves and more research into the science of teaching emerges, educators continue to hone their craft through various forms of professional development coming in many forms from multiple avenues, but the constant is that teachers continue to learn what makes their teaching more effective. Effective teaching can be defined at its basic level as students' successful

achievement of learning as intended by their teacher. Students have a clear idea of what they should be learning and the teacher designs and delivers a learning experience, which allows students to achieve this (Kyriacou, 1997). Teachers can improve their teaching through working with an instructional coach, as the coach can help move the teacher from where he is to where he wants to be (Aguilar, 2011).

The concept of instructional coaching was developed in the early 1980s in response to developing ideas about teacher learning; these new ideas changed professional development for educators. Years later, The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation of 2001 caused the nation to focus more attention on the way teachers teach and students learn; this in turn moved professional development and instructional coaching forward to search for ways to improve students' test scores (Knight, 2007). In the age of more accountability as dictated by NCLB (Guilfoyle, 2006), school districts are hiring instructional coaches to help lead their schools' transition to higher quality professional development, hoping that instructional coaching will lead to more effective student learning (Knight, 2007).

Currently in many schools, instructional coaches deliver professional development full time and are familiar with a large number of scientifically supported instructional strategies. Their job is to collaborate with classroom teachers, helping them choose the most appropriate research-based interventions to help students learn more effectively (Knight, 2007). While the instructional coaching approach could be an improvement over the "one and done" workshop method traditionally employed by school districts for professional development, there is a dearth of literature exploring the effectiveness of instructional coaches and almost no research on the initial training and continued professional development of instructional coaches.

Many instructional coaches receive little or no preparation, and not much is written about the practice of instructional coaching (Aguilar, 2011). A relatively small number of studies exist that illustrate leadership traits and general behaviors of instructional coaches or teacher leaders. Most of this literature focuses on the descriptive or prescriptive characteristics of school leaders, focusing on what coaches do or how they spend their time. There is considerable literature on whether coaches should be directive (assuming an assertive role) or responsive (emphasizing teacher reflection) or whether a balance between the two is best (Neumerski, 2013). However, there is a deficiency in literature concerning how coaches are trained to assume these roles. Many strong teachers are plucked out of their classrooms and thrown into coaching, but an effective teacher of children is not necessarily effective at leading adults through learning (Aguilar, 2011). Coaching literature highlights specific characteristics coaches should have, such as strong interpersonal skills, tact, patience, good communication skills, and flexibility (Poglinco et al., 2003). One obstacle to researching teacher leadership and the behaviors of those leaders is that the concept itself [teacher leader] is not defined well (Goodwin, 2013). It varies in definition from person to person, building to building, institution to institution. Few studies focus on how teacher leaders define and perform their roles (Neumerski, 2013). Research specifically supporting the need for instructional coaches is difficult to find at present.

Even though unanswered questions abound on the effectiveness of instructional coaching, it is becoming a widely implemented practice by school districts. Instructional coaching as it is now being defined is a newer concept, and research on what it is and how coaches should be trained has not caught up with its implementation.

Statement of the Problem

Teachers who take on the role of instructional coach are in a shared leadership position for instructional reform in their respective schools with building administrators (principals) (Gallucci et al., 2010). However, building administrators hold advanced degrees in administration, including coursework in leadership. These courses give principals some necessary insight into training and coaching adults before taking on instructional leadership roles. Now that teachers are being promoted to become instructional coaches without the benefits of this coursework in leadership, it is notable that the multi-faceted training of building administrators is much more extensive than the training of instructional coaches. Little is known about an instructional coach's professional preparation or learning processes, much less their satisfaction with their initial training. Even though the role of instructional coaches has expanded, the "lack of attention to the subject of coaches' learning overall" could be due to the limited empirical literature that examines instructional coaches' professional learning and development (Gallucci et al., 2010). The concept of teacher leadership is defined in myriad ways, and little research exists about how instructional coaches are initially trained for their positions.

The concept of teachers coaching peers has a greater research base that shows it is a stronger method of helping teachers improve their classroom effectiveness. However, schools that do not have a strong structural approach in the implementation of a coaching program and guidance of the instructional coaches could fall flat in their application of the coaching model to improve student achievement (Goodwin, 2013). Unfortunately, placing instructional coaches into their positions without the appropriate initial training could be disastrous to the success of the instructional coach.

Not all highly effective classroom teachers will excel as instructional coaches. Great teachers do not necessarily make great leaders (Neumerski, 2013). While teachers in their pre-service training focused on child and adolescent development, content knowledge, and pedagogical skills, when they become "teachers of teachers," they have little education in adult learning and transformational and organizational leadership theories. Not only will they be working one-on-one with teachers in individual settings, but they will also be required to facilitate group training (Knight, 2004). Instructional coaches are very likely to need additional professional development to garner the knowledge it does not appear they are receiving in their initial training.

Instructional coaches would likely benefit from a strong foundation in organizational theory. Organizational theory is not a single theory; it includes studies on leadership, motivation, organizational structure, decision-making, and change. It includes an understanding of the dimensions of organizational life in schools (Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2011). Teacher leadership indicates an affinity with transformational leadership (Silva, Gimbert, & Nolan, 2000; Crowther, 1997; Pounder, 2006). At its basic tenets, transformational leadership has practices and behaviors that facilitate organizational change (Shatzer, Caldarella, Hallam, & Brown, 2014). In schools, transformational leadership has a more bottom-up approach, with approaches focusing on consensus making and common vision creation (Shatzer, et al, 2014). Three important components of transformational leadership include increasing followers' awareness of the importance of their tasks and the importance of performing them well; making followers aware of their needs for personal growth, development, and accomplishment; and inspiring followers to transcend their own self-interest for the good of the organization (Lunenburg &

Ornstein, 2011). The transformational leader looks to satisfy the higher needs and engagement of the follower.

The result of this style of leadership is to create a mutual relationship that converts followers to leaders and leaders into moral agents. Stewart (2006) states that leaders must take responsibility for their leadership and begin to satisfy the needs of the followers. In an educational setting, the instructional coach could be the transformational leader looking to establish a relationship with the classroom teacher to provide the teacher with research-based instructional strategies to increase student achievement. If instructional coaches cannot establish a strong working relationship with the classroom teacher, their role is diminished. By studying the theory of transformational leadership, coaches will be able to connect to the classroom teachers with whom they work to establish a culture of shared responsibility for student achievement (Stewart, 2006). Instructional coaching requires adequate preparation and ongoing training to ensure coaching success, but the training and preparation these peer coaches are receiving is inadequate (Raffanti, 2008). By studying organizational theory and transformational leadership and then applying the research to their position, instructional coaches could establish stronger relationships with the classroom teachers and have the opportunity to positively impact student achievement.

Instructional coaches need strong training in several key areas in order to be effective in their positions. One of these areas is adult learning. In order for instructional coaches to successfully work with teachers, they should understand the premises of adult learning. Instructional coaches should acknowledge and embrace the importance of climate in influencing adult learning (D'Auria, 2015). Coaching teachers is vastly different than teaching children and adolescents, and coaches should understand the importance of creating a comfortable climate

when working with classroom teachers in order for their work to be successful. Skilled coaching leaders will help educators learn from error, persist in the face of setbacks, and engage in ongoing dialogue about problems of practices in the classrooms (D'Auria, 2015). Coaches need to create a culture in which it is safe to talk about struggles with teaching in the classroom and to collaborate in order to construct more effective ways to teach students based on best practices. Coaches need to know not only what to do but also how to apply that knowledge to the diverse situations classroom teachers are facing. Their leadership should include knowledge of good instruction, adult development, and school culture (D'Auria, 2015).

Being well versed in changing mindsets will also benefit instructional coaches. Whether it be changing their own mindset or the mindsets of the teachers with whom they work, coaches would benefit from being aware of the implications of holding either a primarily fixed or growth mindset for how one acts and interacts with other people (Heslin & VandeWalle, 2008). Those with a fixed mindset tend not to handle setbacks well because they believe setbacks call their intelligence into question; however, those with growth mindset are more likely to respond to obstacles by remaining involved, trying new strategies, and using all the resources at their disposal (Dweck, 2010). The premise of a coach entering a classroom to support a teacher could lead a teacher to feel threatened, and if the teacher has a fixed mindset, a coach will have a more difficult time trying to enact change in the classroom. Conversely, if the teacher has a growth mindset, the coach will find it easier to help foster effective teaching practices to improve student achievement. Instructional coaching should be viewed as an "effectiveness builder" not a deficit-filler (Aguilar, 2011).

The most fundamental practice in promoting a growth mindset is acknowledging and praising for effort not ability (Bambrick-Santoyo, 2013). If instructional coaches create the

culture that they are working with teachers to guide them to be more successful in their teaching practices and not degrading them for what they are doing, they will be encouraging the teachers to embrace a growth mindset. Nothing better represents the chasm between fixed and growth mindsets than the feedback given to teachers. Coaches cannot present a deluge of feedback too quickly as instructors will not be able to make meaningful progress (Bambrick-Santoyo, 2013). Coaches should give meaningful feedback to teachers, but teachers need time to implement change in their classroom and to practice the strategies designed to improve student learning and achievement. Instructional coaches need to give teachers small, easily applied changes to make in their teaching; by implementing these changes through practice in the classroom, teachers can see potential gains in student learning (Bambrick-Santoyo, 2013). Working together with growth mindset attitudes, teachers and coaches can achieve extraordinary gains.

The study of conflict resolution is another area that can strengthen the capacity of instructional coaches in their positions. Many schools are hurt by conflicts that alienate teachers from their professional work, and instructional coaches need to develop conflict competence if their schools are to flourish (Msila, 2012). Change initiatives are a source of many conflicts in schools (Msila, 2012), and the new teacher leadership model is a definite change for many schools. Whether the teachers are in conflict with each other or with instructional coaches, coaches who have conflict resolution awareness and training can diffuse the situations so the focus of conversations remains on student growth and achievement.

In conclusion, the implementation of the instructional coaching model in direct reaction to No Child Left Behind is moving forward. However, much of the literature about coaching and coaches is not found in peer-reviewed scholarship. More information exists in books, evaluation reports and privately funded case studies (Walpole & Blamey, 2008). What is known is that

when instructional coaches can have a working familiarity of adult learning, they can lead for inventive preparation through transformational learning (Mirci & Hensley, 2010). In order to support successful coaching, Jim Knight (2007) recommended that coaches "need to practice, learn communication skills, have a deep understanding of effective instruction and have a process they follow, and have an understanding of the complexities of working with adults. All of that stuff is learnable, but you can't just pick it up on the job. You need a system to support it" (p. 76). More research on instructional coaching and its effectiveness and training should ensue to improve the quality of instructional coaches.

Statement of the Purpose

The purpose of this study is to determine if instructional coaches are satisfied with both their initial training as they move from classroom teachers to teacher leaders and their continued professional development after they assume their roles. Demographic information for all respondents will be examined to better understand instructional coaches' educational experiences as it relates to coaching teachers. Identifying coaches' satisfaction of initial training and continued professional development practices that predict higher levels of effectiveness for coaches will contribute to the body of knowledge on the effective initial training continued professional development of instructional coaches.

Research Questions

The following research questions will guide this quantitative research study to examine the satisfaction of training of instructional coaches.

1. To what extent do instructional coaches view their initial training as beneficial?
2. To what extent is there a difference in coaches' perceptions on the benefits of their training based on whether they received training in the following areas: a) adult

education, b) conflict resolution, c)leadership, d) building teacher capacity, and e) building teacher coach relationships?

3. To what extent is there a relationship between perceived benefits of training and support from a) building principal, b) other coaches and leaders, c) classroom teachers, and d) district administration?
4. To what extent does years teaching, initial training, support from building administrators, and support from district administrators predict perception of current district/building PD?

Theoretical Framework

This study will employ the use of the theoretical lens, Vygotsky Space. Lev Vygotsky was one of the leading developmental psychologists of the 20th century and the founder of the sociohistorical theory of social constructivism (Gavelek & Raphael, 1996).

> In social-constructivism, language and dialogue are critical to the development of knowledge, for it is through dialogue that the community is able to construct common knowledge, and it is through internal language that individuals construct their idiosyncratic expression of the knowledge of the community (Mandeville & Menchaca, 1994, p. 320).

Vygotsky (1978) emphasized how language provides the tools that learners need to think and the tools that the more knowledgeable members of a community use to help explain the world to the learner. Vygotsky Space, a metaphor developed by Harre (1984), is a sociocultural learning theory model that frames professional learning in terms of relationships between collective and individual actions and public and private spheres (Galucci et al., 2010). Harre (1984) called this model the "Vygotsky Space" because it provided a visual representation to Vygotsky's theory.

The model has two dimensions: the public-private and the social-individual, represented by the horizontal and vertical lines (Figure 1.1). By crossing these two lines, Harre created four quadrants: social-public; social-private; individual-private; and individual-public.

Figure 1:1. Vygotsky Space

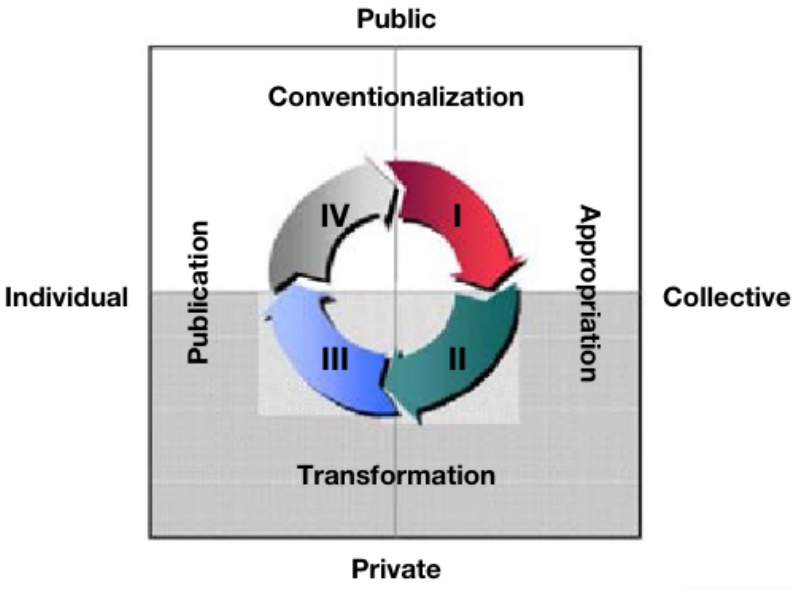

Figure 1.1. Vgotsky Space, a sociocultural learning theory model (Galluci, 2007, p. 8).

What is learned occurs first in the public domain where it is used in social ways by one or more knowledgeable members of the culture and made visible to the learners only after social interactions within a public domain that individuals adopt and adapt what they have observed and begin to use privately what they have learned. This process of moving from the publicly shared use of strategies, concepts, and ways of thinking to private, individual use is called internalization. In terms of the Vygotsky Space, the processes of internalization are depicted as moving from one quadrant to the next. This movement involves four different processes: appropriation, transformation, publication, and conventionalization (Gavelek & Raphael, 1996).

Vygotsky (1978) stated, “Learning is not development; however, properly organized learning results in mental development and sets in motion a variety of developmental processes that would be impossible apart from learning” (p. 90). The Vygotsky Space is instrumental in helping to conceptualize how learning moves from a social aspect to an individual phase and back to a social aspect (Kong & Pearson, 2003). Although the original framework was used to illustrate how an individual’s development is achieved through participation in a social process (Gallucci, 2008), it will be used in this study to trace connections between the district professional development structures -- the support instructional coaches receive prior to beginning as instructional coaches in preparation to work with classroom teachers to improve instruction. Vygotsky Space is a useful model for the analysis of professional learning and connection of that learning to its social context of the organization of the school district (Galluci, 2008). In sociocultural learning, “learning and development occur while learners interact with more knowledgeable members of a community within specific social, cultural, and historical contexts” (Kong & Pearson, 2003, p. 5). Vygotsky Space does not purport that learning processes are linear; the learner may be functioning in any of the given quadrants at any given time (Gallucci et al., 2010). The coaches might reinterpret the concepts and practices from professional learning, transforming them to practices that can be shared and discussed with teachers and then demonstrated for classroom teachers (Gallucci, 2008). This shows the movement of learning between the spheres of public and private as well as individual and collective. It is both a cyclical and evolutionary process of learning. The Vygotsky Space helps clarify how individuals learn in the context of socially organized activities (Gallucci, 2008).

Significance of the Study

Because of the wide implementation of instructional coaching in school districts, the results of this study are especially important for instructional coaches and administrators. This study is significant because the data and findings add to the limited quantitative data existing on the training and ongoing professional development of instructional coaches. The perceptions of practicing instructional coaches from within a range of roles in both elementary and high schools could help districts implementing instructional coaching plan the training and ongoing professional development of the coaches. In addition, these findings may have significance for districts regarding potential changes that would affect the manner in which training and professional development had taken place previously. An opportunity to conduct exploratory research into this newly popularized and burgeoning area of practice exists at present, with the need and opportunity presenting at the same time. This study provides helpful insight into how satisfied instructional coaches are with their training and what might be done to improve their training as well as their continued professional development to aid them in their coaching endeavors. Participants provide insight into the specific training they received before starting as instructional coaches as well as what professional development they are currently receiving, and they provide insight into whether this was adequate preparation for them to start coaching teachers. The results can help school districts decide the most effective ways to initially train and continue to train instructional coaches in their buildings.

Definition of Key Terms

The following definitions provide a consistent understanding of key terms and acronyms used in this research study.

Instructional Coach: An instructional coach is someone whose chief professional responsibility is to bring evidence-based practices into classrooms by working with teachers and other school leaders (Knight, 2007).

Instructional Coaching: At its core, instructional coaching involves two people: the classroom teacher and the coach. Coaches work one-on-one and in small groups with teachers, providing guidance, training, and other resources as needed. Together, they focus on practical strategies for engaging students and improving their learning. Also, coaches are often responsible for providing or arranging professional development activities for all teachers in a school or district (Knight, 2007).

Training: Training is defined in this paper as the acquisition of knowledge and skill for present tasks. The purpose of training is to help people learn and develop skills for their job requirements; it is designed for immediate impact, for the role that one does at present (Masadeh, 2012). Some level of training is needed to meet expectations of organizations and to experience a high degree of success (Fitzgerald, 1992). Training attempts to convey knowledge, skills and competencies necessary to perform job-related tasks (Truelove, 1992). It is meant to teach new skills.

Professional Development: Professional development is defined in this paper as the acquisition of knowledge and skill used in the present or future (Fitzgerald, 1992). It is a long-term process designed to enhance potential and effectiveness, creating a learning activity that is designed for future impact (Masadeh, 2012).

Teacher Leadership: The concept of teacher leadership has become embedded into the language and practice of educational improvement. It has its roots in the reform initiatives of the 1980s. “Teacher leadership highlights the use of teachers’ expertise about teaching and learning

to improve the culture and instruction in schools such that students learning is enhanced" (York-Barr & Duke, 2004).

Professional Development: The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 required that states ensure high-quality professional development for teachers. High-quality professional development programs help teachers deepen their knowledge and transform their teaching (Borko, 2004).

Adult Learning: Adult education is unique in its approach as it aims to do considerably more than simply impart information to participants (McGrath, 2009). Adults tend to be problem centered, and they learn best when they are actively involved in determining what, how, and when they learn (Knowles, 1996).

Transformative Learning Theory: This theory emerged from the work of Jack Mezirow, reflecting a particular vision for adult education and how adults learn (Dirkx, 1998). It describes the conditions and processes to enable adults to make significant knowledge transformation and paradigm shift (Sammut, 2014). Transformational learning is grounded in critical reflection of content, process, and premise.

Instructional Capacity: Instructional capacity is the collection of resource for teaching, providing high quality instruction to groups of students in a specific context (Jaquith, 2012). It is an important prerequisite for addressing the stream of changes and restructuring demands faced by schools in the United States (Thoonen, Sleegers, Oort, Peetsma, & Feijsel, 2011).

Transformational Leadership: Transformational leadership is a leadership approach that causes change in individuals and social systems (Burns, 1978). It has a positive influence on subordinates' effort and satisfaction. Transformational leadership is an effective approach in educational settings. Transformational leaders focus on restructuring schools by improving the

conditions in a school, and it enhances the motivation, morale, and performance of followers (Pounder, 2006).

Growth Mindset: Growth mindset is the belief that one can become good at something through effort and learning. Intelligence is not fixed, but dynamic, and can develop over time (Dweck, 2006). Those who hold growth mindsets may be more likely to engage in more metacognitively sophisticated learning habits (Yan, Thai, & Bjork, 2014).

Fixed Mindset: Fixed mindset reflects a belief in natural talent: one is either good at something or is not (Dweck, 2006).

Summary

The concept of teachers coaching peers is an effective method for helping teachers improve their classroom teaching. While many schools are incorporating instructional coaching into their teacher leadership structures, little empirical research exists on what it is and how coaches should be trained. This purpose of this study is to determine if instructional coaches are satisfied with their training as they move into teacher leadership positions. Identifying their satisfaction contributes to the body of knowledge on the effective training of coaches.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter provides a review of the literature relevant to the training of instructional coaches in the K-12 school system. An historical perspective of instructional coaching will be explored to show the path through which instructional coaching came into widespread existence throughout school districts. Below is a review of literature related to teacher leadership and instructional coaching, followed by an examination of instructional coach training focusing on adult learning, capacity building, transformational leadership, and mindset development.

Historical Perspective of Instructional Coaching

The concept of instructional coaching was developed in the early 1980s in response to developing ideas about teacher learning; these new ideas changed professional development for teachers. Until the late 1980s, professional learning consisted of time spent listening to "experts" deliver workshops, informing teachers how to do more. These "experts" were not classroom teachers nor did they understand the cultures of schools, and thus they did not have the support of many teachers who believed they were more of an expert due to their own knowledge of their students and their schools (Froelich & Puig, 2007). Years later, the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation of 2001 caused the nation to focus more attention on the way teachers teach and students learn; this in turn moved professional development, including instructional coaching, of teachers forward in searching for ways to improve students' test scores (Knight, 2007; Kowal & Steiner, 2007). In the age of more accountability as dictated by NCLB (Guilfoyle, 2006), school districts began hiring instructional coaches to help lead their schools' transition to higher quality teacher professional development, hoping that instructional coaching would lead to higher measures of student learning through examining teacher practice and

working to improve instruction (Hall & Simeral, 2008; Knight, 2007). School districts throughout the United States have chosen to integrate instructional coaching into their teacher leadership systems. Various models of instructional coaching exist in school districts, most of them focusing on supporting long-term professional development of teachers, helping teachers organize data, providing feedback on instruction, and supporting a culture of collaboration (Darling-Hammond, 1999; Hattie, 2009; Showers, Joyce, & Bennett, 1987).

When instructional coaching is conducted by more experienced peers, these coaches are referred to as teacher leaders. Teacher leadership is not a new concept, and teachers who assume leadership positions can still realize the sense of purpose they brought with them into their profession (Lambert, 2003). Teacher leaders have several goals: development of all adults within the school community, achievement of steady improvement in student performance, and construction of school districts as sustainable organizations (Lambert, 2003). The role of teacher leaders demands many talents (Knight, 2007; McKenna & Walpole, 2008). "Coaching itself assumes an uncomfortable truth-many problems in student achievement are likely related to poor instruction. Increasing the quality of instruction means addressing these problems" (McKenna & Walpole, 2008, p. 3). Rainville and Jones (2008) found that coaches must build relationships with teachers, consciously position themselves as a "coach-as-learner" to allow for teachers to take control of their professional development, and create a consistent role as coach so as to avoid misunderstandings and counterproductive actions. Instructional coaches have complex roles in the positions they hold in schools.

In 2013, the Iowa Legislature passed an educational reform package in order to raise student achievement and utilize the expertise of the top teachers in Iowa. This leadership system, known as Teacher Leadership Compensation (TLC), was funded to reach $150 million per year

by fiscal year 2017. The TLC system offers leadership opportunities for teachers (Rasey & Slater, 2015). New teacher leaders received professional development, along with increased responsibilities and compensation (Hupp & Ballard, 2015).

Defining Teacher Leadership

One obstacle to researching teacher leadership is that the concept itself is ill defined (Goodwin, 2013). However difficult it may be to research teacher leadership, it has become embedded in the language and practice of educational improvement, but ways of thinking about teacher leadership have evolved over time. Teacher leadership can imply either an informal or a formal role, and with either role, the responsibilities of the leader can vary (York-Barr & Duke, 2004). The concept of teacher leadership suggests that teachers hold a core position in the ways schools operate and in the main functions of teaching and learning. Crowther, Kaagen, Furgeuson, and Hann (2002) state that teacher leadership facilitates action to achieve whole-school success.

Mangin and Stoelinga (2008) define teacher leaders as people who take on "nonsupervisory, school based, instructional leadership roles" (p. 1). Teachers are sometimes placed in leadership positions because they, not the people managing the teachers, have the knowledge of how to improve teaching and learning (Neumerski, 2008). These teachers are thought to be the ones who have the best chance of changing school wide instruction. Many teacher leaders are out of full-time classroom teaching; others assume leadership positions in addition to full-time teaching; still others split time between leadership and teaching positions (York-Barr & Duke, 2004). Katzenmeyer and Moller (2009) stablished that teacher leaders are "teachers who lead within and beyond the classroom, identify with and contribute to a community of teacher learners and leaders, and influence others towards improved educational

practice" (p. 17). Teacher leaders must have a range of knowledge, skills, and dispositions in order to have the respect of their colleagues in their position of teacher leaders. When teachers take part in the decision making of schools, add to the professional development of others, mentor and coach other teachers, and create new ideas for school improvement, teacher leadership is carried out (Ghamrawi, 2010; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000; Gamus, Bellibas, Esen & Gamus, 2016; Pounder, 2006).

Some teachers have leadership potential (Barth, 2001), but not everyone is suited to becoming a teacher leader (Goodwin, 2013). The most effective teacher leaders have earned the respect and trust of their colleagues. They are able to develop strong critical-friend relationships with other teachers (York-Barr & Duke, 2004). Teacher leadership has been rooted in school improvement and effective decision-making initiatives (Anderson, 2004). Teacher leaders use their expertise about teaching and learning to improve the culture and instruction in school, which results in enhanced student learning (York-Barr & Duke, 2004). Darling-Hammond and McLaughlin (1995) accentuated that teacher leaders model learning to improve students' educational experiences.

Instructional Coaching

Instructional coaching has grown out of trends emphasizing professional collaboration, job-embedded professional development, and differentiated roles for teachers; these trends have surfaced in research and practice since the 1990's (Borman & Fegler, 2006). While instructional coaching is accepted as a means to improve instructional strategies and student learning, the literature is mostly descriptive, based on qualitative case studies which represent little standardization in how instructional coaches approach their craft (White, Smith, Kunz, & Nugent, 2015).

One goal of instructional coaching is to contribute to the intellectual capacity in school, helping educators make informed decisions about instruction that will lead teachers to teach in ways to help students gain deeper knowledge of content so they can apply the knowledge to any question or context (Neufield & Roper, 2003). In order to help teachers improve their practice and increase student learning, coaches provide professional development that is closely tied to teachers' ongoing work in the classroom (Neufield & Roper, 2003). This makes instructional coaching a high-quality professional development opportunity (Blazar & Kraft, 2015).

Instructional coaches help teachers see how research-validated practices offer useful and practical solutions to problems they may face; coaches inform teachers about strategies to improve their instruction and student learning in the classroom (Knight, 2004). The focus of improving the quality of classroom instruction falls on instructional coaches supporting teachers in their efforts (Bean & Draper, Hall, Vandermolen, Zigmond, 2010). Joyce and Showers (2002) recommend that when coaching accompanies theory, demonstration, and practice, teachers transfer more back to their classroom practices. Coaches spend most of their time interacting with individuals or groups of teachers, observing their classrooms, and advising them on best practices to improve instruction and student learning (Bean & Draper, 2010). They help teachers with concepts and practices, assisting them to implement these in useful ways to foster student achievement (Thomas, Bell, Spelman, & Briody, 2015).

Instructional coaches usually do not have the supervisory power to evaluate other adults; they must use expertise and build relationships to exert influence with classroom teachers (Gallucci et al, 2010). Through skilled communication, coaches provide specific support to teachers by sharing common experiences, modeling lessons, and offering constructive feedback (Thomas et al., 2015). The teacher-coach relationship exemplifies continuous problem-solving

practices that emphasize feedback given by coaches to assist teachers in reaching goals of improving teaching and learning. Teachers not only learn new strategies and how to implement them in the classroom from coaches but also when to use these strategies to increase student achievement in the classroom (Denton & Hasbrouck, 2009).

Instructional Coaching Training

The impetus for instructional coaching is to improve the quality and instruction of teachers, which should result in enhanced student learning. Improper coach training is a roadblock that could diminish the effectiveness of instructional coaches (Fullan & Knight, 2011, as cited in Mueller & Brewer, 2013). Many school districts hire good teachers from within their districts to be instructional coaches. Unfortunately, being a good teacher does not necessarily mean that one is able to be a facilitator to help other teachers, and many districts put their best teachers in these positions without proper training (Stock & Duncan, 2010). Raffanti (2008) points to insufficient or inappropriate preparation and ongoing training for these instructional coaches. Districts have invested heavily through substantial financial resources in leadership for improvement of instruction but do not have the appropriate knowledge to offer adequate guidance, support, and training to provide for instructional coaches (Neumerski, 2012). Raffanti (2008) suggests that school districts refine and design training and support mechanisms for teacher leaders to ensure a more successful transition into instructional coaching. Instructional coaches need more than 2-3 days of training prior to taking their job (Stock & Duncan, 2010).

Gallucci et al. (2010) found limited empirical literature that examines coaches' professional learning. Little or no corresponding literature exists on job-embedded professional learning for coaches (Burkins & Ritchie, 2007). The distinct lack of literature illustrating how instructional coaches are trained and mentored is exposing a void in the implementation of

teacher leadership models many school districts are adopting. Gallucci (2008) found poor training of instructional coaches is due to the poor intentional planning of the training. It is important to ensure the instructional coaches are provided the support and training they need to become successful; unfortunately, little is known about how and to what extent teacher leaders and specifically instructional coaches are mentored (Stock & Duncan, 2010). Understanding and supporting coaches' learning is noticeably under-researched (Gallucci et al., 2010).

Once coaches start in their positions in school districts, they are often left to overcome obstacles in their positions on their own. Few studies of structural supports that assist coaches have been conducted. Empirical studies are extremely limited and focus only peripherally on the learning of coaches. The content and pedagogical expertise of coaches is assumed as a precondition for the job (Gallucci et al., 2010). While little research on training and mentoring is in existence, the research in existence has only recently begun to move from emphasizing qualities of being a coach to the behaviors involved in doing coaching but without attending to the process of this work (Neumerski, 2012). A clear process of how coaches will be trained and mentored is lacking in the literature on instructional coaching. Professional development supporting adult learning, building relationships, leadership development, and communication skills is critical for instructional coaches (Gallucci et al., 2010).

Perception of School Leadership Support

Building principals have the opportunity to support their staff in order to bring out the best in their staff. Teachers' perceptions of principal's empowering behaviors are positively associated with teachers' psychological empowerment (Lee & Nie, 2017). Empowering school leaders are observed to be more capable in creating work conditions, which can result in higher levels of teacher intrinsic motivation (Lee & Nie, 2017). A lack of school administrator support

and feeling of belonging can be perceived as a psychological strain, which is related to job dissatisfaction. Principals play a significant role in developing an organizational climate that is perceived to be supportive (Burke, Aubusson, Schuck, Buchanan, & Prescott, 2015). One predictor of teachers' intentions to stay in the profession is the support of the school executive that is principals and senior leaders of a school (Burke, et al., 2015). A growing consensus on the attributes of effective school principals shows that successful leaders influence effective organizational processes (Wise & Jacobo, 2010). In order for school principals to create and lead a learning organization, the school culture must be one in which principals and teachers engage in constant dialogue and reflection in order to improve (Wise & Jacobo, 2010). A lack of support can be perceived as psychological strain; school administrators should pay more attention to teachers' organizational support (Ingusci, Callea, Chirumbolo, Urbini, 2016).

Adult Learning

One area in which instructional coaches must be educated about is adult learning principles (McGrath, 2009). The instructional coaches have previously been teaching children and adolescents, but they must alter their teaching strategies as they teach adults (the classroom teachers). Knowles (1996) stated, "adults are not just gown-up children; they learn best when they were actively involved in determining what, how, and when they learned" (p. 254). Coaches must know the teachers well enough to let them discuss or present their views (McGrath, 2009). This creates a peer dialogue that allows peers to benefit from one another by internalizing the cognitive processes embedded in their communication and interaction (Vilkinas & Ladyshewsky, 2014). Identical processes of learning operate in both the child as well as the adult learner. When this is recognized, it allows the creation of effective programs for teacher training with guidance from coaches to assist teachers at various points in their performance (Stepp & Peterson-Ahmad,

2016). Teachers are more likely to participate with coaches when they know why they are learning new things (McGrath, 2009), as well as constructing this new knowledge on the foundations of what they already know and understand (Taylor & Hamdy, 2013). Instructional coaching is a social interaction that allows individual schemes to emerge through the environment by using collaboration to create a team learning community that is foundational for the partnership between both the coach and the teacher (Stepp & Peterson-Ahmad, 2016).

The nature of the social interaction of instructional coaching reinforces the use of sociocultural learning theories, specifically Vygotsky Space, which is the theoretical framework supporting this research project. It connects aspects of coaches' learning to organizational support (Gallucci, et al., 2010). This model is helpful for studying the reciprocal relationship by connecting the learning of the instructional coaches to the supports that they receive from their organization (Gallucci, 2008). Vygotsky (1978) stated that social interaction influences cognitive development. It is this social interaction that the instructional coaches have with the teachers with whom they are working and the administrators in their district that helps to drive their own personal development as instructional coaches.

Instructional coaches create conditions and processes necessary for adults to make a significant knowledge and paradigm shift (Mezirow, 1991, 2009). This knowledge and paradigm shift in the form of refining teaching in the classroom can translate into stronger teaching and increased learning in the classroom.

Adult education is unique in its approach as it aims to do considerably more than simply impart information to participants (McGrath, 2009). Instructional coaches do more than merely introduce pedagogies to teachers; this "one and done" form of teacher development inoculation does not stick with teachers. Adult learning construed as meaning making or knowledge

construction must have reflection and dialogue between instructional coach and teachers (Merriam, 2008). An important goal of instructional coaching is to help classroom teachers develop the ability to transfer knowledge (Hedeen, Raines, & Barton, 2010). The instructional coach's work with the classroom teacher extends beyond merely identifying strategies to use in the classroom; it involves helping the teacher integrate the new knowledge into his/her teaching to increase student achievement.

Transformative Learning

Coaches and teachers engage in critical reflections for transformative learning to occur; reflection on content (what we perceive, think, feel, and act), process (how we perform the functions of perceiving), and premise (awareness of why we perceive) strengthens the teacher's transformative learning as it follows the conceptual framework for how adults learn (Dirkx, 1998; Hedeen, Raines, Barton, 2010; Sammut, 2014). Transformative learning theory comes closest to the goals and processes of coaching (Sammut, 2014). Furthermore, transformative learning is learner-centered; coaches base what they teach to classroom teachers on what the teachers want and need in their classrooms (Taylor, 2006). Sammut (2014) found when individuals are coached, they are more accountable to themselves. This predicates a buy-in to what is being shared by coaches to improve teaching.

Adult learners approach learning differently than adolescent or child learners. Adults tend to be problem-centered and could pose their classroom-centered problems to the instructional coaches for help. Because adults are motivated by both internal and external factors, instructional coaches have to provide the teachers the motivation to work with and learn from the coaches (McGrath, 2009). Teachers are motivated to improve their teaching practices and their students' learning. Knowles (1996) stated that meaning for learning resides in what people strive for.

Adult motivation can be blocked by barriers such as negative self-concept and time constraints (McGrath, 2009).

Conflict Resolution

To create an effective learning climate, instructional coaches focus on conflict resolution training for working with adult learners (Knight, 2007). A common expression of strong emotions in adult learning occurs around areas of conflict (Dirkx, 2008), and coaches should be trained to resolve conflict. Adults resent and resist situations in which they feel others are imposing their will on them (McGrath, 2009). Some adults may not be ready for their beliefs to be challenged and may feel threatened and non participatory because they cannot accept their previous beliefs are wrong (McGrath, 2009). Teachers may feel threatened and may not want to be coached; coaches trained in conflict resolution will be able to resolve conflicts with adult learners.

Building Instructional Capacity

Building strong relationships with teachers is vital for instructional coaches. Teachers rarely learn from collaborating coaches unless they see them as people they can trust (Knight, 2016). This is foundational to building capacity in schools. According to Bolger (2000), capacity development entails "abilities, skills, understandings, attitudes, perceived values, relationships, behaviors, motivations, resources, and conditions that enable individuals to carry out functions and achieve their development objectives over time" (p. 2). Specifically, teachers exercise their individual knowledge, skills, and dispositions in an integrated way to advance the collective work of the school under a set of unique conditions to create school capacity (Newmann, King, & Youngs, 2000). Schools are expected to improve teaching through enhancing capacity building for individual and collective learning in schools. This promotes

professional leaning and is a prerequisite for addressing a consistent stream of changes and different restructuring demands and large-scale reforms introduced by accountability policy (Thoonen, Sleegers, Oort, Peetsma, & Feijsel, 2011). Utilizing instructional coaches as teacher leaders to improve student achievement is a large-scale reform in many schools.

Coaching Relationship

The coaching relationship is an important change agent in schools. Coaches build trust, communication, commitment, support, and collaboration (Wang, 2013). Trust within a group of teachers, as well as high expectations and a shared focus on student achievement, has been found to be important for teacher leadership (Neumerski, 2012). Jaquith (2012) found that a successful collaborative relationship has a high level of trust and certainty of confidentiality. Collaboration is the heart of the change process, and it cannot occur without trust and communication. "A strong professional community consists of the staff sharing clear goals for student learning; collaboration and collective responsibility among staff to achieve goals; professional inquiry by the staff to address the challenges they face; opportunities for staff to influence the school's activities and policies" (Newmann, King & Youngs, 2000, p. 264). These opportunities can come in the form of professional development delivered by the instructional coaches to the classroom teachers.

Barrier to Building Capacity

One barrier to capacity building is isolationism of teachers. They are accustomed to being alone; being asked to participate in professional learning opportunities that require working with others may be uncomfortable for them (Froelich & Puig, 2007). Stock and Duncan (2010) found that secondary school teachers are more resistant to change than other teachers in school districts; knowing this, instructional coaches will need to work with difficult staff members to

increase a school's capacity. Professional development addresses teachers' knowledge, skills, and dispositions as well as professional community as an important aspect of school capacity. A school's capacity is enhanced when its programs for student and staff learning are coherent, focused, and sustained (Newmann, King, & Youngs, 2000). Instructional coaches provide quality support for educators and support schools in their efforts to improve public education (Stock & Duncan, 2010). This support can come in the form of coaching teachers with professional development opportunities. Newmann, King, and Youngs (2000) purport that professional development should address all aspects of capacity rather than only the competence of individual teachers; too often, professional development is implemented in ways that fail because it violates key conditions of teacher (adult) learning.

Success for Instructional Coaches

Instructional coaches can be successful by gaining acceptance and respect from the teachers/colleagues they coach (Froelich & Puig, 2007). In order to be successful, the instructional coach must communicate with administration, teachers, and staff members. However, if instructional coaches draw upon their existing stores of knowledge based on experiences of being immersed within the bureaucratic model of schools, then there is the possibility that innovation in professional development will not occur (Mirci & Hensley, 2010). Jaquith (2012) found that despite having some experiences in the classroom, some coaches were unable to gain entry to classrooms in spite of attempts to establish trust and confidentiality, and, therefore, were unsuccessful in establishing working relationships with teachers. Communication is key to translating intellectual capital into social capital through shared leadership among administrators, coaches, and teachers in order to create a healthy school culture and environment (Nappi, 2014). Through transformational leadership, instructional coaches need to be

instrumental in building instructional capacity in schools; this includes a collection of resources for teaching: instructional knowledge, instructional materials, and instructional relationships (Jaquith, 2012).

Transformational Leadership

James MacGregor Burns (1978) defines transformational leadership as a process in which "leaders and followers help each other to advance to a higher level of morale and motivation" (p. 69). According to Burns, the transformational leadership approach creates substantial change in the lives of people and organizations. Leadership must be aligned with a collective purpose, and effective leaders must be judged by their ability to make social changes. The result is a change in the level of commitment and the increased capacity for achieving mutual purposes. Effective leadership means knowing when, how, and why to do something (Estrella-Henderson & Jessop, 2015). Transformational leaders increase motivation, job satisfaction, and commitment (Cerni, Curtis, & Colmar, 2010) and motivate followers to provide additional effort by encouraging them to buy into a greater vision (Shatzer, Caldarella, Hallam, & Brown, 2014). This style of leadership has a positive influence on subordinates' effort and satisfaction (Bass & Avolio, 1990; Bycio, Hackett, & Allen, 1995; Howell & Frost, 1989; Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1996). Transformational leaders can significantly shape the climate within organizations, and the environment they create affects the quality and richness of adult learning (Pounder, 2006). Cerni, Curtis, & Colmar (2010) found transformational leadership is a particularly effective approach in educational settings.

Transformational leaders provide a vision and a sense of mission; this excites and inspires subordinates (Pounder, 2006). At its core, transformational leadership emphasizes intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration. This allows the leaders to engage

teachers in dialogue about their questions and considerations, which can lead to giving individual support based on a teacher's needs (Brezicha, Bergmark, & Mitra, 2015). Transformational leaders guide teachers to establish goals, develop plans to achieve them, and identify, discuss, and debrief actions that ensure accountability and results not only for the leader, but also for the teacher, and ultimately for the success of all students (Estrella-Henderson & Jessop, 2015). A large and growing body of research illustrates how effective leadership practices influence teacher effectiveness and together how these influence school outcomes (Orphanos & Orr, 2013).

A number of research studies have supported the claim that a relationship between transformational leadership and teacher outcomes exists (Geijsel, Sleegers, van den Berg, & Kelchtermans, 2001; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006; Thoonen et al, 2011). Skillful leaders help educators learn from error, persist in the face of setbacks, listen carefully to the voices of fellow practitioners, understand that trust is foundational to learning, and engage in ongoing dialogues and conversations about problems of practice (Pounder, 2006). The most powerful ability that teacher leaders have is to help other teachers grow (Bamrick-Santoyo, 2013). Instructional leadership coaching is one of the greatest variables to improving student achievement, and there is a growing recognition that expert teachers and school leaders are perhaps the most import resource for improving student learning (Estrella-Henderson & Jessop, 2015).

Transformational leaders focus on restructuring the school by improving school conditions, and their practices are helpful in fostering the organizational learning it stimulates (Stewart, 2006). These leaders use their shared vision to create a supportive school climate in order to solicit change and manage school reform (Shatzer, Candarella, Hallam, & Brown, 2014). Skillful leaders must be able to observe and analyze instruction; collect, examine, and mine data; run effective meetings; manage conflict; deepen collaborative skills in others; and influence

organizational learning (Pounder, 2006). Transformational leaders understand and respect how individuals make sense of their work while working within the context of their social environment and boundaries of the school setting (Brezicha et al., 2015). Leaders can learn the skills required to foster a psychologically safe environment without sacrificing accountability (Pounder, 2006).

It is important to recognize that strong leadership skills do not automatically follow from strong teaching skills (Bamrick-Santoyo, 2013). The content of leadership training includes knowledge of good instruction, adult development, and school culture (Pounder, 2006). Results of studies by Leithwood and Jantzi (1996) and Orphanos and Orr (2011) confirm more effective leadership practices are influenced by the nature and quality of leadership preparation. When leaders are allowed to develop and practice skills and are supported with effective coaching and targeted feedback, more effective leaders emerge (Pounder, 2006). The transformational leader wants to lead. "Leaders are neither born nor made: leaders evolve from a structure of motivation, perceived values, and goals" (Burns, 1978, p. 57).

Mindset

Being open to new ideas and approaches does not come easily to many, and without the right mindset, learning is less likely to occur (McDonnell, 2014). Instructional coaches need to be well versed in mindset in order to collaborate with classroom teachers about utilizing new instructional strategies to increase student achievement. Some may hold a fixed mindset because of their easy success in teaching, but growth mindset people keep looking for the next challenge, believing the next try has a chance of success, which fuels their perseverance and results in higher achievement (Dockterman & Blackwell, 2014).

Shifting Mindsets

Instructional coaches who work with teachers who hold a fixed mindset will find it beneficial to encourage a growth mindset with them even though a fixed mindset is more readily cultivated (Heslin & VandeWalle, 2008). While shifting mindsets can be challenging, evidence exists to show it is possible. McDonnell (2014) found that shift must be addressed to ensure all are in the right frame of mind before starting to train on a particular curriculum. Instructional coaches will be working with teachers who will be asked to shift their mindset on professional development. If instructional coaches understand how to shift from a fixed to a growth mindset, it is a critical first step to help break down developmental barriers and empower teachers to become successful learners. When someone believes intelligence is malleable, intellectual ability can always be further developed (Blackwell, Trzesniewski, & Dweck, 2007). When teachers are invited to enact a growth mindset, it is a useful way to envision student learning and academic development (Boyd, 2014).

Former NFL coach Joe Gibbs stated, " . . . you need individuals willing to learn from mistakes and adapt to the challenges they face" (McDonnell, 2004, p.12). It may be overwhelming to think about systems change; it will take grit, perseverance and tenacity to transform educational systems and practices to ensure an increasing number of students become successful (Laursen, 2015). It is incumbent upon instructional coaches to cultivate implicit theories of intelligence because those who view intelligence as something that can be changed tend to be more motivated and perform at higher levels (Jones, Bryant, Snyder, & Malone, 2012). Stanford psychologist, Carol Dweck (2016) found that motivation (or attitudes about the learning enterprise) can substantially affect how people approach difficult tasks. When peoples' views of themselves are seen having efficacy, agency, and integrity, it becomes a key driver of academic motivation (Brady et al., 2016).

Mindset and the Adult Learner

Mindset theory fits adult learning theory as defined by Malcolm Knowles because adults can use their motivation to succeed and their desire to reach a goal as fuel to learn how to change their mindsets (McDonnell, 2014). As instructional coaches work with teachers to improve their teaching effectiveness, they tailor their coaching to fostering a growth mindset for the adult learner. Structuring workshop experiences to amplify learning through a blended growth mindset approach helps participants build a new relativity to the material (Boyd, 2014). Additionally, teachers with more incremental views of intelligence (growth mindset) were more likely to perceive the value of practical skills (Jones et al., 2012). Those who hold the growth mindset are somewhat more likely to engage in more metacognitive sophisticated learning habits and manage their own learning in more productive ways (Yan, Thai, & Bjork, 2014). When teachers believe they can improve with constructive feedback, they are more likely to seek feedback than those who don't believe they can improve (Boyd, 2014). It might be difficult for teachers to create a context of intellectual growth if teachers do not believe in growth for themselves and are not rewarded for their own growth. If teachers believe their own skills can be developed, each of their students provides an opportunity for them to learn more about their craft (Dweck, 2015).

Summary

This review of literature relevant to the training of instructional coaches provides an historical perspective of instructional coaches. It defines teacher leadership and instructional coaching. Additionally, it examines instructional coach training focusing on adult learning, capacity building, transformational leadership and mindset development.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Chapter three provides an overview of the methodology that guides this study. The chapter provides a rationale of the quantitative approach and the corresponding philosophical assumptions. The research questions are stated and the research setting and population are explained. Additionally, the survey instruments and the data collection procedures, as well as the data analysis procedures of the study are explained. The chapter concludes with a discussion on limitations and delimitations of the research study.

Research Design

This study will use a quantitative approach and survey research methodology with an objectivist epistemology and a postpositivist philosophical foundation. The objectivist epistemology states that knowledge is not created through research; it is only discovered (Crotty, 2003). Creswell (2009) describes postpositivism as a traditional form of research most aligned to the scientific method or science research. Choices made in the development of scholarly research stem from the way researchers view the world around them and then impact the way questions are posed and answers are sought. Researchers generalize or draw inferences to a population (Creswell, 2009). Researchers develop statements of truth as they collect data and evidence (Phillips & Burbules, 2000). Crotty (2003) advocates for the use of the scientific method for appropriate research because of the existence of knowledge independent of its discovery through research. According to Fraenkel, Wallen, and Hyun (2015), quantitative researchers seek to establish relationships between variables, looking for the cause of relationships as well as possibly explaining the causes. Postpositivists seek to identify a problem and then assess the causes that influence outcomes (Creswell, 2013). The interaction and

assertion of these two philosophical attributes both support and frame research decisions in this study.

Methodological Approach

A common methodology used to collect data in postpositivist research is the use of surveys. Survey research provides a numeric description of trends, attitudes, or opinions of a population by studying a sample of that population (Creswell, 2013), with a goal of being able to make inferences about the entire population (Fowler, 2014). Generalizing results of a sample to an entire population is the primary goal and significant strength of survey research (Rea & Parker, 2014; Check & Schutt, 2012). Survey research is used in this study to better inform and obtain factors that influence the training and continuing professional development of instructional coaches.

For the present study, the design choice was to use survey research as means to collect data. Data collection was through a self-administered online survey and represented a snapshot in time as reported by practicing instructional coaches. Compared to the extensive histories of other research methodologies, online surveys are reasonably new. However, with the widespread use of electronic communication, online surveys provide a low cost, fast, and efficient mode of data collection (Sue & Ritter, 2007).

Research Questions

The following research questions guided this quantitative research study to examine the training of instructional coaches.

1. To what extent do instructional coaches view their initial training as beneficial?
2. To what extent is there a difference in coaches' perceptions on the benefits of their training based on whether they received training in the following areas: a) adult

education, b) conflict resolution, c)leadership, d) building teacher capacity, and e) building teacher coach relationships?

3. To what extent is there a relationship between perceived benefits of training and support from a) building principal, b) other coaches and leaders, c) classroom teachers, and d) district administration?
4. To what extent does years teaching, initial training, support from building administrators, and support from district administrators predict perception of current district/building PD?

Research Setting

Districts in Iowa were selected to participate in the study according to several factors, reflecting the broad population of educators throughout the state of Iowa: their location in the state, the size of their district, and the year they began participation in the Teacher Leadership and Compensation (TLC) program, which is a unique state-funded professional development program that rewards effective teachers with leadership opportunities and higher pay, attracts promising new teachers with competitive starting salaries and more support and fosters greater collaboration for all teachers to learn from each other. Each school district was sent a request for permission to conduct research with a one-page summary outlining the study (Appendix A).

Sample and Participants

Participants in this research study were practicing instructional coaches in school districts in Iowa. Districts were selected according to several factors in order to reflect a broad representation of instructional coaches throughout the state of Iowa. The districts represented different sizes, locations around the state, and the year they implemented the TLC Grant to incorporate teacher leadership. Districts were invited to participate in the study. The sampling of

participants employed both purposeful sampling due to the specific regions and sizes of districts as well as convenience sampling by selecting respondents because of their availability and access to complete the survey in those districts. The response rate was dependent on the response of participants in the convenience sampling. The survey was administered using Qualtrics software.

Table 3.1 provides information on participant demographics.

Table 3.1

Participant Frequency Distributions (n = 58)

Variable	*n*	% of sample
Education		
Masters Degree in Ed/Ed Leadership	37	63.8
Another discipline	11	18.9
No Masters Degree	10	17.3
Classroom Teaching Experience Years		
3-5	3	.05
6-10	11	18.9
11-15	16	27.5
16-20	14	24.1
21-30	11	18.9
31+	3	.05

Survey Instrument

The survey used in this study is one variation of the Instructional Coaching and Teacher Leadership in Iowa (Appendix B), created by two professors at a midwestern university. Three variations of the survey were created (one for instructional coaches, one for administrators, and one for classroom teachers). These surveys have similar constructs but were designed to reflect the specific contexts of respondents. The specific variation of the survey used for this study was the Instructional Coach/Teacher Leader Survey. Researchers conducted a pilot study of the three surveys with volunteers from non-participating/non-invited school districts in order to get feedback on the clarity of the questions. Following the pilot study, researchers revised questions for clarity before disseminating the survey to school districts.

Headers used to design the Instructional Coach/Teacher Leader survey questions are described below.

Demographics/Role Descriptions

Six questions gathered demographic information from participants. These questions span nominal (full-time/part-time responsibilities), ordinal (degrees received, building level, coaching responsibility), and scale (years of teaching experience, years of coaching experience) measures.

Coaching Activities

Thirty-nine questions gathered information about activities of instructional coaches/teacher leaders. Thirteen questions measured participants' activities based on engagements and frameworks, ten questions measured participants' activities with teachers, and sixteen questions measured participants' other activities. All of these coaching activity questions used a four-point Likert scale with possible responses labeled never, rarely, sometimes, and often.

Support for Instructional Coaches/Teacher Leaders

Twenty-two questions gathered information about support for instructional coaches/teacher leaders. Eight questions measured participants' level of support from their own building administration and institutional structure. All responses employed a four-point Likert scale labeled never, rarely, sometimes, and often. Six questions gathered information about how instructional coaches/teachers leaders feel about support from individuals/groups in their districts. All responses used a four-point Likert scale labeled never, rarely, sometimes, and often. Four questions gathered information on which individuals or groups of people have been most supportive and which individuals or groups of people could be more supportive. Participants selected their responses from drop-down menus and open response text boxes.

Factors Related to Successful Coaching

Thirteen questions gathered information about factors related to successful coaching. Two questions gathered information about primary responsibilities of the instructional coach/teacher leader. Participants selected responses from a drop-down menu. Eight questions asked about types of support for instructional coaches/teacher leaders using a three-point Likert scale labeled important, less important, not at all important. Respondents identified their most important professional support in a text box. Two questions gathered information about who is most supportive of instructional coaches/teacher leaders and why using open text boxes.

Alignment of Coaching/Leadership to Specific Initiatives

Seven questions gathered information on the alignment of coaching/leadership to specific initiatives. Responses were selected in a variety of ways: drop-down menus, checklists, and text boxes.

Transition to Coaching/Leadership Role

Thirteen questions gathered information on the transition to the coaching/leadership role of participants. Responses were selected in a variety of ways: drop-down menus, checklists, and text boxes.

Initial Professional Development of Instructional Coaches/Teacher Leaders

Four questions gathered information about instructional coaches/teacher leaders initial professional development. Responses were selected in a variety of ways: checklists, text boxes and Likert scales.

Literacy and Technology Coaching/Leadership

Six questions gathered information about literacy and technology coaching/leadership. Responses were selected through yes/no questions and text boxes.

Current Professional Development for Instructional Coaches/Teacher Leaders

Four questions gathered information about current professional development for instructional coaches/teacher leaders. Responses from participants were selected through drop down menus, checked boxes, and Likert scales.

Other Information

The survey ended with a question allowing participants to give additional information about experiences not asked in the survey. Respondents answered using yes/no along with a text box as a means to expand on their answer.

The constructs used in the study are summarized in Table 3.1 below.

Table 3.1

Summary of Constructs Used in Study

Domain	Number of Questions	Type of Response
Coaching Activities	39	Four-point Likert scale
Support for Instructional Coaches/Teacher Leaders	22	Four-point Likert scale, drop-down menus, and open response text boxes
Factors Related to Successful Coaching	13	Drop-down menus, three-point Likert scale, open response text boxes
Alignment of Coaching/Leadership to Specific Initiatives	7	Drop-down menus, checklists, and open response text boxes
Transition to Coaching/Leadership Role	13	Drop-down menus, checklists, and open response text boxes
Initial Professional Development of Instructional Coaches/Teacher Leaders	4	Checklists, text boxes, and four-point Likert scales
Literacy and Technology Coaching/Leadership	6	Yes/No questions and text boxes
Current Professional Development for Instructional Coaches/Teacher Leaders	4	Drop-down menus, checklists, and four-point Likert scales
Other Information	1	Yes/No question with text box

Variables

Through operationalizing the Vygotsky Space framework and using the results from the survey described above, this study examines variables pertaining to initial and current professional development of instructional coaches/teacher leaders as predictors of the satisfaction of the training of instructional coaches/teacher leaders as well as instructional coaches' perceptions of benefits of ongoing district/building professional development. All independent and dependent variables are described in the following subsections. They are summarized in Table 2 following the descriptions.

Independent Variables

Measurement of each of the independent variables is described below.

Support for Instructional Coaches/Teacher Leaders. Support for instructional coaches/teacher leaders are measured through participant responses on the Instructional Coaching and Teacher Leadership in Iowa Survey. Perceived value of support for success in instructional coaching/teacher leaders position are described below.

Support from Individuals/Groups. Relative ranking of support for instructional coaches/teacher leaders is measured using a Likert scale by participants ranking the perceived support from the following individuals/groups as not supported, rarely supported, moderately supported, strongly supported: (1) building principals, (2) other coaches/leaders, (3) teachers, and (4) district administration.

Initial Professional Development. Initial professional development for instructional coaches/teacher leaders is measured through participant responses on the Instructional Coaching and Teacher Leadership in Iowa Survey. Initial professional development areas and needed professional development areas for instructional coaches/teacher leaders are described below.

Initial District/Building Directed Training. Initial district/building directed training was measured by participants selecting either yes or no.

Initial Training Areas. Initial training areas is measured by participants selecting subjects in which they received training using a drop down menu: adult education, conflict resolution, leadership, building teacher capacity, building teacher/coach relationships.

Years of Classroom Teaching. Years of classroom teaching is measured by participants selecting the category that best fits their years of teaching. They could choose from 3-5 years, 6-10 years, 11-15 years, 16-20 years, 21-30 years, and 31+ years.

Dependent Variables

Measurement of both of the dependent variables is described below.

Perceived Benefits of Initial Training. The perceived benefits of initial district/building directed training is measured by participants ranking it as very beneficial, somewhat beneficial, not very beneficial, or not beneficial at all.

Perceived Benefits of Current PD. The perceived value of district/building professional development to the growth of instructional coaches/teacher leaders is measured by participants ranking it as very beneficial, somewhat beneficial, not very beneficial, or not beneficial at all.

Table 3.2

Summary of Variables Used in Study

Type of Variable	Domain	Name of Variable	Type of Response
Independent	Support for Instructional Coaches/Teacher Leaders	Support from Individuals/Groups	4-point Likert Scale
Independent	Initial Professional Development	Initial District/Building Directed Training	Yes/No
Independent	Initial Professional Development	Initial Training Areas	Drop-down Menu

Table 3.2 cont.

Summary of Variables Used in Study

Type of Variable	Domain	Name of Variable	Type of Response
Dependent		Perceived Benefits of Initial Training	4-point Likert Scale
Dependent		Perceived Benefits of Current District/ Building PD	4-point Likert Scale

Data Analysis Procedures

Once the window for completing the research study is closed, data will be compiled and exported through Qualtrics online survey program into SPSS v.24 for analysis. Any entry in the dataset with missing data was removed from the data set prior to analysis. Both descriptive and inferential analyses were used to answer the research questions.

Descriptive Statistical Analysis

SPSS v.24 was used to report means, standard deviations, and frequencies on all independent and dependent variables. Descriptive statistics were used to answer question one: To what extent do instructional coaches view their initial training as beneficial? Skew and kurtosis values are also reported for all variables measured on the ordinal or scale level to determine the extent to which each variable meets the assumptions of normality necessary for the inferential statistical analyses used in this study.

Inferential Statistical Analysis

Research questions two through four were answered using independent samples *t*-tests, correlations, and a multiple regression analysis.

Independent samples *t*-test. Five independent samples *t*-tests were conducted to answer research question 2: To what extent is there a difference in coaches' perceptions on the benefits of their training based on whether they received training in the following areas: a) adult

education, b) conflict resolution, c) leadership, d) building teacher capacity, and e) building teacher coach relationships? Specifically, the five independent samples *t*-tests answered:

a) Is there a statistically significant difference based upon perceived benefits of initial training and receiving training in adult education?
b) Is there a statistically significant difference based upon perceived benefits of initial training and receiving training in conflict resolution?
c) Is there a statistically significant difference based upon perceived benefits of initial training and receiving training in leadership?
d) Is there a statistically significant difference based upon perceived benefits of initial training and receiving training in building teacher capacity?
e) Is there a statistically significant difference based upon perceived benefits of initial training and receiving training in building teacher coach relationships?

Correlations. Correlations were run to address research question 3: To what extent is there a relationship between perceived benefits of training and support from a) building principal, b) other coaches and leaders, c) classroom teachers, and d) district administration? According to Green and Salkind (2011), "the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient (r) assesses the degree that quantitative variables are linearly related in a sample" (p. 257). In other words, this correlation determines if there is a relationship between the variables in the sample. Green and Salkind (2011) further discuss the two assumptions essential to the significance test of the Pearson correlation coefficient. The first assumption suggests that the variables are bivariately normally distributed. This means that each of the variables is normally distributed independently and at all levels. If the assumption does not hold true, there may be a nonlinear relationship that exists. Green and Salkind (2011) further describe the second assumption which

requires that "the cases represent a random sample from the population and the scores on variables for one case are independent of scores on these variables for other cases" (p. 258). If this assumption does not hold true, a significance test does not need to be run. Finally, the Pearson correlation coefficient is reported as an effect size ranging from -1 to + 1, which is represented in a correlation matrix with all of the variables. Since several correlations were computed in this study, a Bonferroni approach was used to control for Type 1 errors. Green and Salkind (2011) describes that the Bonferroni approach "requires dividing .05 by the number of computed correlations" (p. 261). A correlation was only significant if the *p*- value was less than the adjusted significance.

Multiple regression. A multiple regression was used to address research question 4: To what extent does years teaching, initial training, support from building administrators, and support from district administrators predict perception of benefits of ongoing district/building professional development? A standard multiple regression, a popular technique in many disciplines, was selected because it enables the researcher to examine the relation between the dependent variable and multiple independent variables (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). With the standard analysis approach, the overlapping portion of the variance is included in the overall summary statistics of the relationship of the set of IVs to the DV, but is not assigned to either of the IVs as part of their individual contribution (Mertler & Vannatta, 2013). Multiple regression is appropriate for this study because of the ability of the researcher to assess the relationship between the dependent variable and several independent variables (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). This study had a sample size of 58, and according to Maxwell (2000), due to the difficulty in formulating a theoretical value of effect size, there are other methods for calculating effect sizes

that show that a small sample size such as the one in this study is deemed appropriate for a multiple regression.

Delimitations

This study is delimited to instructional coach/teacher leader training in schools in years one, two, and three of implementation of the TLC grant in the state of Iowa. Although the three surveys were used to explore other information about how instructional coaches are supported in their roles as gathered by instructional coaches/teacher leaders, classroom teachers, and administrations, that data go beyond the scope of the present study. Additionally, those instructional coaches/teacher leaders who were asked to participate in the study were limited to those who work at the selected school districts across the state of Iowa. The scope of this study does not extend to other states beyond Iowa, due to the nature of the state-funded Teacher Leadership program that is specific to Iowa. Additionally, instructional coach/teacher leader performance was not considered, only training satisfaction (of both initial and ongoing professional development) was investigated.

Limitations

The limitations of the study are important to note regarding the survey instrument itself as well as the instructional coaches who responded to the study. The following limitations should be considered while drawing conclusions from the findings associated with this study.

1. This study was limited to only instructional coaches from selected school districts across the state of Iowa who chose to take the survey. These school districts were selected based on their location in the state, their size, and their year in implementation of the TLC Grant, a unique state-funded professional development that rewards effective teachers with leadership opportunities and higher pay.

2. With the small sample size for this study, caution must be applied as to why the findings might not be entirely consistent with previous literature.
3. The questions for this study were at the end of an already lengthy survey instrument. which may have resulted in survey fatigue by instructional coaches by the time they answered the majority of the questions.

Because this study was entirely quantitative, there was no attempt to find out the reasons for the instructional coaches' opinions of perceived support or their perceived satisfaction of their initial training and ongoing professional development.

Summary

This chapter outlined the methodological approach used in this study. Research design and approach, methodological approach, survey instrument, data collection and analysis, and limitations and delimitations were discussed. All variables in the study were also listed and defined.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to gain an understanding of how beneficial instructional coaches believe their initial training and continued professional development are as they move from classroom teachers to teacher leaders. This study was conducted using Vygotsky Space developed by Harre (1984) in order to determine the perceived benefits of the initial training and continued professional development of instructional coaches.

This chapter provides the results of the data analysis and answers the four research questions that guided this study. This chapter is divided into six sections. The first section describes the data screening procedures to ensure assumptions of data normality in order to conduct data analysis. The second section details the results of all descriptive statistics conducted on demographic variables and all independent and dependent variables. The third section reports the results of the independent samples *t-tests* used to answer research question two. The fourth section reports the correlations between independent and dependent variables to answer research question three. The fifth section reports the correlations between all independent and dependent variables for multiple regression analysis. The sixth and final section answers each of the research questions used in this study.

Data Screening and Assumptions of Normality

In advance of conducting descriptive and inferential analysis, all data were subjected to screening for outliers and missing values. Results of the data screening revealed no outliers or missing values for the independent or dependent variables. Additional screening was conducted to assess whether the variables met the assumptions of normality. Assumptions of normality are required precursors for tests of statistical significance (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013).

Vogt and Johnson (2011) described normality of data as a statistical assumption that is essential for statistical tests. Normality of variables can be assessed using statistical and graphical methods (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). Skewness refers to how well data is distributed symmetrically, with the mean located centrally within the distribution (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). Kurtosis refers to how well data is distributed in a bell shape, focusing on the height of the curve (Vogt & Johnson, 2011). A perfectly normally distributed data distribution has a skewness and kurtosis of zero.

Both skewness and kurtosis were evaluated for the independent and dependent variables used in this study. Positive skew results from positive numerical data and graphically distributes values to the right or upward while negative output places values to the left or downward (Vogt & Johnson, 2011). Graphic and numeric displays of the data reveal kurtosis values greater than +/-1 (Vogt & Johnson, 2011) in five of the variables. Kline (2016) stated that some values as high as +/- 3 can and will meet assumptions of normality. Additionally, Edgell & Noon (1984) stated that tests can be robust as long as variables are independent, which is the case with the variables in Tale 4.1. As a result, even though not all assumptions of normality were met, those variables used in independent samples t-tests are independent of each other. The results of the analysis of normality for the independent and dependent variables used in this study are reported in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1

Assessment of Normality for Variables in the Model (n = 58)

Variables	Skew	SE of Skew	*Kurtosis*	*SE of Kurtosis*
Adult Education Training	-.286	.314	-1.988	.618
Conflict Resolution Training	1.132	.314	-.746	.618
Leadership Training	-.754	.314	-1.483	.618
Building Teacher Capacity Training	-.286	.314	-1.988	.618

Table 4.1 cont.

Assessment of Normality for Variables in the Model (n = 58)

Variables	Skew	SE of Skew	*Kurtosis*	*SE of Kurtosis*
Building Teacher/Coach Relationships Training	-3.493	.314	10.565	.618
Classroom Teaching Experience	.039	.314	-.697	.618
Building Principal Support	-1.872	.314	5.279	.618
District Administration Support	-.967	.314	.148	.618
Perceived Benefits of Initial Training*	.323	.314	-.835	.618
Perceived Benefits of Ongoing Training*	1.080	.330	.118	.650

*Dependent Variables

Descriptive Statistics Analysis

Descriptive statistics were run for each of the variables in this study. The advantage of descriptive statistics according to Fraenkal and Wallen (2006) is that the statistics permit researchers to describe information contained in many scores with just a few indices, such as mean and median. Table 4.2 reports the results of the descriptive analyses the independent and dependent variables used in the study. Statistics include the range (minimum and maximum values), means, and standard deviation for each variable.

Table 4.2

Descriptive Statistics for Dependent and Independent Variables

Variables	Min	Max	*Mean*	*SD*
Adult Education Training (0 = no)	0	1	.57	.50
Conflict Resolution Training (0 = no)	0	1	.26	.44
Leadership Training (0 = no)	0	1	.67	.47
Building Teacher Capacity Training (0 = no)	0	1	.57	.50
Building Teacher/Coach Relationship Training (0 = no)	0	1	.44	.50
Classroom Teaching Experience[a]	1	7	4.48	1.29
Building Principal Support[b]	1	4	3.67	.63
District Administration Support[b]	1	4	3.53	.71
Initial Training Received (0 = no)	0	1	.76	.43

Table 4.2 cont.

Descriptive Statistics for Dependent and Independent Variables

Variables	Min	Max	*Mean*	*SD*
Perceived Benefits of Initial Training[c]	1	4	1.78	.79

[a]Scale: 1 = 1-2, 2 = 3-5, 3 = 6-10, 4 = 11-15, 5 = 16-20, 6 =21-30, 7 = 31+
[b]Scale: 1 = Not Supported, 2 = Rarely Supported, 3 = Moderately Supported, 4 = Strongly Supported
[c]Scale: 1 = Not Beneficial At All, 2 = Not Very Beneficial, 3 = Somewhat Beneficial, 4 = Very Beneficial

Independent Samples *t*-test

Independent samples *t-tests* were conducted to determine to what extent was there a difference in coaches' perceptions on the benefits of their initial training based on whether they received training in the areas of adult education, conflict resolution, leadership, building teacher capacity, and building teacher coach relationships. There are three assumptions that a data set must meet in order to conduct an independent samples *t*-test (Green & Salkind, 2010). These assumptions are:

1) The test variable is normally distributed in each of the two populations.
2) The variances of the normally distributed test variable for the populations are equal.
3) The cases represent purposely selected sample, and the scores on the test variable are independent of each other (p. 176).

Assumptions one, two, and three were met by the data screening and initial data analysis described earlier in this chapter for all variables except building teacher coach relationships, which did not meet assumption two. Assumption two can be met for this variable using Levene's test for equity of variances, which assumes equal variance when the test is not significant (Green & Salkind, 2010). Levene's test was not significant (.114), so equal variances were assumed.

The first independent samples *t*-test was conducted to determine to what extent there was a statistically significant difference in coaches' perceptions on the benefits of their initial training

based on whether they received training in adult education. The independent samples *t*-test was not statistically significant, $t(56) = -1.8$, $p = .08$ indicating that the mean perceived benefits of initial training with adult education training ($M = 3.55$, $SD = .506$) is not significantly greater than the mean perceived benefits of initial training without adult education training ($M = 3.28$, $SD = .614$). The 95% confidence interval ranged from -.51 to .03 with the value of zero included in this range, also indicating the difference was not statistically significant.

The second independent samples *t*-test was conducted to determine to what extent there was a statistically significant difference in coaches' perceptions on the benefits of their initial training based on whether they received training in conflict resolution. The independent samples *t*-test was not statistically significant, $t(56) = -.28$, $p = .78$ indicating that the mean perceived benefits of initial training with conflict resolution training ($M = 3.42$, $SD = .516$) is not significantly greater than the mean perceived benefits of initial training without conflict resolution training ($M = 3.42$, $SD = .587$). The 95% confidence interval ranged from -.39 to .29 with the value of zero included in this range, also indicating the difference was not statistically significant.

The third independent samples *t*-test was conducted to determine to what extent there was a statistically significant difference in coaches' perceptions on the benefits of their initial training based on whether they received training in leadership. The independent samples *t*-test was statistically significant, $t(56) = -3.32$, $p = .002$, $d = .9$ indicating that the mean perceived benefits of initial training with leadership training ($M = 3.59$, $SD = .498$) is significantly greater than the mean perceived benefits of initial training without leadership training ($M = 3.11$, $SD = .567$). The 95% confidence interval ranged from -.77 to -.19 with the value of zero not included in this range, also indicating the difference was statistically significant.

The fourth independent samples *t*-test was conducted to determine to what extent there was a statistically significant difference in coaches' perceptions on the benefits of their initial training based on whether they received training in building teacher capacity. The independent samples *t*-test was not statistically significant, $t(56) = -1.310$, $p = .196$ indicating that the mean perceived benefits of initial training with building teacher capacity training ($M = 3.52$, $SD = .508$) is not significantly greater than the mean perceived benefits of initial training without building teacher capacity training ($M = 3.32$, $SD = .627$). The 95% confidence interval ranged from -.49 to .10 with the value of zero included in this range, also indicating the difference was not statistically significant.

The fifth and final independent samples *t*-test was conducted to determine to what extent there was a statistically significant difference in coaches' perceptions on the benefits of their initial training based on whether they received training in building teacher/coach relationships. The independent samples *t*-test was not statistically significant, $t(56) = -.66$, $p = .512$ indicating that the mean perceived benefits of initial training with building teacher/coach relationships training ($M = 3.44$, $SD = .572$) is not significantly greater than the mean perceived benefits of initial training without building teacher/coach relationships training ($M = 3.25$, $SD = .50$). The 95% confidence interval ranged from -.78 to .4 with the value of zero included in this range, also indicating the difference was not statistically significant.

Correlations

Pearson correlation coefficients were used to determine to what extent there were relationships between variables and to assess for multicollinearity among the variables in the regression analysis. Correlations address the association between two variables by representing the strength of the linear relationship between them (Vogt & Johnson, 201). The strength of the

relationship between two variables is indicated by the correlation coefficient (*r*), which ranges between -1 and 1. An *r* value of -1.00 or 1.00 indicates perfect predictability, and less and less predictability exists as *r* values get closer to zero (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). Multicollinear variables are two variables that are too highly correlated, .9 or higher, and are considered redundant (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). Green and Salkind (2010) write that correlation coefficients of .10, .30, and .50, no matter their sign are interpreted as weak, moderate, and strong coefficients. There are two assumptions that a data set must meet in order to conduct a correlation (Green & Salkind, 2010). These assumptions are:

1) The variables are bivariately normally distributed.
2) The cases represent a random sample from the population, and the scores on the variables for one case are independent of scores on these variables for other cases (p. 176).

Both assumptions were met by the data screening and initial data analysis described earlier in this chapter.

Pearson correlation coefficients were computed among each of the variables perceived benefits of initial training, support from building principal, support from other coaches and leaders, support from classroom teachers, and support from district administration resulting in ten correlation coefficients represented in Table 4.3. To avoid the risk of a Type I error in determining statistical significance when computing multiple correlations, the Bonferroni approach was used to determine the new level for statistical significance. The Bonferroni approach involves dividing a generally accepted alpha level (.05) by the number of correlations (.05/10), which resulted in a new alpha level of .005. In this analysis, correlations required a *p* value below .005 to be considered statistically significant. Using .005 as the revised and

conservative significance level, two of the ten correlations were deemed significant. All significant correlations are noted with an asterisk (*) in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3

Correlations for Research Question 3 (n = 58)

	1	2	3	4	5
1 Perceived benefits of initial training	--				
2 Support from building principal	.121	--			
3 Support from other coaches and leaders	.142	.000	--		
4 Support from teachers	.089	.430*	-.203	--	
5 Support from district administration	.269	.548*	.154	.312	--

* $p < .005$ Bonferroni adjustment for multiple correlations to minimize chances of Type I error.

The two statistically significant correlations were considered moderate based on the interpretation of the correlation coefficient as recommend by Green and Salkind (2010). The variable perceived support by teachers was positively correlated with perceived support by building principals ($r = .430$, $p < .005$), indicating that perception of support by teachers was higher with perceived support from building principals. The variable perceived support by district administration was positively correlated with perceived support by building principals ($r = .548$, $p < .005$), indicating that perception of support by district administration was higher with perceived support from building principals.

Pearson correlation coefficients were also computed among each of the variables perceived benefits of current training, perceived benefits of initial training, years of classroom teaching, support from building principals, and support from district administration resulting in ten correlation coefficients represented in Table 4.4. To avoid the risk of a Type I error in determining statistical significance when computing multiple correlations, the Bonferroni approach was used to determine the new level for statistical significance. The Bonferroni approach involves dividing a generally accepted alpha level (.05) by the number of correlations (.05/10), which resulted in a new alpha level of .005. In this analysis, correlations required a *p*

value below .005 to be considered statistically significant. Using .005 as the revised and conservative significance level, two of the ten correlations were deemed significant. All significant correlations are noted with an asterisk (*) in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4

Correlations for Research Question 4 (n = 58)

		1	2	3	4	5
1	Perceived benefits of current PD	--				
2	Perceived benefits of initial training	.391*	--			
3	Years of classroom teaching	.116	.116	--		
4	Support from building principals	..411	.281	-.283	--	
5	Support from district administration	.268	.089	-.149	.548*	--

* $p < .005$ Bonferroni adjustment for multiple correlations to minimize chances of Type I error.

Multiple Regression

A multiple regression analysis was conducted to determine the extent to which years of teaching, perceived benefits of initial training, perceived support from building principals, and perceived support from district administration were statistically significant predictors for perception of benefits of current district/building PD. Results of the analysis revealed that the combination of independent variables significantly predicted perceived benefits of current district/building PD, $F(4, 51) = 5.321$, $p = .001$, accounting for 29% ($R^2 = .294$) of the variance in perceived benefits of current district/building PD. The variables perceived benefits of initial training ($\beta = .272$, $p = .002$) and perceived support from district administration ($\beta = .343$, $p = .001$) were statistically significant predictors. Table 4.4 provides the unstandardized regression coefficients (β), the standard error for the unstandardized regression coefficient ($SE\ \beta$), standardized regression coefficients (β), and the variance (R^2) explained.

Table 4.4

Regression Coefficients for Perceived Benefits of Ongoing District/Building PD (n=58)

	β	SE β	β
Constant	.705	.684	
Years of teaching	.094	.061	.194
Perceived benefits of initial training	.291	.135	.272*
Perceived support from building principals	.090	.151	.084
Perceived support from district administration	.304	.136	.343*

Note: $R^2 = .294$, Adj $R^2 = .239$.
**$p < .001$

Summary Answers to Research Questions

Each of the four research questions is answered in this section using results from the data analyses presented in this chapter.

Research Question 1

To what extent do instructional coaches view their initial training as beneficial?

A descriptive analysis was run to identify the perceived benefits of initial training. Twenty-seven identified it to be very beneficial; 29 identified it to be somewhat beneficial; 2 identified it to be not very beneficial.

Research Question 2

To what extent is there a difference in coaches' perceptions on the benefits of their training based on whether they received training in the following areas: a) adult education, b) conflict resolution, c) leadership, d) building teacher capacity, and e) building teacher coach relationships?

Adult education training. An independent samples *t*-test did not identify a statistically significant difference on perceived benefits of initial training when coaches received adult education training as opposed to when they did not receive adult education training.

Conflict resolution training. An independent samples *t*-test did not identify a statistically significant difference on perceived benefits of initial training when coaches received conflict resolution training as opposed to when they did not receive conflict resolution training.

Leadership training. An independent samples *t*-test identified a statistically significant difference on perceived benefits of initial training when coaches received leadership training as opposed to when they did not receive leadership training.

Building teacher capacity training. An independent samples *t*-test did not identify a statistically significant difference on perceived benefits of initial training when coaches received training on building teacher capacity as opposed to when they did not receive training on building teacher capacity.

Building teacher/coach relationships training. An independent samples *t*-test identified a statistically significant difference on perceived benefits of initial training when coaches received training on building teacher/coach relationships as opposed to when they did not receive training on building teacher/coach relationships.

Research Question 3

To what extent is there a relationship between perceived benefits of training and support from a) building principal, b) other coaches and leaders, c) classroom teachers, and d) district administration?

Building principal. A Pearson product correlation identified a moderate statistically significant relationship between perceived benefits of training and perceived support by a building principal.

Other coaches and leaders. A Pearson product correlation did not identify a statistically significant relationship between perceived benefits of training and perceived support by other coaches and leaders.

Classroom teachers. A Pearson product correlation did not identify a statistically significant relationship between perceived benefits of training and perceived support by classroom teachers.

District administration. A Pearson product correlation identified a moderate statistically significant relationship between perceived benefits of training and perceived support by a district administration.

Research Question 4

To what extent do years teaching, initial training, support from building principal, and support from district administration, predict perception of benefits of current district/building PD?

Years teaching. Results from the multiple regression analysis revealed that the variable of years teaching was not a statistically significant predictor for perception of benefits of current district/building PD.

Initial training. Results from the multiple regression analysis revealed that the variable of perceived benefits of initial training was a significant predictor for perception of benefits of current district/building PD. This indicated that participants who perceived benefits of initial training were likely to have a better perception of the benefits of current district/building PD.

Support from building principal. Results from the multiple regression analysis revealed that the variable of support from building principal was not a statistically significant predictor for perception of benefits of current district/building PD.

Support from district administration. Results from the multiple regression analysis revealed that the variable of support from district administration was a significant predictor for perception of benefits of ongoing district/building PD. This indicated that participants who perceived they had support from district administration were likely to have a better perception of the benefits of current district/building PD.

Summary

This chapter provided results from the data analyses described in Chapter 3. Analysis of the data indicated assumptions of normality were met. Results of each statistical analysis were provided. One of the independent samples *t-tests* was statistically significant. Two of the ten correlations were significantly significant. Two of the four variables in the multiple regression were statistically significant predictors of perceived benefits of current district/building PD. Chapter 5 provides a discussion of the results and recommendations for practice and future research.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

This chapter provides a discussion of the results presented in Chapter 4, informed both by the theoretical framework of the study and current literature. The chapter begins with a summary of the current study, followed by a discussion of the results, implications for practice, and recommendations for future research. The chapter closes with a conclusion and final thoughts.

Summary of the Study

The first chapter described the importance of the study in literature and provided each of the research questions guided by the theoretical framework. Information was provided on the purpose of the study as well as the significance of the study. Vygotsky Space, which served as the theoretical framework for the study, was explained, and the chapter concluded with definitions of key terms used throughout the study.

In Chapter 2, an overview of the literature relevant to the training of instructional coaches and an historical perspective of instructional coaches was provided. It defined teacher leadership and instructional coaching. Additionally, it examined instructional coach training focusing on adult learning, capacity building, transformational leadership, and mindset development.

The methodology of the study was reviewed in Chapter 3. Discussion of the research design and methodological approach was included, as well as information about the research setting, sample and participants, and the survey instrument. All variables in the study were also listed and defined. Details were provided on how data were analyzed to address each of the research questions. The specifics for conducting the independent samples *t-tests*, correlations, and multiple regression analyses were presented. Limitations and delimitations were detailed to conclude the chapter.

Chapter 4 provided results of the analyses conducted, including a review of the methods for screening the data before statistical analysis began and the establishment of the assumption of normality of the data set. Descriptive statistics were provided as well as results of the independent samples *t-tests*, correlations, and the multiple regression. The chapter concluded with responses to the four research questions posed in this study.

The following sections of Chapter 5 present a discussion of the results presented in Chapter 4 as they relate to the dependent and independent variables. The recommendations for school administration and instructional coaches are provided, as well as recommendations for future research. The chapter concludes with limitations and final thoughts on this study.

Summary of the Results

The results of the multiple regression analysis revealed that the combination of independent variables of years of teaching experience, perceived benefits of initial training, perceived support from building principals, and perceived support from district administration predicted the perceived benefits of current district/building professional development for instructional coaches. The variables of perceived benefits of initial training and perceived support from district administration were statistically significant predictors of the perceived benefits of current district/building professional development for instructional coaches; the others were not.

Several correlations were computed to examine how pairs of variables were related. Two of the computed correlations were found to be statistically significant, and they were both related to coaches' levels of perceived support from building principals. Higher perceived level of support from building principals was correlated with both higher perceived support from teachers

and higher perceived support from district administration. The other two variables were not statistically significantly correlated with each other.

Findings of the independent samples *t-tests* show that there was a statistically significant difference in coaches' perceptions on the benefits of their training depending on whether or not they received training in leadership. Other results of the independent samples *t-tests* showed no statistically significant results.

Discussion of Results

School districts continue to implement instructional coaching to improve teaching practices and to positively impact student learning. Many strong classroom teachers are hired to leave their classrooms to become instructional coaches, but that does not mean they will be effective at leading adults in learning situations (Aguilar, 2011). Coaching literature provides insights into characteristics coaches should have (Goodwin, 2013), but there is a deficiency in the literature concerning how these coaches are trained to assume their roles. The current study addressed a substantial gap in the extant empirical literature on training and ongoing professional development of instructional coaches (Gallucci et al., 2010). Much of the information about instructional coaching exits in books, evaluation reports, and privately funded cases, not in peer-reviewed scholarship (Walpole & Blamey, 2008). This study aimed to examine the complexities of coaches' satisfaction with their initial training and subsequent current professional development. The results showed that several factors led to a perception of benefits of initial training and ongoing professional development.

The literature that does exist on the training and development of instructional coaches is mostly descriptive, based on qualitative case studies that represent little standardization in how instructional coaches approach their craft (White, Smith, Kunz, & Nugent, 2015). Understanding

and supporting coaches' learning is noticeably under-researched (Gallucci et al., 2010). The clear process of how coaches will be trained and mentored is also lacking in the literature on instructional coaching. Gallucci et al. (2010) claimed that professional development supporting adult learning, building relationships, leadership development, and communication skills is critical for instructional coaches.

Findings Tied to Literature

Findings from the study on coaches' perceived benefits of their initial training support the claim that leadership development is necessary for instructional coaches' training (Knight, 2006). Strong leadership skills do not automatically follow from strong teaching skills (Bamrick-Santoyo, 2013), so it is imperative that instructional coaches have leadership training. This study found that the participants perceived benefits from leadership training, thus supporting the literature on instructional coaching. These results are consistent with Stuart's (2006) findings because if instructional coaches cannot establish a strong working relationship with the classroom teacher, their role is diminished. By applying leadership theory, they will be able to connect to the classroom teachers and establish a culture of shared responsibility for student achievement (Stuart, 2006). While leadership training was identified as a significant contributor to the successful training of instructional coaches, it was unanticipated to find that instructional coaches' perceived benefits of adult education training was not a significant component of the their training in this study because adult education development and adult learning are usually considered pieces of the content of leadership training (Pounder, 2006).

Conflict resolution skills are necessary to create an effective learning climate when working with adult learners (Knight, 2007), but conflict resolution training was also not found to be a significant contributor of the perceived benefits of the initial training of instructional

coaches in this study; thus the findings of the current study do not support the previous research in the area of receiving training in conflict resolution. Again, this was somewhat surprising and contradictory to McGrath's (2009), findings that adults resent and resist situations in which they feel others are imposing their will on them. Some adults may not be ready for their beliefs to be challenged and may feel threatened because they cannot accept that their previous beliefs could be wrong.

The results of this study did not show that coaches perceived training in building capacity and building relationships were significantly correlated with the perceived benefits of their initial training. The findings were also contradictory to Knight's (2006) findings that building healthy relationships with teachers was vital for instructional coaches and is foundational to building capacity in schools. Newmann, King, and Youngs (2000) purport that professional development should address all aspects of capacity; they argue that too often professional development is implemented in ways that fail because it violates key conditions of teacher (adult) learning.

Importance of Social Support

Interestingly, findings from this study connected to the importance of social support. The majority of the statistically significant results from this study related to social support in some capacity. Higher levels of perceived support from building principals was correlated with both higher levels of perceived support from teachers and higher levels of perceived support from district administration. This feeling of either being supported or not supported by building principals could permeate through many factors in terms of instructional coaches' satisfaction. Whether they were *actually* supported or not supported by building principals, however, is not the issue. The *feeling* of being supported is (possibly) different than *actually* being supported. This study did not examine actual support; rather, the focus was on instructional coaches'

perceptions, or feelings, of support. Whether or not the building principal offered support in some capacity, if the instructional coaches perceived this support, instructional coaches were more satisfied with their training. Lee and Nie (2017) indicated that perceptions of principal's empowering behaviors were positively associated with teachers' (instructional coaches') psychological empowerment. This could lead to the instructional coaches' increased satisfaction of their training as they perceive support from building principals.

The findings in this study raise intriguing questions regarding the nature and extent of the training of instructional coaches. One item the study did not figure into its structure was the type of academic degree(s) the instructional coaches had earned. It is possible that if instructional coaches held a masters degree in administration, they might have already studied conflict resolution, adult learning theory, building capacity, and building relationships, thus causing the instructional coaches not to perceive additional benefits from initial instructional coach training in these areas. If type of previous education had been considered as a factor in this structure, then it could have been found to be a contributing factor to their overall perceptions of the benefits of their initial training.

When asked how beneficial instructional coaches viewed their initial training, 56 out of 58 of respondents rated their training as either very beneficial or somewhat beneficial. This may not necessarily be useful data, as their training appears not to have been specific enough. Training in adult education, building capacity and teacher relationships, and conflict resolution have been identified as being important to the success of instructional coaches as they move from being effective classroom teachers to being instructional coaches (Knight, 2006). However, this study was unable to demonstrate these areas of training are what instructional coaches find to be important in their initial training. The coaches may have been satisfied in a customer

service or social support capacity about their initial training, but other researchers have proposed many facets of successful coaching that the results of this study did not support, and thus the findings of this study were contrary to expectations based on prior findings.

Theoretical Framework and Study Results

Vygotsky Space was the theoretical framework employed in this study. Harre (1984) developed the sociocultural learning theory model framing professional learning in terms of relationships between collective and individual actions and public and private spheres (Galucci et al, 2010). Vygotsky's theory of the content of knowledge is influenced by culture which includes beliefs important to that culture (Kalpana, 2014).

Vygotsky Space is a useful model for the analysis of professional learning and connection of that learning to its social context of the organization of the school district and helps clarify how individuals learn in the context of socially organized activities (Galucci, 2008). The social aspect ties to the findings of this study as instructional coaches' perception of the benefits of their initial training had a statistically significant relationship between the perceived support of both the building principal and district administration. Increased feelings of support led the coaches to perceive their initial training as being more beneficial. Additionally, support from district administration predicted a perception of benefits of current district/building professional development. This, too, relates to the social aspect of Vygotsky Space, as coaches who perceive that their district administration supports them will likely find benefits of current district/building professional development, which is another social function in school districts. It may have been the culture of the school districts, which included support from building and district administration, that led to the perceived support instructional coaches felt regarding their training and continued professional development. However, other findings in this study did not

fit Harre's Vygotsky Space model as they did not reveal statistically significant results regarding social interaction in the context of the organization of the school district.

Recommendations for School Personnel

This study is a small part of a larger research project focusing on training instructional coaches and their continued professional development. This study was the first to take a quantitative look at the training of instructional coaches and the coaches' perceptions of their initial training and their continued professional development in the state of Iowa. Some of the issues emerging from this study relate specifically to building administration and/or district administration who are charged with developing initial training and continued professional development for the instructional coaches as well as the instructional coaches themselves.

Recommendations for Building/District Administration

The findings of this study may help building administration and/or district administration better plan the training and continued professional development of their instructional coaches. Two recommendations can be made to administration based on this research.

1. **Offer Leadership Development Opportunities.** The results of this study showed that coaches identified training in leadership development was beneficial. As this seems to be consistent with previous research on the benefits of having coaches familiar with aspects of leadership as they work with classroom teachers to improve teaching practices that lead to increased student learning, coaches should be exposed to components of leadership development training to help them be successful. The training could come from a variety of sources: initial training, continued district-based PD, conferences/symposiums, college coursework.
2. **Provide support for instructional coaches.** The strongest finding of this study was

that instructional coaches' perception of support from their building principals and district administration had an impact on their views on their initial training as well as their continued professional development. The simple perception of support (which is possibly different from whether it was given or not) from both types of administrators was found to increase the coaches' satisfaction with their training and professional development. An recommendation for administrators then is to clearly communicate their support to instructional coaches, making it more likely that the coaches explicitly feel supported. It can be predicted from the results of this study that the stronger the instructional coaches feel support from the administration, the more coaches will perceive benefits from their training and professional development.

Recommendations for Instructional Coaches

The findings of this study may help instructional coaches understand what they can do to increase their satisfaction in their training to be an instructional coach and in their continued professional development whether it is individually driven or district driven.

1. **Seek out opportunities to study leadership.** Instructional coaches who participated in this study identified that training in leadership had a positive impact on their training as instructional coaches. If school districts do not offer training in leadership, perhaps instructional coaches should seek out opportunities to study leadership.

2. **Connect with building/district administration.** One of the salient points of this study was that if instructional coaches perceived support from building/district administration, their perceived satisfaction of their initial training and continued professional development was higher. Making connections with administration and creating avenues for receiving support from them may be beneficial to instructional coaches.

Recommendations for Future Research

This study contributed to the existing literature in the area of instructional coaching. However, this study was unique in that it went deeper into the initial training of instructional coaches and their perceived benefits of support from building and district administration. This study also used a quantitative methodology to examine the perceptions of instructional coaches about their training. Further research is suggested to use similar survey questions but in a smaller survey, focusing entirely on the training of the instructional coaches.

Gallucci et al. (2010) claimed that professional development in areas of adult learning, building relationships, leadership development, and communication skills is critical for instructional coaches. The findings of the present study did not support all of these claims, and some findings almost directly contradict the findings of others. It is unclear why the results of this study were not consistent with previous findings in which areas coaches should be trained to help them as they move from classroom teaching to instructional coaching. Perhaps the existing research providing this information is dated, which could explain why instructional coaches in this study did not identify these areas as being crucial for them in their roles. Additionally, another reason why these results did not correlate with previous research may be due to the small sample size of this study. Further research should be conducted to investigate critically why these results are not correlating with previous research on the training of instructional coaches.

Furthermore, the results of this study do not provide an explanation about what was going on inside the instructional coaches' minds as they completed the survey. Future qualitative research should be undertaken to investigate the specific topics coaches were exposed to in their initial training, and the coaches' perceptions of their usefulness. Using a qualitative approach

would allow researchers to dig deeper into the specific training areas regarding the satisfaction coaches feel about each area.

Findings of the perceived support instructional coaches feel from building and district administration elicited unanswered questions about what caused the perceived support and if the administrators were intentional about offering support for their instructional coaches. Further qualitative research is needed to uncover the background on the findings of perceived support. The theme of social support for instructional coaches emerged from this study, warranting further investigation.

Final Thoughts

While not much has been published about instructional coaches' professional preparation or learning processes, much less their satisfaction with their training, this study provided an insight into coaches' satisfaction with their initial training as well as their continued professional development. Training in leadership studies is beneficial to coaches as they transition from teaching in the classroom to coaching their peers. Additionally, when instructional coaches feel perceived support from administration (both building and district level), they are more satisfied with their initial training and their current professional development. These two findings from this study could give administrators more insight into the professional learning of instructional coaches. Administrators should be intentional about supporting instructional coaches as they plan to train and develop this group of teacher leaders. Continued research should be conducted to derive more insight into the usefulness of the areas of training for instructional coaches as well. Investigating the theme of perceived social support that coaches feel from administrators is another area that could provide awareness into what instructional coaches need to be successful in their teacher leader roles.

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Appendix A – Letter Sent to School Districts

We are writing to you to invite your district to participate in a research study that is focused on understanding teacher leadership and instructional coaching in the state of Iowa. This work is supported by the Center for Educational Transformation at the University of Northern Iowa in an effort to understand the varied and meaningful types of coaching and leadership that are happening in school districts throughout the state.

The "X" Community School District is an especially exciting potential partner in this work, as your participation would bring needed information about larger districts in Iowa. We invited specific districts to participate in order to both maximize the breadth of characterization of teacher leadership in the state, while also enabling depth of exploration as well.

Our project will utilize an easy-to-use survey website to capture responses from teachers, teacher leaders and coaches, and building administrators in your district regarding their experiences and activities related to teacher leadership. The 15-20 minute survey would be administered at a time convenient to you and your faculty at some point in November 2016-April 2017. Following the surveys, we will invite compensated volunteers from each district to participate in a focus group to further explain and reflect on trends identified in the survey. Our work has been reviewed and approved by Drake University's Institutional Review Board, project number 2015-16054.

We believe that not only will your district benefit from the opportunity to reflect on the teacher leadership in your district currently, but we also hope our work will inform legislation, such as the Teacher Leadership Compensation program, to support coaching and leadership efforts that support teacher development and student learning.

If we have contacted you in error, please do consider passing our request to the appropriate contact person in your district, or reach out directly to us via the information below.

We would welcome the opportunity to discuss this with you further and will plan to follow up with you directly within the next two weeks. Alternatively, we are available at the emails and phone numbers below and would look forward to speaking with you more about the research project.

We are excited about the potential to partner with your district, and look forward to hearing from you or speaking with you soon.

Best regards,

Jen Thoma, PhD
jennifer.thoma@drake.edu
(515) 271-3726

Lindsay Woodward, PhD
lindsay.woodward@drake.edu
(515) 271-3006

Appendix B – Survey

Instructional Coach/ Teacher Leader Survey

Page 1

Description of Instructional Coaches and Teacher Leaders

1) Please select all of the following that apply to you:

CHECK BOXES

- have a bachelor's degree in something other than education.
- have a bachelor's degree in early childhood education.
- have a bachelor's degree in elementary education.
- have a bachelor's degree in content area education (math, science, social studies, ELA, other)
- have a bachelor's degree in special education.
- have an endorsement in reading
- have an endorsement in SPED
- have an endorsement in ELL
- have an endorsement in a content area (math, science, social studies, ELA, other)
- have a reading specialist endorsement
- have a master's degree in education or educational leadership
- have a master's degree in another discipline
- have a PhD or EdD
- have a teaching certificate for the state of Iowa

2) Do you coach, or are in your leadership role, full-time (e.g., it is your only job) or part-time (e.g., you also teach students every day)?

Select: full-time or part-time

3) How many years of classroom teaching experience do you have?

Drop down: 1-30+

4) How many years of coaching/teacher leadership experience do you have?

Drop down: 1-30+

5) In which building level(s) do you serve as a coach/leader?

Select all that apply:

- Pre-Kindergarten
- Elementary (K-5)
- Middle school (6-8)
- High school (9-12)

6) What is your title?

Check all that apply (alphabetize this):

- Instructional Coach
- Literacy Coach
- Math Coach
- Science Coach
- Technology Coach/Integrationist
- Model Teacher
- Team Leader
- Data Team Leader
- Reading Specialist
- Other (with text box)

Page 2

Coaching Activities

1) When thinking about your role as a coach/leader, how often are you engaged in the following practices or frameworks?

	Not at All	Occasionally	Moderately	Frequently
Literacy Coaching (coaching specifically				

related to literacy strategies, routines, and instruction)				
Technology Support				
Instructional Technology Integration Support				
Providing Professional Development				
The state initiative Early Literacy Implementation (ELI)				
Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS)				
Content Area Coaching (Math, Science, etc.)				
Leading Data Teams or Data Driven Decision Making				
Meeting with Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) or other grade-level or department meetings				
Meeting with grade-level or department meetings (not a formal PLC, e.g., informal meeting)				
Modeling Instruction				
Professional Development or coaching specifically using the state initiative Authentic Intellectual Work (AIW) framework				
Specific building or district initiatives				

2) When thinking about your role as an instructional coach, how often are you engaged in the following activities **with teachers**?

	Not at All	Occasionally	Moderately	Frequently
Working with teachers				

individually, providing support on a full range of instructional strategies				
Working with teachers in collaborative teams (with others such as SPED, ELL, reading specialist, etc.), providing support on a **full range** of instructional strategies				
Working with teachers in departments or PLCs (with teachers only), providing support on a **full range** of instructional strategies				
Working with teachers individually, providing support on **specific** instructional strategies (literacy, technology integration, math, etc.)				
Working with teachers in collaborative teams (with multiple roles), providing support on **specific** instructional strategies (literacy, technology integration, math, etc.)				
Working with teachers in departments (with teachers only), providing support on **specific** instructional strategies (literacy, technology integration, math, etc.)				
Providing ongoing support to teachers as they try strategies out themselves				
Assisting teachers in the analysis and selection of texts and instructional materials that meet the diverse needs of students				
Assisting teachers in the analysis and interpretation of assessment data				

3) What other activities or programs are you engaged in **with teachers**, exclusive of those listed previously?

TEXT BOX, if none, check a box

Page 3

Coaching Activities, Continued

1) When thinking about your role as an instructional coach/ teacher leader, how often are you engaged in the following activities?

	Not at All	Occasionally	Moderately	Frequently
Assisting in the writing of curriculum for entire grade levels or subject areas (e.g., 1st Grade Literacy; 7th Grade Math; etc.)				
Assisting in the development of unit plans or daily lesson plans				
Assisting in the development and/or selection of assessment instruments (e.g., Common Formative Assessments, grade level assessments, etc.)				
Providing instruction for individuals or small groups of students in a class, especially those identified as struggling				
Developing a repertoire of instructional strategies to share with and model for teachers				
Connecting teachers to relevant research to support their teaching and make research more tangible and applicable				
Visiting classrooms and providing feedback to teachers on instruction (such as part of a coaching cycle)				
Engaging in reflective dialogue with teachers as part of a planned observation of				

instruction (such as part of a coaching cycle)				
Sharing results of assessments with parents and/or community				
Assisting in interpreting assessment results for parents				
Designing or coordinating assessment schedules				
Specifically dministering assessments for individuals or groups of students				
Coordinating schedules of other instructional leaders with teachers (Ex: a reading specialist in certain classrooms, or an ELL teacher with students' schedules)				
Serving as a leader on committees				
Looking for and assisting in the selection of **new** classroom materials (such as leveled books appropriate for specific student groups, social studies materials adapted for student needs, etc.)				
Supporting teachers as they prepare for a formal evaluation (annual review, administrator assessment, etc.)				

2) What other activities are you engaged in, exclusive of those listed previously?

TEXT BOX, if none, check a box

Page 4

Support for Instructional Coaches/Teacher Leaders

1) The following question asks you to consider the types of support you receive from your building administration and institutional structure. How supported are you in the following areas?

	No Support	Little Support	Moderate Support	Strong Support
Time to plan and prepare				
Time to meet with teachers				
Time to meet with other instructional coaches/teacher leaders				
Needed resources are available or provided				
Professional development opportunities are provided specifically for instructional coaches/teacher leaders				
Support is provided for out-of-district professional development				
Establishing clear expectations for your role				
Communicating the function of your role and how you fit into the institutional structure				

2) Thinking about how you are supported in your coaching/leadership efforts, how supported do you feel by the practices of the following individuals/groups in your district?

	Not Supported	Rarely Supported	Moderately Supported	Strongly Supported	Not Applicable
Building Principal(s)					
Other Building Administrators					
Other Leaders/Coaches					
Teachers					
District Administration					
School Board					

3) Which of the individuals or groups of people have been the most supportive of you in this role? Choose one:

Drop-down (select one):

Building Principal(s)
Other Building Administrators

Other Leaders/Coaches
Teachers
District Administration

4) Why do you feel the most supported by this person or group of people?

TEXT BOX

5) Which of the individuals or groups of people could be more supportive of your work in this role? Select all that are applicable:

Drop-down (select multiple):

Building Principal(s)
Other Building Administrators
Other Leaders/Coaches
Teachers
District Administration

6) How could this individual or group of people be more supportive of your role and work?

TEXT BOX

Page 5

Factors Related to Successful Coaching

1) Which of the following do you feel is your primary responsibility in your teacher leadership role?

Drop down (Select one):

- Providing instruction and/or assessment to students
- Discussing instruction with teachers (individually or in a group) and/or providing professional development
- Observing and providing feedback to teachers
- Co-teaching, modeling, or otherwise partnering with teachers around instructional strategies
- Leading data collection, analysis, and/or interpretation
- Other (text box)

2) Which of the following would your building principal feel is your primary responsibility in your teacher leadership role?

Drop down (Select one):

- Providing instruction and/or assessment to students
- Discussing instruction with teachers (individually or in a group) and/or providing professional development
- Observing and providing feedback to teachers
- Co-teaching, modeling, or otherwise partnering with teachers around instructional strategies
- Leading data collection, analysis, and/or interpretation
- Other (text box)

3) Consider the following types of support. Sort the following factors into whether they are most important, less important, or not at all important to your success in your position.

(Sort into three listed boxes)

Time to plan and prepare
Time to meet with teachers
Time to meet with other instructional coaches/teacher leaders
Needed resources are available or provided
Professional development opportunities are provided
Support is provided for out-of-district professional development
Establishing clear expectations for your role
Communicating the function of your role and how you fit into the institutional structure

4) When thinking about all of the ways you are supported in your work, what do you feel is the most important professional support you have?

TEXT BOX

5) Who do you feel benefits most directly from your work?

Select one:

- Classroom teachers

- Instructional Coaches/Teacher Leaders
- Students
- Building Administrators
- District Administrators
- Parents
- Other (text box)

6) Why do you feel the group selected above benefits the most from your work?

TEXT BOX

Page 6

Alignment of Coaching/Leadership to Specific Initiatives

1) Which framework best aligns to your district's model of coaching/teacher leadership?

Drop Down:

- AIW
- TAP
- Jim Knight
- Student Centered (Sweeney)
- Elena Aguilar
- Cognitive Coaching
- New Teacher Center
- I am not sure/ do not know
- Other (with text box)

2) What types of data do you use to set goals and support teachers? Please check all that are

applicable:

(CHECKLIST)

- Teacher-generated data (observations, teacher-made assessments, etc.)
- State-wide assessment data (FAST, MAP, etc.)
- Program-specific assessment data (Lexia, Advanced Placement exam, etc.)
- District or building common assessments
- Other (text box)

3) Does your work involve supporting Early Literacy Implementation or Multi-Tiered System of Support initiatives?

Select yes or no

4) Is your role specifically to support a specific initiative or program in your building(s)?

Select yes or no

Branch: If yes

What initiative or program do you support?

TEXT BOX

Branch: If no

Does your work involve supporting any specific initiative or program in your building(s)?

Select yes or no

If no, move to next page. If yes, go to:

How does your work support specific district initiatives and programs?

TEXT BOX

Page 7

Transition to Coaching/Leadership Role

1) How was your leadership role established?

Drop down (select one):

- A district-created job description for which I applied
- A building-created job description for which I applied
- I was appointed by the district with no job description
- I was appointed by the building leadership with no job description
- I don't know how my position was established
- Other (with text box)

2) Do you feel you have a well-defined role?

Select yes or no

If yes:

What factors have contributed to the clear definition of your role?

TEXT BOX

If no:

What changes or supports are needed to more clearly define your role?

TEXT BOX

3) Do you feel that the following groups understand your role and what the aims of your work are?

	Yes	No
Classroom teachers		
Instructional Coaches/Teacher Leaders		
District Administrators		
Building Administrators		
Parents		
Students		
School Board		

4) Do you feel you have opportunities to engage in peer support for your role?

Select yes or no.

If yes:

What peer supports do you engage in?

Check all that apply:

- Relationship with a peer mentor
- Building level meetings
- District level meetings
- AEA or other local network meetings
- State meetings
- National conferences

- Other instructional coaches in district
- Other instructional coaches, not in district

If no: Next Question

5) What experiences most prepared you for your role as an instructional coach/teacher leader?

TEXT BOX

Page 8

Initial Professional Development of Instructional Coaches/Teacher Leaders

1) Did you receive district/building directed training to be an instructional coach/teacher leader before you started in your role of instructional coach/teacher leader?

   Select yes or no

   Branch: If no, move next question. If yes, go to:

   What subjects did you receive in your training? Please check all that are applicable:

(CHECKLIST)

- Adult education
- Conflict resolution
- Leadership
- Building capacity
- Building teacher/coach relationships
- Other (text box)

   What other area(s) would have been beneficial before you started as an instructional coach/teacher leader?

   TEXT BOX, if none, check a box

How would you rate your training before you became an instructional coach/teacher leader?

Very beneficial/somewhat beneficial/not very beneficial/not beneficial at all

Page 9

Literacy and Technology Coaching/Leadership

1) Are you a literacy coach?

Select yes or no.

2) Do you support teachers in their literacy instruction?

Select yes or no.

If yes: How have you been prepared to support teachers in their literacy instruction?

TEXT BOX

How do you support teachers in their literacy instruction specifically?

TEXT BOX

If no: Next question.

3) Are you a technology coach/integrationist?

Select yes or no.

4) Do you support teachers' integration of technology into their instruction?

Select yes or no.

If yes: How have you been prepared to support teachers in their technology integration?

TEXT BOX

How do you support teachers in their technology integration efforts, specifically?

TEXT BOX

If no: Next page.

Page 10

Current Professional Development for Instructional Coaches/Teacher Leaders

1) Do you currently receive district/building directed professional development in your role of coach/teacher leader?

Select yes or no

Branch: If yes

How many professional development hours do you engage in each month?

Drop down: 1-10+

What type of professional development do you engage in?

CHECK BOXES (Please check all that apply to you)

- Workshops/classes
- Conferences or seminars
- Individual/collaborative research
- Peer observation of instructional coaches/teacher leaders
- Learning communities of instructional coaches/teacher leaders
- Other (text box)

How beneficial is district/building directed professional development to your growth as an instructional coach/teacher leader?

Very beneficial/somewhat beneficial/not very beneficial/not beneficial at all

Branch: If no

How beneficial would continued district/building directed professional development be to your growth as an instructional coach/teacher leader?

Very beneficial/somewhat beneficial/not very beneficial/not beneficial at all

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Other Information

1) Are there topics or experiences that we did not ask about that would be important to know about your role as an instructional coach/teacher leader?

Select one:

- Yes (with large text box)
- No

Move to end of survey

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END SURVEY PAGE