UNIVERSITY OF REDLANDS

A Phenomenological Study of White Female First-, Second-, and Third-Year Teachers in Title I
Schools

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Education in Leadership for Educational Justice

By

Ashley Amanda Tiedemann

August 31, 2020

Dissertation Committee:

Dr. Ann E. Blankenship Knox

Dr. Mikela Bjork

Dr. Kimberly Lium

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We hereby approve the dissertation of

[Redacted Signature]

Jan 11 2021 15:09 PST

Candidate Signature—Full Legal Name Ashley Amanda Tiedemann Date

Candidate for the degree of Doctor of Education

[Redacted Signature]

Jan 11 2021 15:21 PST

Dissertation Chair Signature—Full Legal Name Ann Blankenship Knox Date

[Redacted Signature]

Jan 11 2021 15:07 PST

Committee Member Signature—Full Legal Name Mikela Bjork Date

[Redacted Signature]

Jan 11 2021 15:45 PST

Committee Member Signature—Full Legal Name Kimberly Lium Date

[Redacted Signature]

Jan 13 2021 06:45 PST

Dean, School of Education— Mario C. Martinez, Ph.D Date

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine first-year experiences by interviewing second and third-year White female teachers at the beginning of their second or third year teaching, who work in Title I, K-5 schools. The overarching goal in this study was to: (a) identify similarities and differences in first and second-year teacher experiences; and, (b) identify the struggles teachers face inside and outside of the classroom. To achieve the goal of this study, the researcher used a qualitative phenomenological method. Data from this study was viewed with critical race theory, intersectionality, and cultural capital lenses. These lenses were used to identify cultural gaps, and socioeconomic differences between White, middle-class, female teachers and their students in Title I schools.

Participants were white, female teachers in their second and third year of teaching at Title I, K-5 schools. Each participant was interviewed between December and March of their second or third year of teaching; therefore, each participant had worked through their entire first year of teaching at a Title I school. Each participant shared their experiences of their first and second year. White middle-class teachers were selected due to the possible differences in cultural capital and socioeconomic level between teachers and students. Additionally, White females represent 80% of teachers in the United States (Tale & Goldring, 2017). Participants at Title I schools are in more need of supports from their peers, mentors, and administration; however, most participants did not receive these supports. Due to the elevated needs of students at low-income schools, new teachers struggled to meet their needs and understand their cultural capital along with their own White privilege.

Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to:

████████████████████ and ████████████████████

My “grandmama” was a pillar of inspiration who encouraged me to start this journey, and I wish she was here to see me finish.

██████ has been unconditionally supportive throughout the entire process and I am forever thankful for his love and patience.

Acknowledgements

I have overwhelming gratitude for many people who helped me and guided me through this process; without them I do not think I would have finished. Due to these people I never felt lonely in this journey.

My committee: Dr. Blankenship Knox—thank you for dealing with me as my chair, especially when my class was putting me through the ringer at work. I was not pleasant to be around. Due to your overwhelming diligence I was always prepared to defend my proposal and study. At first, I hated it; however, I grew to appreciate the process. You pushing me to do better work made me love my study, and not just go through the motions.

Dr. Kimberly Lium—you always let me come to your office, at any school, and met with me for hours on Zoom to go over data. You have always encouraged me to complete this process and better myself. Your friendship and advice are invaluable.

Dr. Mikela Bjork—you had the daunting task of helping me start my literature review. After hundreds of dollars of Amazon book purchases, I felt as though I had a strong foundation. You introduced me to Jean Anyon's work and it changed my entire view on education.

Thank you to my friends—[REDACTED]—for listening to my constant talking about my study and the data. I appreciate you all for never rolling your eyes at me, and feigning interest.

To [REDACTED]—you're more than a friend, more than a co-worker, and more than a doctoral colleague. Writing with you at Panera, complaining through text messages and guiding each other through this mess has been so much fun. I'm amazed at your ability to raise two children, work, as well as writing your own dissertation.

To Lin-Manuel Miranda—Hamilton was playing constantly while I wrote, and I always think of my dissertation when your work comes up in my shuffle.

To [REDACTED]—without you, this would not have been possible. Your support, and feedback was consistently helpful, and your encouragement means the world to me. Tag you are next

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Chapter One

Introduction

The opening statement of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) from 1965 states: “Poverty, delinquency, unemployment, illiteracy, and school dropouts are not new to American society. What is new is the vigorous Federal effort to meet these problems” (Office of Education, 1969, p. 4). In 1965, President Lyndon B. Johnson began the “War on Poverty” in an attempt to close the growing achievement gap that is ever present for students from low socioeconomic status families (Roza & Lake, 2015). President Johnson’s “war” continues to be fought in classrooms today.

Low-income students often struggle with behavior problems, stress, depression, anxiety, low academic achievement, homelessness and doubled-up living (Brown, 2009). The challenges that are present for students who suffer from being socioeconomically disadvantaged affect their education, mental health, and their future economic status. First-year teachers do not have the knowledge to understand why a student is misbehaving or is not performing academically (Brown, 2009). Additionally, new teachers who do not carry the experience of growing up in a low-income family themselves are not prepared for these challenges. Understanding the why of a behavior for students from low-income homes is a skill that many teachers develop over time, or may never understand (Brown, 2009). Teachers without knowledge of how stressful their students’ living situation is will also not understand the poverty-induced depression and anxiety that their students could be suffering from (Brown, 2009). The added needs of low-income students along with a new teacher’s responsibilities can quickly become overwhelming.

Where a teacher is placed in their first year of teaching will affect the experiences they will have inside and outside of the classroom. Chang (2009) identifies that all first-year teachers

will have teaching obligations, emotional needs, and labor that is more significant in comparison to other professions with similar educational requirements. Also, patterns of student behavior in Title I schools significantly affect teachers' experiences in their first year of teaching (Chang, 2009). The factors that lead a teacher to leave the profession due to burn out are: demands of teaching, the socioeconomic status of the school, class size, teacher preparation, and the amount of support a teacher receives from the administration (Evers et al., 2004; Maslach et al., 2001). New teachers are being put into schools where they are most likely to experience burn out symptoms. Chang (2009) argues that students' disruptive behaviors in Title I schools are at times determining factors of teachers burning out and leaving the profession altogether. All first-year teachers face challenges; however, the many added challenges of Title I schools give first-year teachers a unique experience.

First-year teachers walking into a classroom at a Title I school often have preconceived notions about the students and population they are teaching (Pavlakis, 2014). Teachers begin to lose their passion for teaching when working in Title I schools due to low test scores and the teacher being unable to see the significant success of students (Van Horn et al., 2009). However, Auwarter and Arguete (2008) argue that if a teacher has a negative preconception of their students' abilities, there is a significant negative impact on the students' progress. With lowered expectations from the teacher, students are less likely to progress in a positive manner (Auwarter & Arugete, 2008). While first-year teachers struggle with their students' achievement, poor behavior in the classroom also plays a significant role in their experience.

Homelessness and doubled-up living are factors in students' behavior at school (Cunningham et al., 2010). Doubled-up living is defined by Cunningham et al. (2010) as more than one family living in a single home, apartment, trailer, or condominium. Cunningham et al.

(2010) argue that low-income and students who are in the condition of homelessness are more likely to move schools and homes during the school year for various reasons. The reasons students will move homes or schools are (a) being evicted, (b) being unable to pay the rent, (c) parents moving in with relatives, and (d) parents starting a new job (Cunningham et al., 2010). Students who move schools more than three times between kindergarten and sixth grade are close to an entire academic school year behind their peers and academic curriculum (Pavlakakis, 2014). With a less consistent living arrangement, students exhibit more behavioral and emotional issues (Cunningham et al., 2010). First-year teachers do not have the knowledge to understand what a student is dealing with, and these teachers struggle to help homeless or doubled-up living students with their behavior as well as academic achievement inside of the classroom.

There is no research showing there are higher numbers of new teachers at Title I schools. However, districts give experienced teachers the opportunity to transfer schools near the end of every school year. Experienced teachers often choose to leave Title I schools due to the high responsibilities associated with low-income students (Brown, 2009). In turn, Title I schools rarely see experienced teachers wanting to take on the additional workload associated with the needs of low-income students. Working at a Title I school is typically not the top choice for new or experienced teachers.

Teachers in Title I schools often do not live in the community in which they teach; furthermore, their social class and race may be different from that of the students they are serving (Anyon, 2014). These differences in social capital between teachers and students in Title I schools make teachers outsiders to the community. Therefore, the experiences and knowledge new teachers have does not match that of their students they are teaching.

This is the context from which I did the research for this dissertation to look at first-year teachers' experiences in Title I, low-income schools. Tale and Goldring (2017) state that 80% of teachers nationally identify as White. Students at a Title I school have a higher possibility of having a White teacher than a teacher of color. Title I schools have a higher number of African American students and Hispanic/Latino students who have an intersection of race as well as low socioeconomic status (Frankenberg et al., 2003). Therefore, students do not see themselves in their teachers, and teachers also do not share the social capital their students walk into the classroom with. Thus, teachers who are coming into Title I communities do not share the same experiences as the students and families they serve (Anyon, 2014). It is important to examine first-year teacher experiences in Title I schools to understand what additional support they need when working with low-income students. By understanding the experiences of first-year teachers in Title I schools, they can be better supported for the challenges future teachers will face. The main question addressed in this work is: How are first-year teachers' experiences different or similar in Title I schools? What additional support do Title I teachers need in their first year of teaching?

Conceptual Framework

Critical Race Theory (CRT) is used to study the relationship between race, power, and racism (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). The five tenets of CRT are: (1) permanence of race and racism (Bell, 1992; 1995), (2) Whiteness as property (Harris, 1995), (3) critique of liberalism (Crenshaw, 1998), (4) interest convergence (Bell, 1980), and, (5) counter-storytelling (Matsuda et al., 1993).

The five tenets of CRT allow the researcher to seek how racial disparity affects White teachers in this study. Permanence of race and racism is how White culture has created a

normalcy of racism (Bell, 1995). People of color, however, do not hold these privileges and commonly experience lower rates of employment, as well as higher rates of poverty (Bell, 1995). Whiteness as property, the second tenet of CRT, addresses the privileges a White person has based on their skin color such as: (1) the right of disposition or character, (2) the right of pleasure and use, (3) the right to property and position, and (4) the ability or right to exclude others (Harris, 2003). Critique of liberalism, the third tenet of CRT, is described as being slow to make changes, the notion of colorblindness, and viewing the law as neutral (DeCuir & Dixon, 2004). Bell (1980) describes interest conversion as Whites taking interest in people of color's rights when it will benefit their race in the long run. Delgado (1989) identifies counter-storytelling as the fifth tenet of CRT. Counter-storytelling is the practice of a person of color identifying their reality that is commonly unacknowledged by White people (Delgado, 1989).

CRT addresses the way in which White teachers are affected by racial disparities, while Crenshaw (1991) argues intersectionality addresses the multiple ways in which a person can be oppressed. Intersectionality identifies the intersections between a person's race, class and gender (Crenshaw, 1991). The use of intersectionality, allows a person's entire identity to be analyzed instead of one element separately. Crenshaw (1991) developed the term intersectionality in response to the labor movement and civil rights of Black women in the 1980s. Black women felt as though they belonged to more than one of these movements (Crenshaw, 1991). Intersectionality allowed these women to intersect their oppressed identities to develop a unique experience. Crenshaw (1989) argues that intersectionality is a theory that is consistently developing, and can be used to understand more social groups and constructs as needed. The use of intersectionality allows the researcher to identify the oppressed intersections of a student's race, gender, and class as well as the teacher's race gender, and class. By understanding the

differences or similarities between the two, it allows for an evaluation of how the intersections affect their experiences.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the experiences of first, second, and third-year teachers who work in Title I schools. The overarching goal in this research was to: (a) identify similarities and differences in first-year teacher experiences, and (b) identify the struggles teachers face inside and outside of the classroom. This study sought to understand the needs of first-year teachers in Title I schools. Moreover, this study aimed to find where the administration can support first-year teachers in Title I schools.

Research Questions

- R1: What are first, second, and third-year teacher experiences in Title I, K-5 schools?
- R2: What struggles do these first, second, and third-year teachers face, both inside and outside of the classroom?

Significance of the Study

Teachers need to have the ability to work effectively with all students, no matter the socioeconomic background or culture of the student. It is the teacher's responsibility to give students the opportunity to succeed in the classroom no matter what social capital the student holds. First-year teachers at Title I schools are enlisted with these same responsibilities that experienced teachers have. Low-income students have more needs than those of students who have their basic needs met at home (Brown, 2009). Chang (2009) argues that teachers will leave the profession at a higher rate than other professions who carry the same educational background. The first-year Title I teachers are more likely to leave the profession due to the additional responsibilities placed on them when working with low-income students (Brown,

2009). Many of the classroom responsibilities first-year teachers face will overwhelm them, and the added obligations of a Title I school will create more pressure on these teachers. The stressors that motivate teachers to leave the profession, are the same possible stressors this study aims to understand to better support new teachers working with low-income students.

It is essential to see and understand the needs of first-year teachers who do not have the experiences of working with students from differing backgrounds. When working in urban schools, educators have to build bridges to work with students, parents, and their communities to work against the oppression low-income students face (Anyon, 2014). This study shows what a first-year teacher needs to be more successful when working with low-income students in Title I schools.

Methodology

This research was conducted using a qualitative approach to investigate the experiences of first-year Title I, K-5 teachers. In order to understand the experiences of first-year teachers at Title I schools, I used a qualitative phenomenological research approach (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). I then used phenomenology to examine the unique experiences of first-year teachers in Title I schools (Moustakas, 1994; Vagle, 2018). To better understand the phenomena that occurs in Title I schools in regards to first-year teachers' experiences, I then used semi-structured interviews to comprehend the data.

There were six participants included in this study. Each participant worked at a singular district in self-contained K-5 classrooms at two different elementary schools. All six participants had earned their California Multiple Subject Teaching Credential from an accredited four-year university. Participants were chosen based on their race, gender, age, education, and if their school was 70% or higher in a Title I population. The parameters for participants were: White,

females, ages 25-35, and held a California Multiple Subject Teaching Credential. Participants ages 25-35 were chosen to limit the amount of professional experiences they had before beginning their teaching career. I chose to interview White females due to 80% of the teaching professionals in the United States identifying as White and female (Tale & Goldring, 2017). I used semi-structured interviews. In these interviews, I asked participants about their grade level, their experiences teaching in Title I schools, and the support they receive, along with questions about their experiences in their classroom. The goal with these questions was to understand the experiences of first-year teachers in Title I schools, and how to better support first-year teachers who begin their career at a Title I school.

Definitions of Terms

The following definitions will be used in this study:

1. Title I: Schools are labeled as Title I when more than 40% of the student population qualifies for free or reduced lunch (Sousa & Armor, 2016). A school can use Title I funds throughout the school when the population is over 40%; however, Title I funds must be used only toward low-income students when the percentage is below 40% (Sousa & Armor, 2016).
2. Social Capital: Social capital as power can be seen in material goods, social status, symbolic, and cultural backgrounds (Bourdieu, 1991). Individuals can pull power from their cultural background to maintain power or to move forward in their social status (Bourdieu, 1991).
3. Classroom Management: The routines and procedures a teacher sets up to promote student engagement and an orderly classroom environment (Evertson & Weinstein,

2006). The management of a classroom is argued by Headden (2014) to be one of the most difficult jobs a teacher can master.

4. Doubled-Up Living: Two or more family units living in a single home, apartment, trailer or condominium (Cunningham et al., 2010).
5. Beginning Teaching Support and Assessment (BTSA): Each new teacher is assigned a BTSA coach as a mentor. Coaches and new teachers work together to complete the BTSA program.
6. Individual Education Plan (IEP): A document built to meet the needs of students with special needs. These are created with the help of the student's parents, administration, school psychologists, general education teacher, special education teacher and at times a speech pathologists as well as a school counselor.
7. Individual Support Team (IST): A team made up of the student's parents, IST leader (typically an experienced general education teacher), the student's general education teacher, the school psychologist, and at times administration and the school counselor. This team is assembled to address student's academic needs at times, or behavioral needs at times.
8. Unwritten Rules: Participants shared there are rules on campuses that are unknown to new teachers, but considered norms to experienced teachers at that school site. These rules can include: Where to go for an assembly, where students line up, how students are supposed to go to lunch and at times how to work with administration.
9. Hit-List: Participants #5 and #6 shared there was a "hit-list" on their campus if teachers did not follow the status quo. It was shared by participants that teachers would be attacked both professionally and personally by their administrator if they upset them.

Limitations

There are limitations to all research, and this study is no different. Therefore, the first limitation is my personal experience of working in a Title I school as a first-year teacher as well as currently working in a Title I school. In order to check biases, I used member checking to maintain trustworthiness.

The second limitation is that participants worked at more than one school site; therefore, their experiences may be influenced by factors other than students' economic status, such as administration, peers, or grade level teams. Participants also only worked at two different schools' sites. The amount of data was limited in this manner. Another limitation is that participants had different BTSA coaches. Therefore, there was more or less support for teachers based on their school's level of support from peers. Participants also had different administrators, and they had different experiences with these administrators. The participants in the study had different preservice education, in addition to experiences. Lastly, the sample does not reflect all first-year teachers' experiences in Title I schools.

Assumptions

The assumption upon which this research is based is that all participants shared their honest experiences, gave appropriate responses to all interview questions, and were honest in their demographic survey. Interviews were conducted in the participants' classrooms in order to gain trust from the participants. All teachers selected for this study were based on the demographic survey answers. These answers were assumed to be honest from participants. Participants shared they were White, identified as female, and were in their first three years of teaching.

Conclusion

In this chapter, the basis for this study was provided through an introduction, background of the problem, problem statement, purpose of the study, research questions, significance of the study, and definitions of terms. The study will use a phenomenological approach to understand the experiences of first-year teachers in Title I schools. Chapter Two includes a review of the literature and is divided into (a) theoretical framework (intersectionality and critical race theory), (b) cultural capital, (c) White privilege and bias, (d) Title I, (f) first-year teachers, (e) low-income students, (f) achievement gap, and (g) hidden curriculum.

Chapter Two

Theoretical Framework and Review of Literature

Introduction

Teachers are the backbone of education. When a person decides to become a teacher, they start the journey with the dream of changing students' lives for the better. Throughout their credential program, student teaching, and interviews, this idealistic view stays with these new teachers. The feeling of holding the keys to their very own classroom fills them with joy and excitement. In the weeks leading up to the first day of school, the colorful paper will begin to litter the walls with creative borders. Desks will be arranged, books will be placed inside, pencils will be sharpened, and the day comes to meet your students.

First-year teachers quickly begin to learn that teaching is more than teaching students out of their books but learning to teach students how to have empathy, integrity, responsibility, and respect (Ju & Smith, 2011). This type of teaching is different depending on the population your school explicitly serves (Anyon, 1997). White, middle class, female teachers will have the cultural capital to understand the lessons that students in an affluent school will need. In a low-income Title I school, where the students can be more diverse, the White, female, middle class teacher will not always have the same social capital. Due to the differences between students and teachers in more diverse schools, intersectionality and critical race theory will comprise the theoretical framework in this study. The use of intersectionality and critical race theory is appropriate to look at the intersecting identities of first-year teachers and the intersecting identities of their diverse student populations.

Theoretical Framework: Critical Race Theory

Critical race theory (CRT) is a movement built from multiple activists and scholars studying and changing the relationships between racism, race, and power (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). CRT found its beginnings in law, where it was used to address racial inequalities; however, the use of the theory quickly moved into politics and education (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017; Howard, 2010). Tate (1997) argues that CRT is used effectively to advocate for race in both law and education. In addition to advocating in education and law, CRT also examines the foundations of equality theory, liberal order and legal reasoning (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017).

The idea of legal indeterminacy was adopted from critical legal studies to support the needs of the developing theory of CRT (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). According to Delgado & Stefancic (2017), legal indeterminacy proposes that there is more than one outcome to a case, dependent on how the facts are interpreted. Just as in CRT, there is more than one way to interpret how racism is perceived depending on how it is interpreted (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). In the first-year of teaching at a Title I school, a teacher can interpret their students actions differently based on their own personal experiences, as well as not being able to understand the culture of their diverse students. A new teacher without experience with diverse students can have multiple outcomes to situations inside of the classroom based on how they interpret the actions of their students.

CRT also uses pieces of feminist theory. Through feminist theory, CRT digs into the relationship between social roles and the power within these roles (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). Society has built social constructs between racial features to oppress those who are not from the principal cultural group (Tate, 1997, 2010; Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). To address oppression

and its many historical wrongs, CRT uses empowerment and the ideas of the community (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017).

There are five tenets of CRT: (1) permanence of race and racism (Bell, 1992; 1995), (2) Whiteness as property (Harris, 1995), (3) critique of liberalism (Crenshaw, 1998), (4) interest conversion (Bell, 1980), and (5) counter-storytelling (Matsuda et al., 1993). All five tenets of CRT will be discussed concerning education.

Permanence of Race and Racism

The notion of permanence of race and racism pertains to White culture in America and the burden people of color must work against due to this underlying racist infrastructure (Bell, 1992). People from the White culture have innate privilege associated with the color of their skin which manifests as economic, social, educational, and political capital. In contrast, people of color commonly experience higher rates of poverty and lower rates of reliable employment, and people of color consistently struggle to obtain adequate health care (Bell, 1995). Sue et al. (2007) argue that due to the permanence of racism, people of color are continually subjected to microaggressions. Microaggressions are defined as racism that is hidden or open and humiliating to people of color (Sue et al., 2007). Inexperienced first-year teachers are more likely to make these statements to their students of color without understanding they are perpetuating racism through microaggressions.

Whiteness as Property

Whiteness as property in CRT is a concept which attempts to explain the privilege a White person has based on the color of their skin. Harris (2003) identifies four areas of Whiteness as property: (a) the right of disposition or character, (b) the right of pleasure and use, (c) the right to property and position, and (d) the ability or right to exclude others (Harris, 1993).

Within education, the right to pleasure and use can be seen as the use of Whiteness to focus on one viewpoint and not focus on the needs of minority students. An example: a White teacher can focus on how students should behave and learn based on a White perspective. In this example, there is no need for the teacher to consider the needs of a student of color because the teacher perceives that there is one “correct” way to learn or behave at school. The teacher is not expected to know and understand the needs a student of color has. Another way in which Whiteness as property is seen in education is a person's ability to take honors classes or the ability to attend a safer school (DeCuir & Dixson, 2004).

The third right of Whiteness as property protects the position and rights of a White person based on the color of their skin (Harris, 1995). Harris (1993) argues that the intentions of a White person are consistently assumed to be positive. In contrast, a person of color does not always carry this perceived right, and their actions can be quickly scrutinized (Harris, 1993). In education, administrators and teachers are disproportionately White. Therefore, it is perceived that a White person is given more power inside the educational system in comparison to a person of color in education (McEwen et al., 2007). Last is the right to exclude, which allows those who hold this right to exclude others based on the color of one's skin (Harris, 1995). This is seen when White students are granted admittance into honor classes, and then are able to exclude their peers of color based on their honors courses. When Whiteness is valued and seen as property, those who have this right tend to value it more than having equity for all (Vaught & Castagno, 2008).

White Privilege and Bias

The teachers in this study who will be interviewed are all White and therefore carry the privileges that come with being White. White privilege is defined as “an invisible weightless

knapsack of special provisions, assurances, tools, maps, guides, codebooks, passports, visas, clothes, compass, emergency gear, and blank checks" (McIntosh, 1988, p.1). The privileges White people hold in contrast to people of color who do not have these privileges are significant in day to day life. Teachers who identify as White are given these privileges without knowing they have them.

A White teacher is ignorant to the privileges they have due to being born White. While White teachers hold power in a school system, they are also a part of the cultural group that runs the education system (Vaught & Castagno, 2008). First-year White teachers and some experienced teachers have not had the opportunity to reflect on what it means to have White privilege (Curran et al., 2004). Without the reflection of the privileges of being White, these teachers also fail to reflect on their prejudices and personal belief systems that affect their students of color in the classroom (Curran et al., 2004). Equity in the classroom will not be present without understandings of one's bias and White privilege. A teacher with any amount of experience will have significant difficulties with students of color if they are unable to understand their own personal beliefs or their students' experiences of oppression.

Students of color are aware of their race, background and culture (Porto, 2009), while a teacher who is ignorant of their position in a racial group will be unable to recognize the role race is playing in their classroom (Dalton, 2008). Chou (2007) argues that White privilege is rarely addressed in teacher preparation programs, even those with multicultural education, and therefore, first-year teachers may be unable to examine their racial role inside of a classroom.

Critique of Liberalism

Critique of liberalism is another tenant of CRT that is often seen inside of a classroom. DeCuir & Dixon (2004) state critique of liberalism is (a) involving slow change; (b)

colorblindness; and, (c) the idea of the law being neutral. Many teachers consider themselves colorblind in the classroom and argue that they are not racist because they do not see the color of a student (Vaught & Castagno, 2008). If a teacher is refusing to see a student's color or culture, they are failing to see the worth of that student's culture and history. If a teacher is choosing to be colorblind in the classroom, this action can have a negative effect on the student's environment and identity. DeCuir & Dixon (2004) argue that a teacher is placing value on equality instead of equity by stating they are colorblind. Not only does being colorblind in the classroom minimize the student's culture and identity, but it also removes culture and identity altogether, aside from the White culture of the school. Critique of liberalism is generally one of the slower CRT progressions due to liberalism being slow (Ladson-Billings, 2004). Additionally, by using a neutral legal system, there is slow social change while navigating the steps within the legal system (Ladson-Billings, 2004).

Interest Conversion

The next tenet of CRT is interest conversion. Bell (1980) argues that White people take notice of people of color's needs when it will benefit their personal agenda. When an issue is important to White people, they will participate in order to gain progress for their race. Gillborn (2013) reasons that there is not a balance between people of color and White people in situations where each group appears to be working together. Consequently, when the interests of both the White group and people of color meet, then people of color will have the ability to make progress. While people of color do make progress as a race in this tenet of CRT, this progress is made due to White people wanting to make progress for themselves. An example of this is in *Brown v. Board of Education*, where the previous decision of separate but equal was overturned, but it was in the best interest of the dominant White group as well as people of color. Before

Brown v. Board of Education was decided, there was continued disgruntlement from people of color due to segregation laws in the south (Bell, 1980). This disgruntlement was an appealing factor when deciding on *Brown v. Board* (Bell, 1980).

Counter-Storytelling

The next tenet of CRT is counter-storytelling. Delgado (1989) states that storytelling is the practice of a person of color identifying their reality. A person of color's story is generally portrayed through a White lens; therefore, counter-storytelling portrays a person of color's story through their own lens (Delgado, 1989). These narratives are important in CRT to provide first-hand experiences for people of color. The action of a person of color identifying their reality allows this person to share the experiences of marginalized groups, how minorities are stereotyped, the structures of society, and how oppression is rationalized by the oppressor (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Yosso, 2005). This tenet of CRT provides insight into the experiences of people of color. In doing so, it identifies how people of color's experiences can be diminished due to oppression from the majority (Solorzano & Yosso, 2002).

Critical Race Theory in Education

While CRT began in law, it has quickly moved to more disciplines. In education, CRT is widely used to understand the issues of school hierarchy, discipline, history, high-stakes testing, multilateral education, and affirmative action (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). In American schools, theorists argue that racism is often hidden within the "norm" in schools (Gillborn, 2015). Delgado and Stefancic (2017) argue that educators teach minority students using the deficit theory and hide behind the norm of working with minority students. Deficit theory is defined by Collins (1988) as the notion that low-income families are poor because of their own intellectual deficiencies and moral code. Schools are inherently built in Western philosophy that works with

the values of White culture, White orientation, White reasoning, and White methods of learning (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017).

Intersectionality

In the 1960s and 1970s, there was an abundance of social justice movements. Within the social justice movements were the feminist movement, the anti-racist movement, and union movements. None of these movements acknowledged the unique experiences of African American woman (Collins & Bilge, 2016). Intersectionality is used as a tool to describe the relationship African American women have belonging to multiple oppressed groups such as race, class, and gender. Crenshaw (1991) used the term intersectionality in the 1980s to describe the oppression and inequity that Black women experienced because of their intersecting class, gender, and race identities. Intersectionality was used by Crenshaw (1991) to emphasize the social movement for people of color along with the vulnerabilities of woman of color. The intersection of race and gender was especially important for woman who were from low-socioeconomic communities (Crenshaw, 1991).

Crenshaw (1989) describes intersectionality as a theory that is consistently building and never completed. Liasidou (2016) argues that intersectionality surpasses the single view of human identities and allows for the intersecting identities of oppression. The use of intersectionality as a lens allows the researcher to move beyond one a singular way in which to analyze a person's oppression and view (Cole, 2009). Within education, the use of intersectionality allows the researcher to observe the multiple intersections of oppressed identity of the teacher in regards to their race, class and gender (Grant & Zwier, 2011). Students and teachers carry multiply identities that are subjected to oppression inside of the classroom; therefore, their entire identity needs to be examined within a study.

Within intersectionality, six core ideas are used as tools for analysis: social justice, social context, power, social inequality, relationality, and complexity (Collins & Bilge, 2016). Using these six layers of intersectionality, Collins and Bilge (2016) argue that intersectionality provides the opportunity to move past seeing social inequalities in one dimension. Collins and Bilge (2016) describe social justice thus: “Social justice may be intersectionality’s most contentious core idea, but it is one that expands the circle of intersectionality to include people who use intersectionality as an analytic tool for social justice” (p. 30). Therefore, a teacher who working toward a just education for students no matter the color of their skin, their gender, or their social class is working in a social justice frame.

The second core idea of intersectionality is social context. Social context in intersectionality argues one needs to be aware of their knowledge in the area in which intersectionality is being applied (Collins & Bilge, 2016). As a teacher, many may have the social context of what their home life was like, what education looked like to them in school, and what they studied when they went to college. All of these factors shape a person in what they think and do inside of the classroom. This social context is also embodied by the diverse students that teachers encounter. Their experiences shape their ideas, actions and behaviors inside of the classroom.

Power is the third core idea in intersectionality. Collins and Blige (2016) argue that power is shaped by the systemic structure placed on race, gender and class. When these areas intersect in the “right” way, then one person is perceived to have more power than another person. Inside of a metaphorical classroom, a White, female, middle class teacher has the intersection of race, class and profession to exert their power. A student of color from a low-income family will not hold the same power within the classroom. These intersecting identities

give meaning to the power that the teacher holds, while the student does not hold the same meaning due to their intersecting identities.

The fourth core idea of intersectionality is social inequality. Social inequality in intersectionality identifies that inequalities are generally not caused by one single factor, but multiple (Collins & Blige, 2016). A first-year Title I teacher may not understand the social inequalities their students of color may be oppressed by on a daily basis. These different types of oppression often cause students to be misunderstood by the teacher. Understanding a person's intersection of race and class or other areas allows the teacher, student or researcher to be more empathetic. In contrast, relationality, the fifth core idea in intersectionality, looks at how multiple inequities interact. This core idea argues that there is no "either/or" thinking—instead it recognizes a "both" frame of thinking (Collins & Blige, 2016). This is useful when working with first-year teachers in helping them understand that a student of color can also be from a low socioeconomic background. By looking at the interconnections between a student's race and class, a teacher can identify where they can help a student be more successful.

The last core idea of intersectionality is identified as complexity. Collins and Blige (2016) argue that complexity is intertwining all of the core ideas of intersectionality to complexly analyze data. Using intersectionality as an analytic tool is complex within itself and considering the core ideas adds an additional level of complexity for the researcher (Collins & Blige, 2016). It is difficult for first-year teacher to understand the complexities of the students in their classroom. There are various reasons as to why their students are doing what they are doing, and as a first-year teacher, many teachers will fail to understand these complexities. Using intersectionality as a framework allows one to analyze categories multilaterally in place of individually (Cole, 2009). Furthermore, an intersectionality framework allows the researcher to

identify the experiences of marginalized subgroups and builds the identities of individuals who are oppressed. By using intersectionality as a lens in this study, the intersection of race, gender and class can be analyzed for students and teachers.

Cultural Capital

There are three parts of cultural capital as described by Bourdieu (1986): (a) capital that is embodied, (b) capital that is objectified, and (c) capital that is institutionalized. Bourdieu's cultural capital theory is used to identify how teachers' cultural capital and students' cultural capital differ.

Embodied Capital

The norms, traditions and culture a student or teacher comes to school with is their embodied capital (Bourdieu, 1986). White teachers who grew up in the dominant group in schools will have different expectations of the students they are teaching due to their personal embodied cultural capital. An example of differing embodied cultural capital is as follows: a White teacher can hold the assumption that students have the experiences of visiting museums, and going on family trips. White teachers who may have parents with a college education, a savings account and a career can make the assumption that their students, along with their students' parents, share this embodied cultural capital as well (Bourdieu, 1979). The experiences a White teacher has from their time in school build their embodied cultural capital. When a White teacher has grown up in a different cultural norm than their students did, they do not share the same embodied capital.

In contrast to a White teacher's experiences, Bourdieu (1979) argues, a student of color has differing norms, culture, and traditions. Many students of color are not familiar with the idea of taking family trips, will only go to a museum for a field trip and do not always want to go on

school breaks. Students of color whose families live paycheck to paycheck will often spend their school break at home while their parent is at work (Brown, 2009). At times, students do not know when their next meal will be during these times. School offers students a sense of stability and structure; however, additional days off from school break down this stability. These students' parents sometimes hold multiple jobs and have little to no college education, and students will spend an extended period alone at home while their parents work. These differences are no fault of the families; they are simply a different reality.

Objectified Capital

Objectified cultural capital pertains to the material items a person possesses (Bourdieu, 1986). O'Brien and Fathaigh (2005) state that student possessions, educational resources, books, and textbooks are forms of objectified cultural capital. When this knowledge is related to education, the cultural capital may give the person better access to school and curriculum. A White teacher and students of color will have different experiences in attending school by the resources they have or have had access too.

A White teacher who had the opportunity to go to school with paper, crayons, highlighters, colored pencils, a backpack and the other essential items for success in education will have a different expectation of their student than a teacher who did not have these items in school. Therefore, as a teacher who had the materials they needed for success, they will then expect that their students have access to the same materials when work is assigned. In addition to educational items, parents from the dominant group provide their student with access to technology and extra books to read, send their student to summer camp, etc.—all of which add to a students' foundation for learning inside of the classroom (O'Brien & Fathaigh, 2005).

Students who do not possess the necessary materials for an assignment will have more difficulty gaining access to said materials, if they can at all (O'Brien & Fathaigh, 2005).

Technology, computers, and materials are available at the school or a library; however, not having direct access to these items from home places these students at a disadvantage.

Institutionalized Capital

Bourdieu's (1986) last type of cultural capital is institutionalized capital. Institutionalized capital is the traditions and norms which are established within a school (Bourdieu, 1986).

Teachers whose experiences have been shaped by White culture have associated expectations for how students should arrive to class (Howard, 2010). A norm of the White culture is to arrive to class prepared with completed homework, come on time, remain in their seat, and listen to the teacher's instructions (Howard, 2010). Howard (2010) states that students who do not fit into the culture's norms will be seen as disruptive, disrespectful, and unprepared, and will receive poor marks on their report cards.

Therefore, when a teacher has a White cultural view of education and what is believed to be normal, a student with different cultural capital clashes with the culture of the teacher.

Teachers in their first year of teaching in a Title I school are working with students of color who carry different experiences and social capital. A White first-year teacher without similar experiences can develop misunderstandings through negative stereotypes and low expectations (Sue et al., 2007). They will struggle with students beyond their own culture who do not fall into their "normalized" view of school.

In the educational system—and particularly in a Title I school—it is increasingly important for teachers to make personal connections with students to understand what each individual is bringing into their class (Lareau & Weininger, 2003). First-Year White teachers are

not taught to identify the non-academic cultural capital that students are bringing into their classroom (Lareau & Weininger, 2003). The significant differences in the capital between students and teachers can be where a teacher succeeds or fails in their first year of teaching, and this success or failure is dependent on their willingness or ability to attend to these differences.

In this section, I discussed the different cultural capital that students and teachers hold within the school system. In the next section, I will discuss the privilege that a White teacher from the dominant culture holds and their ignorance of having such privilege.

Conclusion

CRT, intersectionality, and cultural capital theory are the groundwork for this study on first-year teachers in Title I schools. Permanence of race and racism, critique of liberalism, and Whiteness as property address a White teacher's ignorance in the ways they perpetuate racism as well as the privilege they bring into the classroom. A teacher may be unaware of how race and class affect students; however, in the classroom it plays a significant role in the life of a student of color. Intersectionality gives the researcher the ability to identify the multiple ways in which a teacher or student can be oppressed. The use of cultural capital theory gives the researcher a lens through which to identify the different capital a teacher brings into the classroom in contrast to the cultural capital a student brings into the classroom.

Review of Research

Title I

Title I school funding became law when Congress passed the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) nearly 50 years ago (Rosa & Lake, 2015). Rosa and Lake (2015) state that President Lyndon B. Johnson fought the "War on Poverty" through ESEA; this established that students from low-income families were in more need than those from wealthier families.

Title I funds are distributed to schools that are eligible based on a student poverty level census in the school district (Sousa, 2013). Title I funds are distributed to the state, the state distributes the funds to the districts, and then the district has its own way to calculate how to distribute funds to schools (Sousa, 2013). The goal of Title I funds is to close the achievement gap between schools in which a majority of students come from low-income families and schools in which a majority of students come from middle and high-income families (Rosa & Lake, 2015).

Since the passing of ESEA, schools with low-income students have been receiving additional funds to close achievement gaps (Sousa & Armor, 2016). The achievement gap is defined by Chen and Yu (2016) as students who are achieving low scores in English Language Arts, and Mathematics who come from low-income families. An essential characteristic of school's eligibility for Title I funds is the census estimate of the student's level of poverty in the school district in addition to what education costs in the state (Sousa & Armor, 2016). Levels of poverty are distinguished by students' ability to qualify for free or reduced lunch within the district. Since ESEA has been in effect, there have been different changes in the poverty level, and the school's percentage of poverty. If a school has more than 40% of the student population at a low-income status, then they can use the funding school-wide for curriculum, technology, playground equipment, and other various items that will improve student achievement (Sousa & Armor, 2016). In contrast, Sousa and Armor (2016) note, schools with less than 40% of their student population as low-income can only use funds to target the specific students who are failing, at risk of failing, and require supplemental instruction to meet the state's academic standards. The achievement gap can focus on Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies as the school sees fit.

In this section, I discussed how Title I funds are disbursed and what they can be used to purchase. In the next section, I will discuss first-year teachers. The discussion will cover the difficulties of being a first-year teacher, responsibilities and the stress involved.

First-Year Teachers

The first year of teaching is considered to be one of the most challenging years an educator will face. Research shows teachers predictably have more struggles in their first years of teaching than in the years that follow (Cochran-Smith, 2004; Darling-Hammond, 2003; Kane et al., 2008). Veenman (1984) argues that the responsibility of a new classroom is a shock to many new educators. The first year of teaching is a shock to these educators because a new teacher is given the same obligations as teachers who have years of experience (Raine, 2005). In other professions a person is often trained for their new position and given time to understand the complexities of their new job; however, teaching is often done in seclusion from others (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). The seclusion and loneliness a new teacher face in their first year can leave the teacher feeling frustrated, which can lead the new professional to leave teaching altogether (Cochran-Smith, 2004; Darling-Hammond, 2003; Mann, 2008).

Due to a teacher never having the responsibility of an entire classroom beforehand and very little time for a learning curve, it becomes overwhelming as an educator with minimal experience. Viadero (2003) argues that a novice teacher as well as an experienced teacher is responsible for lesson plans, classroom management, teaching curriculum, and the arrangement of furniture within their new classroom. Headden (2014) argues that classroom management is one of the most difficult responsibilities to master as a new teacher. The routines a teacher puts into place from the beginning of the year can establish an organized classroom that promotes student engagement or a disorderly classroom environment (Evertson & Weinstein, 2006).

Milner and Tenore (2010) argue that skills in classroom management are even more imperative in urban schools to maintain a positive learning atmosphere. New teachers with little to no training in classroom management from pre-service training will feel as though they are less supported with student behavior (MacDonald & Speece, 2001).

Student behavior and classroom management is one of the more difficult areas a new teacher will face; however, they will also need to learn how to work effectively with students' parents, especially when teachers do not share cultural capital with their students' families (Metropolitan Life, 2005). Teacher preparation programs have limited to no education in regards to working with parents in an effective manner (Metropolitan Life, 2005). Without training in engaging with parents, first year teachers will often give up quickly when they do not receive the support they are looking for from a student's family (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2002). In low-income Title I schools where parent involvement is low, a first-year teacher often does not feel successful working with the parents of their students (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2002).

An unsupported teacher will feel intimidated, scared and can quickly change their mind about their career choice due to the significant stress a teacher faces in their first year (Cochran-Smith, 2004; Darling-Hammond, 2003; Raine, 2005). In addition to being unsupported, teachers are faced with new professional relationships, managing professional and personal time, learning the curriculum provided by the district, in addition to the continuous observations by administration (McCann & Johannessen, 2004). It is critical in these first years that a teacher is given the opportunity for professional development and mentorship from positive experienced educators (Farrell, 2009). Humprey, Wechsler, and Hourgh (2008) found that a teacher who meets with a mentor on campus or has a mentor assigned from the district is more likely to feel confident in their teaching responsibilities and balance their life at home. Mentors that have the

ability to observe the new teacher, in addition to providing constructive feedback, will allow the new teacher to reflect on their practice (Wang et al., 2008). A teacher who does not receive these supports will be less likely to be successful in their first years of teaching (Wang et al., 2008).

Low-Income Students

Teachers, staff, and administration who work in low-income Title I schools can attest to the difficulties of working with the population. There is a multitude of reasons as to why it is challenging to work in a Title I school: (a) homelessness, (b) doubled-up living, (c) behavior problems, (d) low parental involvement, (e) poverty-induced stress/depression/anxiety, (f) low-academic achievement, and (g) unmet health and/or nutritional needs (Brown, 2009). Low-income families generally work their hardest to provide the most they can for their students; however, due to their circumstances, the needs of their children are not always met (Brooks-Gunn & Duncan, 1997; Cicchetti & Toth, 2005).

Students who come from low-income families struggle with feelings of low self-esteem, helplessness, and hopelessness (Brooks-Gunn & Duncan, 1997; Brown, 2009). Therefore, low-income students are more likely to face mental health issues before they set foot into their classroom (Doll & Lyon, 1998; Wadsworth et al., 2008). Another obstacle many low-income families face is being unable to obtain appropriate medical care and lack of nutritional food that will allow students to pay closer attention inside of the classroom (Brown, 2009; Wadsworth et al., 2008). Students struggle to learn in a classroom as they are worried about if they are going to have food when they go home (Blaustein, 2013). Without appropriate medical care, low-income students go to school without glasses they need and dental problems due to lack of insurance along with other various medical needs. The stress a student and their family faces in low-income circumstances can lead to anxiety or poverty-induced depression (Wadsworth, 2008).

Many students will be hungry in class, fail to see the board, have a toothache, or other medical reasons that cause them pain which prevents them from learning the material.

Henderson and Mapp (2002) state that there is lower parent involvement in students' school activities in low-income families than in families of middle or high socioeconomic status. First-year teachers are often unaware of a low-income family's inability to meet a student's needs academically (Brown, 2009). A parent's first goals for their child are to feed them, clothe them, and meet their medical needs—educational needs come after. A first-year teacher who has never experienced generational or situational poverty can assume that parents do not care for their child when in reality they are providing their student with more critical needs first. Low-income families are unable to attend school events, field trips, and parent-teacher conferences due to economic struggles as well as working multiple jobs (Drake & Pandey, 1996; Van Velsor & Orozco, 2007).

Experienced and first-year teachers fail to see how they can be intimidating to low-income families due to parents lacking confidence in their own academic abilities (Van Velsor & Orozco, 2007). Thompson (2013) argues that parents of low-income families can feel uncertain about how they can help their student succeed academically in the classroom. Many first-year teachers will struggle to understand the various reasons their students are struggling in their classroom. There are many differences in culture between a White teacher and the families of students they teach, and this can lead to a cultural gap between families and school (Christenson & West-Olatunji, 2008).

Students from low-income families who attend Title I schools are more likely to demonstrate what is seen as behavior issues than those of peers from a middle or high socioeconomic family (National Institute of Child Health and Human Development Early Child

Care Research Network, 2005). First-year teachers often have very little knowledge of the behaviors they are likely to encounter while working in a Title I school and lack the knowledge of how to manage such behaviors. Many first-year teachers will struggle to succeed in classroom management due to their inexperience in this area. Pettit and Arsiwalla (2008) argue that low-income students are more likely to develop behavior problems due to the stress of living in poverty. Much of the stress that causes students in poverty to act out is caused by anxiety, depression and inconsistent parenting (Pettit & Arsiwalla, 2008). Welsh, Nix, Blair, Bierman, and Nelson (2010) found that behavior issues interfere with the student's learning and the teacher's ability to instruct the entire classroom. An inexperienced teacher who has no experience with strong student behaviors will struggle to provide appropriate instruction for the entire class. Additionally, disruptive behaviors have been linked to lower reading and math achievement for students (Bulotsky-Shearer et al., 2010).

In this section, I covered the challenges low-income families face in education. Also, I covered how a White first-year teacher does not always understand the challenges low-income students face daily. Many of these challenges lead to poor behavior by the students, and the teacher is often unable to work effectively with behaviors they do not understand. In the next section, I will cover the achievement gap.

Achievement Gap

The achievement gap is discussed in education, in politics, on radio stations, and in teacher professional development, and Title I funds are used to address it. Chmielewski (2017) explains the achievement gap as the inequality of academic achievement between students from low and high socioeconomic backgrounds, as well as minority students who score lower in comparison to White students. An achievement gap suggests that students from low-income

schools and families are receiving different instruction than those who are from high-income schools and families (Chmielewski, 2017). The gap that is prevalent between students of low and middle or high socioeconomic status is based on the achievement of students from middle or high socioeconomic families. It is this group that is setting the "standard" by which students are expected to score. After decades of reform and Title I funds being distributed, there continues to be a widening achievement gap between low and middle or high socioeconomic students (Anyon et al., 2009).

In this section, I discussed how low-income students and students of color are consistently underachieving in comparison to the White students. The measure of this is not necessarily equitable, however—students with more variables working against their success often have a harder time meeting standards. In the next section, I discuss the hidden curriculum in low-income schools.

Hidden Curriculum

The hidden curriculum is defined by Anyon (1980) as differing pedagogical curriculum and assessments which promote cognitive skills dependent on the students' socioeconomic level. Different types of socialization are taking place in classrooms which is also based on students' socioeconomic level (Anyon, 1980). There is a direct correlation between the type of hidden curriculum a student receives and their socioeconomic level. This hidden curriculum leads students to develop skills that are deemed necessary based on their perceived cultural capital for what is seen as their future.

Anyon (1980) completed a study based on schools with varying socioeconomic levels. The schools studied included a working class, middle class, affluent professional class, and executive class school. Each school of differing economic levels received different pedagogical

strategies (Anyon, 1980). In the working-class schools, students were asked to do procedural tasks, students made very little decisions in the classroom with little to no explanation from the teacher, and grades were based on if students followed the procedures correctly (Anyon, 1980). In the middle-class schools, students were able to find answers within textbooks, they received grades based on correct answers, and they were not asked to add creativity within their assignments (Anyon, 1980). Next, in the affluent schools, students were encouraged to work independently, creatively, and teachers gave explanations to students along with negotiating with students (Anyon, 1980). Lastly, in the executive schools, students were encouraged to use problem-solving skills, critical thinking and were required to develop work intellectually where political or social problems were examined (Anyon, 1980).

Through these different strategies employed by the teachers in Anyon's (1980) study, it showed that the socioeconomic levels of students determined the teachers' expectations of student cultural capital. The pedagogy used in each class also suggests the type of occupation that teachers believed their students would be suited for. Anyon (1980), found that students from working-class families were learning to do procedural work that can be related to working in a factory. In contrast to the executive students were encouraged to think critically and engage in political and social issues (Anyon, 1980). The arrangements of the curriculum in each socioeconomic school leave students in working and middle class with a remedial curriculum that focuses on skill instead of critical thinking. Leaving this hidden curriculum unchallenged by others furthers the achievement gap between working-class students and executive class students (Anyon, 1980).

The consequences of the hidden curriculum on students in Title I schools is alarming. It is also alarming that teachers are unintentionally teaching in this manner. According to Anyon

(1980), students in the working-class school were not encouraged to use critical thinking skills or problem-solving skills, which determine their ineligibility for certain occupations after high school.

The system students are subjected to throughout their education will mold their career options. Students attending a Title I school will immediately be subjected to working-class curriculum by first-year teachers and experienced teachers. These students will be tracked into classes that are aimed at labor jobs and factory positions (Anyon, 1982). Coming from a working-class school, students learn to be obedient and not challenge those in charge. They are socialized to follow procedures and expected not to ask questions. Students who have the opportunity to attend the elite executive schools are prepared as creative intellectuals through thoughtful classroom discussions where students challenge themselves and their teachers. These students are more prepared by their teachers for four-year colleges and higher paying salaries attached to a career. First-year teachers can be unaware of how they are affecting their students simply based on their interactions with them on an interpersonal level. A teacher without knowledge of the way in which they are presenting curriculum has the ability to manipulate curriculum that can be harmful to a student's future.

Conclusion

Using CRT, intersectionality, and cultural capital theory as lenses for this study allows students and teachers to be viewed by their different identities. Bourdieu's cultural capital identifies the varying capital that students and teachers bring into the classroom based on their race, class, and gender. As Anyon (1980) showed, there is a hidden curriculum inside of low-income schools, and teachers may not be aware they are teaching this curriculum due to their

privilege. This study will look at gaps in teacher education and how to better prepare first-year teachers to teach in low-income schools.

Chapter Three

Research Questions and Methodology

Introduction

The overarching purpose of this study was to understand first-year teacher experiences in Title I schools. Through understanding the experiences of a first-year teacher in a population of students they are unfamiliar with, educators—as well as administrators—will be able to begin to support these teachers more appropriately. Raine (2005) argues that first-year teachers are given the same responsibilities as experienced teachers without any significant support system in place. A Title I school adds additional responsibilities in regards to student achievement, mental health of the students, behavior of the students, and family involvement of the students that many first-year teachers are not ready for and do not understand (Brown, 2009; Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Van Velsor & Orozco, 2007; Wadsworth et al., 2008). Therefore, in order to address both research questions, a qualitative phenomenological methods approach was used. The research questions used to guide this study were:

1. What are first-year teacher experiences in a Title I, K-5 school?
2. What struggles do first-year teachers face, both inside and outside of the classroom?

The first research question in this study addressed the first-hand experiences of teachers in a Title I school. The second research question addressed the different struggles first-year teachers face inside of the classroom. The evaluation of coding and themes will bring the needs of a first-year teacher to the surface and shed light on what an administrator can change or do to more fully support their first-year teachers.

Methodology: Qualitative Phenomenological Approach

The purpose of this research was to understand the experiences of first-year teachers in Title I schools, therefore, the use of qualitative research was fitting (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Moustakas (1994) states that the use of phenomenological research, under the umbrella of qualitative research, highlights the experiences of individuals. Phenomenology at a basic level is the study into phenomena that occur throughout day-to-day living (Fraenkel et al., 2011; Smith et al., 2009; Vagle, 2018). Through observations and semi-structured interviews, the researcher can obtain information on similarities and differences that occur within people's lives (Smith et al., 2009). These experiences give the researcher direct insight into participants' world (Charmaz & McMullen, 2011) or for this study, the teacher's world—how they perceive students and their new job responsibilities. After I conducted the interviews, I then examined the participants' experiences to understand commonalities, as well as identify any phenomena occurring between others in similar circumstances. To uncover the phenomena occurring in Title I first-year teacher's experiences, I used semi-structured interviews, a field journal, and observations of the participant during the interview. The use of phenomenology allows for the identification of similarities and differences between participants' experiences (Charmaz & McMullen, 2011); therefore, an emphasis was placed on the teachers' experiences with students, administration, and struggles they faced daily to answer the research questions. As a result, using a qualitative, phenomenological approach was appropriate to understand the experiences of first-year teachers in Title I schools.

Study Participants

Using the California Department of Education website www.cde.ca.gov, I identified local Southern California elementary schools that have Title I levels of 70% or above. Once these

schools with 70% Title I rates were identified, I contacted the schools' district personnel to request permission to do research. The district in Southern California required an application to do research be completed. Upon completing the application, the district personnel granted written approval to complete research in four elementary schools who fell into the research criteria. I then sent emails to principals (Appendix E), and included the Potential Participant Email (Appendix A), which I requested that the principals share with potential participants. School #1's principal shared the email with potential participants and four participants expressed interest in participating in the study. I emailed each participant an Informed Consent Form (Appendix C) to sign and return. Once this was returned, I emailed the potential participants the Demographic Survey (Appendix B). All four participants returned the Demographic Survey and each participant qualified for the study's parameters. I assigned participants the names Participant #1-#4. No other principals emailed their staff, and therefore my dissertation committee member reached out to a school staff member at one of the qualifying schools. The committee member obtained and then shared multiple email addresses. I then emailed the two potential participants Appendix A, and both potential participants were interested in participating in the study. They too returned the Informed Consent Form (Appendix C) and completed the Demographic Survey (Appendix B). These two participants were named Participant #5 and #6.

The selection of participants was based on race, gender, age, and their college education. Therefore, participants were White females ages 25-35. Participants were chosen between the ages of 25-35 to lower the amount of prior experience they had in various fields before their first-year of teaching. Due to the majority of the education field being White and female, I chose to maintain the same demographic. Participants were selected based on them having a California Multiple Subject Credential from a four-year university.

Based on the answers to the questionnaire, the number of participants was determined to be six. I was unable to anticipate how many participants would meet the study requirements, but it is ideal to have no more than twenty participants and no less than six to reach saturation; saturation is met when no new information has been found in the data collected (Glaser & Strauss, 2017). Bowen (2008) argues that saturation varies depending on the study and guidelines; however, Guest, Bunce, and Johnson (2006) state that saturation can be reached within six interviews. Once they signed the informed consent form, participants were allowed to complete the Demographic Survey and were able to participate in a semi-structured interview. A semi-structured interview is a strategy to collect data where the researcher asks a sequence of questions that are prearranged, but are open-ended (Seidman, 2013).

Data Collection

Data Collection and Storage

In order to complete the study, I requested approval from the University of Redlands Institutional Review Board (IRB). The IRB gave approval for this study with the approval number: #2019-45-REDLANDS. Interviews were conducted inside the participant's classrooms; however, they were given the option of doing interviews in a public setting. Every participant requested to do the interviews inside of their own classroom. I recorded the interviews electronically on a Sony ICD-PX370 Mono Digital Record with Built-in USB. Recordings were stored on my personal, password-protected laptop in a password-protected folder to protect the confidentiality of the participants. After I transcribed and coded the interviews, I deleted the recordings from my Sony ICD-PX370 Mono Digital Record with Built-in USB and computer to maintain confidentiality.

Interviews

Interviews were conducted after the participant had given consent both verbally and in writing. Interviews were conducted between December 2019 and March 2020 with one session per participant. I used the method of semi-structured interviewing for the details of a first-year teacher's experience in order to allow participants to tell the stories of their experiences (Seidman, 2013). The use of interviewing provides "an interest in understanding the lived experience of other people and the meaning they make of that experience" (Seidman, 2013, p. 9). Therefore, the Interview Protocol (Appendix D) was used to maintain consistency between participants and the experiences in their first-years of teaching for data collection. There was a mixture of low-risk questions and high-risk, less structured questions. The interviews started with low-risk questions—such as asking where the participants taught and what grade level they taught—allowing the participants to feel comfortable and begin to open up. This allowed for trust-building before the higher-risk questioning began. Low-risk questions are questions that the participant can answer with low emotional depth. Higher-risk questions involve more emotional risk-taking on the part of the participant, hence the necessity of building trust.

The interview protocol in Appendix D allowed for an understanding of the phenomena Title I teachers experience. Participants were asked the grade level they teach, and where they teach. Additionally, they were asked if they know and understand their students' socioeconomic level. I used follow-up questions to identify the level of understanding the participant had in regards to their students' socioeconomic level. These questions pertained to their students' living situations and how this may affected their education. Next, participants were asked if they believed socioeconomic status affects students' ability to learn, with follow-up questions to understand why they thought it affects students or not. After, participants were asked more

probing questions about their experiences, the support they received, and what support would have been beneficial to them. First-year teachers may not understand what support they need, but it was necessary to know if they could identify what they needed or not. Participants were then asked questions on how their administration supported them in their classroom. If a teacher begins teaching too late in the year, they do not have the opportunity to participate in Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA); therefore, they were asked if they were currently participating in the program and if they felt as though it was supporting their needs as a first-year teacher. All six participants reported participating in BTSA.

The interview used a semi-structured protocol; Wengraf (2001) states that semi-structured interview protocol allows the researcher to follow new topics as they arise within the interview. Participants were asked what difficulties they had faced throughout the year, what they would have wanted to know before starting the school year, and lastly, participants were asked what the most rewarding part of their first-year of teaching was. When appropriate, the participants were probed for more information or encouraged to share personal stories that were relevant to the questions. Each interview lasted an estimated 60 to 90 minutes. Seidman (2013) states that two hours is too long, and less than an hour does not provide enough time for in-depth phenomenological understanding of the phenomena.

Transcribing

I transcribed all interviews. It was beneficial to transcribe interviews to ensure the integrity of the interview, and the transcription process provided insight about what was said during the interviews (Seidman, 2013). I saw similarities in interviews during the transcription process. Interviews were transcribed and returned to the participants within two weeks of the interview date to give participants the opportunity to read through the transcript to add any

afterthoughts or make changes they saw fit. Changes were not encouraged; however, the option was given. Allowing the participant to reflect on the interview after its completion and allowing the participant to add to their thoughts provided a complete view of their experiences.

Participants were given this opportunity to add missing information they may have forgotten to say during the interview. Seidman (2013) argues that this allows reflection from the participant on the meaning of their experience and how they have made sense of it. No participant chose to make changes to their interview transcripts. After the interviewee gave their approval of the interview, edits were not needed due to participants not making changes or reflections. To maintain confidentiality, the participants were the only people who saw their interviews and I was the only one who analyzed the results.

Journals

In addition to an interview with participants, I used a field journal. The purpose of a field journal was to remember as much information as possible from the interview and take note of the participants' emotions, feelings, impressions, and feelings observed (Emerson et al., 2011). This journal was also used to organize data collected, and record various thoughts. The use of a journal was important to triangulate data, and maintain credibility for the study. These field notes remained confidential on my password-protected laptop.

Trustworthiness

In order to achieve trustworthiness in this study, I used the principles of credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). To achieve credibility, I used data collection triangulation, consistent engagement with the data, and member checking (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). I attained data triangulation with interview transcripts, interview recordings, peer debriefing, and member checking (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Additionally, I

worked consistently with the data, transcribing interviews, and recording personal dialogue about the data in a journal. Once interviews were transcribed, participants were asked to review the transcription for accuracy, and given the opportunity to add information as they saw fit to achieve member checking. I also met with their dissertation committee to peer debrief. Meeting with the dissertation committee allowed me to identify where I had made assumptions and had biases, and it provided a different perspective on the data interpretation (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). To obtain transferability, I provided specific descriptions in order to allow for generalizations for other researchers to transfer the findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Tobin and Begley (2004) state that a researcher can confirm dependability by making sure the research process is clearly documented. This study provides a clearly documented logical process in order to be replicated with ease. When creditability, transferability and dependability have been achieved, then a study can be confirmed (Lincoln & Guba, 1989).

Positionality

Understanding my positionality allowed me to reflect on any bias that would have affected this study. In qualitative research, the researcher often has personal experience with and passion about the subject they are researching (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). My considerable personal experience of attending Title I schools and teaching in Title I schools is essential to recognize in the context of this study (Vagle, 2018). I am a White, middle-class female who grew up in situational poverty. Participants in the study were also White female teachers at Title I schools. All of the participants have experiences of teaching in their first-year that I can identify with. I acknowledge that the participants may share the same socioeconomic status growing up or have a different socioeconomic experience. It is important to note that I feel as though I can develop a relationship with the participants given the shared profession, gender and

shared classroom experiences. In addition to growing up in situational poverty, I had a Title I elementary education after my parents were divorced. It is also significant to note that I went to school in the same Southern California County in which the study took place.

I have worked in the K-5 education field for seven years, two years of tutoring and five years of teaching. With a Bachelors of Arts in Liberal Studies, a Multiple Subject Credential, and a Masters of Science in Teaching, I have a significant background in the area of study. I have also been teaching at a Title I school for five years, including my first-year of teaching. My knowledge and experience in Title I schools and in education makes me a good fit to conduct this study. Within the time of working at Title I schools, I have witnessed new teachers struggle with the demands of their career. Many teachers often feel helpless, stressed, unsupported, and lack self confidence in the classroom. My experience witnessing the many struggles new teachers face led to my desire to study first-year teachers' experiences in Title I schools.

I understand and am aware of the bias I carry. By attending and teaching at a Title I school, I understand the difficulties students face on a daily basis living in poverty as well as the struggles teachers face daily in their classrooms. It is important to acknowledge that I believe students have the ability to learn, and teachers have the ability to teach despite the given circumstances.

I understand that first-year teachers do not always carry the same knowledge that I do. For instance, many first-year teachers do not understand why they are "failing" in the classroom when they do not see test scores go up. I know that a student's test score does not show their ability in the classroom and I understand the importance of identifying the positive improvements they have made throughout the year in all areas. As an experienced educator, I

know many students come to school to receive love, and once they have this then they are able to start learning. An inexperienced educator does not always carry this knowledge initially.

As a teacher, I understand the stress of the classroom. I had learned to lesson plan, grade, use effective classroom management, and proper classroom procedures. Being hired at a Title I school for the first-year of teaching is a difficult position to take without the knowledge and skills experienced teachers have. Many new teachers will quickly give up and blame their students' lack of progress on the students themselves, without reflecting on their own teaching practice. I find it frustrating to work with teachers both new and experienced who fail to reflect and attempt new ways to effectively teach their students. I see the teachers who give up on their students as apathetic. However, I believe that if a teacher is given the right opportunities and they choose to reflect on their practice, then they can be effective in working with all students.

While I went to school as a Title I student, have been a first-year teacher in a Title I school, and have preconceived notions about teachers, it is crucial to maintain an impartial view when interviewing participants. It is also important to remain impartial when analyzing data. It is imperative that I do not project my own experiences onto the participants or data analysis. To maintain an ethical approach to data analysis, I am acknowledging my positionality, and therefore will not project my own experiences onto the data analysis.

Data Analysis

After I transcribed interviews, sent them to interviewees to member check, and added the interviewees' reflections, then data analysis began. There were three cycles of coding performed on transcribed interviews, and journals. The first cycle of coding was concept coding (Saldana, 2015). Corbin and Strauss (2015) identify concept coding as beneficial for multiple participant studies, interview transcripts, and phenomenological studies. By using concept coding in the first

cycle, I focused on “a concept [that] is a word or short phrase that symbolically represents a suggested meaning broader than a single item or action – a ‘bigger picture ’beyond the tangible and apparent” (Saldana, 2015, p. 119). Concept codes were given to units of the transcripts that suggested a concept was part of the “bigger picture” (Saldana, 2015, p. 120).

Once concept coding was complete, I began the second cycle of coding. The second cycle of coding was called theming data. Saldana (2015) states that theming the data is used to identify or categorize data into themes. A theme as identified by Saldana (2015) as a phrase or sentence used to identify the units of data to categorize the coding meaningfully. I then used axial coding to identify which themes were dominant concerning the research questions, and which themes were less critical (Saldana, 2015). In the third cycle of coding, the themes were used to identify concepts that had emerged from the data. It is at this point that I reflected on what themes and concepts had emerged in regards to the research questions (Saldana, 2015). Through these themes, I built three conceptual maps to visualize the data. I then identified the supports first-year teachers needed in Title I schools, their struggles inside of the classroom, and their shared experiences.

Conclusion

In Chapter Three, I provided a rationale for a qualitative phenomenological study looking at first-year teachers in Title I schools. Additionally, the method of the study was provided to identify validity in the study. Participant selection, along with the procedures for interviews, were noted in this chapter. In Chapter Four, I will identify the findings from the research through coding, conceptual maps and experiences of the participants in the study.

Chapter Four

Research Findings

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine the experiences of White female first, second, and third-year teachers who work in Title I schools. This study aimed to: (a) identify similarities and differences in first, second, and third-year White female teachers' experiences in Title I schools, and (b) identify the struggles teachers face inside and outside of the classroom in Title I schools. I interviewed White female first- second, and third-year teachers to understand how teachers feel they can be better supported, and also to find where administrators at Title I schools can better support new teachers. I used a qualitative phenomenological approach to answer the following research questions: (1) What are first, second, and third-year White female teacher experiences in a Title I, K-5 school? and (2) What struggles do these first-year teachers face, both inside and outside of the classroom?

I conducted one interview with each participant. Interviews measured between thirty minutes to ninety-seven minutes, dependent on the amount of details each participant offered. Each interview was recorded to ensure participants' experiences were accurately captured. I transcribed each interview and had participants member check by reviewing their interview transcripts for accuracy (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Next, I read through the transcripts four times: (1) to check for transcription errors, (2) first cycle of coding, (3) reviewing coding themes, (4) reviewing participants experiences while creating the conceptual maps.

Analysis of the interview transcripts revealed rich descriptions of the teachers' experiences in their first, second and third year in the classrooms at Title I schools.

I performed three cycles of coding. During each cycle, the lenses of critical race theory, intersectionality, and cultural capital were used to identify major themes that arose.

The first cycle of coding was done with concept coding in which I identified 499 open codes (Saldana, 2015). During the second cycle of coding, I placed the data into eight different themes. Last, in the third cycle of coding, I built three conceptual maps through axial coding (Saldana, 2015). No new information was found after I coded the sixth interview's transcripts; therefore, the requirements to reach saturation were fulfilled (Glaser & Strauss, 2017).

Participant Summaries

To provide an understanding of each participant, a short-detailed summary is provided below with details and information relevant to participants' experiences. All participants identified as female, and therefore the pronoun she/her will be used.

Participant #1

Participant #1 is a kindergarten teacher in her second year of teaching at School #1; however, she was a long-term substitute teacher for nearly an entire school year at School #2. Participant #1 shared that she felt supported by her BTSA coach and enjoyed the suggestions she received from them. Additionally, Participant #1 shared that she has a child attending elementary school within the district at a higher income school.

Participant #2

Participant #2 is a second-grade teacher at School #1. She is in her second year of teaching, and was a long-term substitute at a different school before working at School #1. Participant #2 shared that her coach is supportive, is available to her, and observes her teaching, and Participant #2 shared that she's been able to go and observe the BTSA coach teaching as well. Participant #2 does not have children of her own.

Participant #3

Participant #3 is fourth-grade teacher at School #1. She is in her second-year of teaching. Her first year of teaching was at School #1 in fifth grade as a temporary teacher. This means she did not get a choice of what grade she taught her second year, and had to re-interview for her position at the end of her first year of teaching. Participant #3 shared that her BTSA coach was a family friend and she found the coach to be somewhat beneficial, and did not believe that the work was helpful in her first two years of teaching. Participant #3 does not have children of her own.

Participant #4

Participant #4 is a third-grade teacher at School #1. She is in her second year of teaching. Her first year of teaching was at School #1 in fifth grade, and she changed to third grade her second year by choice. The year before her first year of teaching she was a long-term substitute in fifth-grade at School #1. Participant #4 shared that her BTSA coach was not supporting her through her first years of teaching, but she would go to her master teacher from student teaching to ask questions. Additionally, Participant #4 shared that she has multiple children in the district at elementary, middle school, and high school levels at higher income schools.

Participant #5

Participant #5 is a kindergarten teacher at School #2. The 2019-2020 school year was her first year at School #2 and the district; however, she taught at another two schools before working in the same district. Her first year was as an intern teacher without BTSA support. She taught kindergarten her first year, fifth grade in her second year, and kindergarten in her third year at school #2. The participant describes all of those schools as Title I schools. The participant described the BTSA coach in her second year of teaching as being more beneficial, and shared

that the BTSA coach was at the same school and in the same grade level as herself. The participant explained that in her third year of teaching at School #2, her BTSA coach was at a different school and she did not have a lot of communication with the coach. Participant #5 shared that she has two elementary-aged students at a higher income school in the same district.

Participant #6

Participant #6 is a first-grade teacher in her third year of teaching at School #2. She has taught at School #2 for all three years. Participant #6 completed BTSA in her second year of teaching. The participant stated she had two different coaches for BTSA, and found the program not very helpful. She stated she did not build a strong bond with either coach, but was more comfortable with the second coach. Participant #6 has one child in the same school district she works in, but the child attends a higher income school.

Participants and Schools

I contacted four schools which met the study requirements of 70% or more Title I population within the district. The principals at each of the four school agreed to allow research to take place; however, only the principal at School #1 forwarded the participant email to their staff. A member of my dissertation committee made contact with School #2's office worker, who provided the email addresses for Participant #5 and Participant #6. I reached out to Participants #5 and #6 directly to invite participation. Participant #5 indicated that the principal at School #2 did not share the participant email with the staff.

School #1	School #2
Participant #1 (First- and second- year)	Participant #1 (Long-term sub position before first-year)
Participant #2	Participant #5
Participant #3	Participant #6
Participant #4	

Table 1: Indicates which school each participant works at.

As indicated in Table 1, participants #1-4 work at School #1; however, Participant #1 long-term subbed at School #2. Participants #5 and #6 work at School #2.

Coding

I used concept coding to gain understanding of the bigger picture from what participants were expressing through their experiences (Saldana, 2015). Concept coding was useful because the study involved multiple participants. Using concept coding allowed for better understanding of the participants' lived experiences through common themes that arose (Saldana, 2015).

Through the second cycle of coding, I revealed eight themes that continued to reoccur in each of the six participant interviews (Saldana, 2015). The eight themes to emerge were:

1. Need for training
2. Student behavior/student trauma/students' social emotional needs/students' basic needs
3. Classroom Management/student relationships/reflection
4. Student low SES/Non-affluent/unsupported
5. Teacher peer support/mentor/help

6. Little support for teachers/poor school culture
7. Privilege/White privilege
8. Teacher feelings/stress/fulfillment

I used axial coding in the third cycle (Saldana, 2015); in this cycle, the more dominate themes were identified and placed into three separate concept maps. The first of the strongest themes was the supports new teachers had or desired, the second was the feelings of new teachers, and the third was low socioeconomic students. I constructed three conceptual maps based on the three major themes to emerge, and the themes that supported each major theme.

New Teacher Supports or Desired Supports

One of the three major themes to emerge was the supports or desired supports new teachers experienced. In terms of sub-themes, each participant spoke of having or wanting: (1) a mentor, (2) support from peers, and/or (3) administrative support from their principal or assistant principal, and the participants spoke of these sub-themes whether their experience was positive or negative. Wang, Odell, and Schwille (2008) argued that teachers who did not receive appropriate support in their first years of teaching would be less likely to succeed. Therefore, it is not surprising that new teachers desired these supports if they were not receiving them.

Teachers at Title I schools are more likely to encounter student behaviors associated with the stressors of coming from a low-income home. Students come to school with anxiety or depression unseen by the teacher due to the circumstances they face at home that can manifest as poor behaviors inside of the classroom (Wadsworth, 2008). In addition, Pettit and Arsiwalla (2008) explain that stress induces anxiety and/or depression from outside of the classroom, which can cause students in poverty to act out in a negative manner. Welsh, Nix, Blair, Bierman, and Nelson (2010) argue that poor student behaviors interfere with the teacher's ability to

instruct an entire classroom as well as interfering with the students' ability to learn inside of the classroom. The additional needs of students from low-income families are added factors for new teachers in the classroom.

Figure 1: Conceptual map of first-, second- or third-year teachers needs/desires from their experiences.

The three sub-themes identified in New Teacher Supports/Desired Supports were: (1) mentors, (2) peer support, and (3) administrative support. As indicated in Figure 1, all six participants within this study stated they had or needed one or more of these three items during their first, second, and/or third year of teaching. These supports are even more imperative due to the stress that poverty has on students in Title I schools (Wang et al., 2008). At School #1, Participants #1-4 shared that they had at least one of the three supports identified in Figure 1. Additionally, Participants #1-4 shared that if they did not have one of these identified supports, then they expressed a need for it. At School #2, both participants expressed a need for two or three of the identified supports, as indicated in Figure 1. None of the participants indicated that

their mentors placed emphasis on working in Title I schools. Only Participant #5 shared that one of her BTSA coaches worked at a Title I school with her.

Mentor

All six participants participated in a Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) program through their district. Each participant was assigned a BTSA Coach as a mentor through this program. Research indicates that a teacher who has a mentor assigned to them, or meets with one on campus, are more likely to feel confident in their abilities in the classroom (Humphrey et al., 2008). Participants #1 and #2 indicated that they benefited from working with their BTSA Coach. Participant #1 shared, “My Induction Coach is great. Yes, she gives good suggestions. She has been in my room.” (Participant #1, Lines 335-336). Participant #1 indicated that she enjoyed the suggestions she received, but did not elaborate beyond these two lines. Participant #2, however, elaborated in how her BTSA Coach supported her teaching.

My coach supports me a lot. She comes in and observes me, and offers me feedback. Like for example, she came in before break and I had a student who was on the floor having a tantrum and I kept trying to console him, “What’s wrong? How can I help you? What upset you?” and it wasn’t help[ing]. [S]he [The BTSA Coach] pulled me to the side and was like “Just let him cool down on his own, leave him alone and take care of the rest of the class because I dropped everybody and went to see what was going on and she told me “Tell him when he’s ready he can come and have a talk with you and just give him as much time as he needs to cool down” and I was like “Okay” so I went and told him, “Hey, I know you’re, I know something happened, I know you’re upset, but I’m giving you a few minutes to cool down. When you’re ready come talk to me and I’ll be here to talk about it.” Then two and a half minutes later [the student said], “Okay, I’m ready.” So, I was like “Wow that worked fast! (Participant #2, Lines 196-206).

Participant #2 shared many ways in which her BTSA Coach would help guide her in academics and behavior. When asked if she felt as though she could be successful without the support of her BTSA Coach, Participant #2 shared, “I think I can figure it out through trial and error, but I think that the support is very helpful for me” (Participant #2, Lines 213-214). Wang, Odell, & Schuille (2008) argue that mentors who observe a new teacher as well as give a new teacher

constructive feedback will guide the teacher to make reflections on their own teaching practice. Participant #2 had the opportunity to be observed by her BTSA coach and was able to take the constructive feedback into account for her teaching practice.

Participants #3-6 described their experiences with their BTSA Coach and the program in significantly different terms than Participants #1 and 2. Participant #3 described her experience with her BTSA Coach as “The only thing that supported me was my coach. I appreciated having her, but she was like blah. I don’t know. I already knew her previously, so she was like a family friend so that was cool to just have her support” (Participant #3, Lines 366-368). Participant #3 shared that she had a previous relationship with her BTSA Coach, but despite that relationship, the support provided was described as “Blah” (Participant #3, Line 367). Participants #4-#6 each shared that they did not benefit from BTSA, and felt the work took time away from their students. Participant #4 explained: “BTSA was not supporting me. My BTSA Coach that was assigned through BTSA was just a hassle, and another box to check” (Participant #4, Lines 298-299). Farrell (2009) argues that first-year teachers who are given the opportunity to work with a positive, experienced educator will be more successful. The same participant did note that she sought out mentorship from her Master Teacher from when she student taught in the same district. Participant #4 was the only participant to seek out mentorship when a helpful, positive mentor was not provided to her.

The different experiences with BTSA Coaches indicated that if a participant had an effective mentor through the BTSA program, then they felt supported in this area. Participants #1 and #2 did not seek any type of additional mentorship; however, participants who did not have a mentor that supported them stated that they wished someone would have taken them under their

wing. Despite Participants #3, #5 and #6 wanting a mentor they connected with, only Participant #4 sought out mentorship to fill her needs.

Within participant interviews, only Participant #5 shared that her first BTSA coach worked at a Title I school with her. Each of the other participants within the study shared that their BTSA coach did not work at the same school site as they did. Participant #5 shared that when she moved to this district and to School #2, her BTSA coach did not work at the same site as she did. Participants did not share within their interviews whether special emphasis was placed on working at a Title I school; therefore, it is assumed that participants participated in the BTSA program all new teachers participate in.

Peer Support

As indicated in Figure 1, Participants #1-6 showed that they either had great peer support or they wished they had someone to help them on their team or at their site. Participants #1-2 indicated that they had a lot of peer support and collaborated with their peers frequently. Participant #1 shared the differences between the peer support she had at School #1 in comparison to School #2: “My first-year, I didn’t have a real cohesive group. I wasn’t here at this site [at School #2], but that was horrible. You just feel like you are on an island all by yourself drowning, you know? You’re like “There’s nobody” I don’t feel that here [School #1]” (Participant #1, Lines 167-169). As McCann and Johannessen (2004) argue, new teachers are learning to build new professional relationships, which can cause a first-year teacher to feel unsupported.

Participants #3-6 indicated that they genuinely wanted support. When Participant #3 was asked how she felt she could be better supported in her first-year of teaching, she gave an example of wanting more peer support.

I don't want to say a support group because that sounds like Alcoholics Anonymous, but you know what I'm saying? I think it's cool that I was at this site too because if it was at a higher income school or another school where they don't collaborate and don't have each other's back like we do, it would have been really difficult because I learned a lot of things from peers. I feel like having maybe a first-year support group which sounds ridiculous. But you know what I'm saying? Or maybe a group chat, or like "How'd your week go?" or "What strategy did you try?" and maybe having one mentor from each grade level who know what the heck they are doing also in on it. I don't know, it's so hard because there is nothing someone can do because I am barely surviving. I don't even have a plan to give you so that you can help me you know. (Participant #3, Lines 165-174)

Another example of a participant wanting more support from peers was shared by Participant #5 from School #2. Participant #5 shared that teachers at School #2 are scared to explain the reality of the school, and if one is not liked, then they could end up on what Participant #5 refers to as the principal's hit-list.

My school seems so, everybody is a group, we're a team, we're team players, everyone is happy to work there. Only to find out a whole bunch of problems. I would have loved to know going in this year what the heck kind of, what is in that secret room back there [Referring to how the school runs but other teachers are too scared to say]. I need to know all those little secrets. I think teachers keep their mouth shut too much. They don't want to be next [The hit-list Participant #4 refers to when the Principal does not like you], but then it is shocking when you are next [On the hit-list]. (Participant #5, Lines 260-264)

Participant #5 shared an experience when she was looking to her peers for support when addressing the principal about a problem on the playground.

We have had so many problems on the playground. Kids pushing each other, bleeding, and there is only one supervisor out there. One person out there watching all those kids. There were times I would have to go and stand out there because [one of my students] would go and run off around the school during recess and I had brought that up to the principal. I told the principal that the playground is a nightmare and they have nothing to do but throw rocks and hit each other with sticks. They have nothing to play on, they have three bikes for all those kids and that's what they were fighting over. I brought it up and asked if we could get something else out there for the playground, there are all these problems with issues and supervision and the other teachers sat around and said "Oh we don't have those problems." I was like really, "Your student was bleeding, a bloody nose because somebody had punched the student in the face, that happened today." It was a daily problem and of course when I looked at the other teacher, the teacher was like "No, I don't have any problems." I was like maybe I'm just crazy, and the principal asked them, but they're scared. (Participant #5, Lines 490-502)

Participant #5 wanted to have peer support for the benefit of all the students' safety. This lack of support left Participant feeling alone at her school, and can cause frustration or more seclusion for a new teacher (Cochran-Smith, 2004; Darling-Hammond, 2003; Mann, 2008). Peer support was what Participant #5 was looking for when she was asking for this help, and Participant #4 shared an example of wanting more peer support in understanding the unwritten rules on the campus. Unwritten rules are the procedures teachers and students are to follow on campus that are not explicitly written out for teachers, staff or students.

I would say that they [first-year teachers] need to be partnered up with someone that has been there [at the school site] a lot longer and has experience. Maybe if we created some kind of, I don't really know what. There are so many things that you don't know, and people don't think to tell you about. Buddying them up with someone for pretty much everything, because there are so many...like printing report cards, and you go through one by one, like I did previously because no one told me [you can print them all together]. That's the thing, there is stuff like that, that you don't know. Yeah, I think teachers need to be buddied up with someone, even if they are just new to the school, not necessarily a new teacher. Just so they have someone to show them stuff, and show them around and they can ask questions. When I first got here the office manager told me "If you have any questions just call me and I'll answer your questions" and so that was helpful. No one else...another fifth-grade teacher helped me a lot, and she would think of things she would try to tell me, but I didn't really feel comfortable. I didn't really want to bug people because I was like, "I should know that; I should look it up and figure it out". I didn't really want to bug people. But if you had someone who was just offering that support and telling them "Hey, did you know we do this this way, and we do this like this" it would be more helpful. When there is an assembly and no one tells you where it's at, where to go, or how it works. People need someone to tell them all that. There should be a partnering up type of thing we do. (Participant #4, Lines 188-204)

Participant #4 felt that she would have been better supported if she had someone she could go to for help during her first year to understand the unwritten rules of the campus. This supports Participant #5's experience of wanting someone to support her when she felt alone in fighting for students' safety. Participant #1 shared experiences of what peer support looked like in her experiences as "Lesson activity ideas, constantly, we're sharing ideas. Just different things that I could do for my students. My difficult kiddo, I've had one teacher that helped me with a token

chart. Things like that. Different ideas and strategies to try in the classroom” (Participant #1, Lines 341-343). Participant #2 offered another example of how she was supported by her peers.

[T]he teachers are very supportive on campus. My grade level especially too. Everyone is very welcoming, but for my grade level specifically, we exchange a lot of resources, you know for the curriculum, and honestly just insight on what to do on a [behavior] situation. If a student needs a break from my classroom, they always tell me you can send them to my classroom. You know just feeling comfortable. If I needed help, I can always reach out to them. (Participant #2, Lines 288-293)

In the first year of teaching, Participant #2 shared that her team’s support was valuable.

Lastly, Participant #6 offered why it is important to have peer support.

I think that the best support are other teachers. I don’t always see everyone really working together and having each other’s backs, but since we don’t really have anything else, I guess that’s it. I have one friend who I know I can go to and that teacher to vent, or if I want to share any success.” (Participant #6, Lines 269-272)

Participants who counted on their peers for support were grateful, and the participants who felt as though they did not have the support they needed from their peers wanted someone to go to. Most participants indicated that they wanted support from peers in areas that are what can be seen as unwritten rules for the campus. These rules can include information on how to run reports as indicated by Participant #4, someone trustworthy to vent to as shared by Participant #6, support in understanding the secrets of camps as indicated by Participant #5, or support for academic materials as indicated by Participants #1 and #2. All six participants indicate the many ways in which peer support was imperative to their success, or where they wanted support from peers to be more successful. The experiences of the six participants indicate that peer support is important for participants to feel supported and be more successful in their first-year of teaching.

Administrative Support (Admin Support)

New teachers who have very little training outside of their pre-service training will often feel as though they are not supported in regards to student behaviors (MacDonald & Speece,

2001). At School #1, participants shared varying perspectives on whether or not they felt supported by their administration. Administration within this study is referring to the school's principal and assistant principal at a specified school. Both School #1 and School #2 had a principal and assistant principal in the years participants spoke of their experiences. School #1 and School #2 have extremely different experiences in regards to administrative support; therefore, it will be broken up into two separate sections.

School #1. At School #1, Participants #1 and #4 felt they had direct support from their administration, while Participant #3 felt she had some support from administration, and Participant #2 did not feel as though administration supported first-year teachers. Participant #1 shared her experiences of support from her administration as: "The principal will send an intervention teacher by, and then sometimes it will be the principal who will come. I will just drop an email and the principal will take care of things or whatever" (Participant #1, Lines 303-305) as well as:

I know the principal is huge on training. Compared to last year, a lot of trainings I was told "Nope, you're kindergarten, you're not going." The principal is like "everyone goes, I don't care who it is" You know? The principal told me any training I find that I am interested in to let him know. That is huge support. The principal supported with the one difficult kiddo I have; the principal has been there the whole way. Supporting me, [asking me] "How's it going" Type of things. Being there through the IST [Instructional Support Team] process and IEP [Individual Education Plan]. (Participant #1, Lines 309-316)

These experiences shared by Participant #1 indicate she felt as though she had support from her administration when she was navigating how to work with a student with behavior issues. She indicated that the principal helped her through both the IST and IEP process that she was unfamiliar with when she stated "I feel really supported" (Participant #1, Line 326) in reference to the principal. For student behavior, Participant #4 felt as though she received direct support from administration; an example Participant #4 gave of support with student behavior is:

The same day I complained I got people in my classroom, so definitely I did receive support in that way. There was another time, also that I just...I was so frustrated and one of my students wouldn't stop and I called the principal and said "You know how I said I'm always so patient, I have zero patience left right now. I just want you to know, I need you to come and take this child from my room immediately" and the principal came and got the student and took the student. I'm very patient, but it only lasts so long. I was like I can't handle this child screaming anymore. I did receive support, I mean, that was at the point that day when I was like I can't take anymore. (Participant #4, Lines 251-260)

Participant #4 consistently shared that she felt as though she was supported by administration in regards to student behavior, but also shared frustrations with how information is shared by administration that was not supportive to her. As an example of this frustration, Participant #4 shared how she was unable to get information on checking out of her classroom for break.

It was really hard this year. Literally for two weeks I asked people who I came across about checking out for break, because the last two years we had a check out why are we not checking out the same way? I was concerned, are the things we need going to be there when we get back? It seems like some things are not being...you have to wait until you ask about it or think about it yourself, and that should be something that is just coming down before I think about it. I'm thinking of it, I'm not running the fucking show. The person that is, should be putting that information out before I even think of it. I'm not in charge. (Participant #4, Lines 206-212)

Participant #3 also felt as though administration was supportive, but in an emotional supportive way. The example Participant #3 gave of this support was when she felt as though she might not be able to continue as a teacher.

I received direct support from my administrator. Mainly it was like, emotional support when I was saying "I'm going to quit" I researched other jobs I can do with my credential or with my Bachelors and the principal was like "Toughen up sweetie" and I was like...okay I better go put my big girl panties on and relax. But I need that you know. The fact for the principal to be like, still believe in me instead of "Maybe this isn't for you." The principal was like "No, you just need to toughen up and you'll be fine." Same with this year with the principal. Or last year, the constructive criticism that would help. The principal would be like "Try this" and the principal would be like, your lesson was great, but try these four-square math things to get that collaborative math piece in. This year, the principal came into view my lesson, and the principal was like "I like how you have pictures of your class up." I have pictures up like how Ron Clark does. (Participant #3, Lines 321-331)

A new teacher who is unsupported will often feel intimidated enough to change careers due to the significant stress a new teacher is under (Cochran-Smith, 2004; Darling-Hammond, 2013; Raine, 2005). The administrator knew what Participant #3 needed to hear when Participant #3 was struggling with the difficulties of teaching. Participant #3 indicated this is what she needed to be successful, but this advice suggests the principal also knew what Participant #3 needed at this time. Participant #3 also shared how she felt she could be better supported by administration if her time was more respected.

My time could have been better used for the kids, for homework, or for whatever I need to do for my classroom. It's just really respect our time, and make things as easy as possible for us. Which sounds like you're catering, like wipe our butts for us, but honestly, I'm out here hustling to thirty other people for six hours. Being pulled in that many directions I do need you to wipe my ass a few times. You know what I'm saying though? It's a lot, and sometimes I just need them [administration] to not forget how it is in there [the classroom] and don't waste my time. Because I have places to be, people to see, copies to make, and printers to fix and home. (Participant #3, Lines 346-353)

The support Participant #3 wanted from administration was to respect her time, and to remember what it was like to be inside of the classroom. The needs and demands a classroom brings is something she felt administration often forgot. McCann and Johannessen (2004) argue that new teachers are learning the curriculum, formal observations, new professional relationships, lesson plans, classroom management and even arranging the furniture in their classrooms. Participant #3 felt as though having these new responsibilities are lost on her administration.

In contrast to Participants #1, #3, and #4, Participant #2 felt as though support from administration came in the form of formal observations and communication about student behavior. Participant #3 gave an example of what kind of support she felt administration should offer:

I feel like the administrators are supposed to be more supportive. Especially in hiring a new teacher. Like "Is everything okay? Do you need any additional resources? Maybe we could sign you up for these trainings" and I don't really know if that is something I am

supposed to initiate on my own. Like, ask about any trainings that are available? Is there any support that could be offered, like “Are you doing okay? How is it going your first or second year teaching? Or first year at this school.” (Participant #2, Lines #225-230)

Participant #2 expressed frustration in seeing the principal only when she had a formal observation and when she went to the principal’s office to make an inquiry,

Besides the evaluations, like the formal observations, I’ve come into my principal’s office for some concerns, like attendance concerns about students. But other than that, no, no direct support, not really. But from the assistant principal, we do communicate more because I do send some students to the assistant principal, and the assistant principal communicates the problems and then we collaborate to see if there is a system that will work for that student. (Participant #2, Lines 245-249).

Outside of formal observations, as well as communication about student behaviors with the assistant principal, Participant #2 did not feel as though she was receiving direct support from administration.

At School #1, Participants #1-4 had varying views of how they were supported or unsupported by their administration. Participant #1 indicated she felt supported by her administrator, and shared multiple ways in which this benefited her. Participants #2-4 all indicated ways in which they felt supported by their administrator, and ways in which they wanted to be better supported by their administrator. All four participants clearly indicated they appreciated the support they did receive or clearly indicated the support they wanted to receive. At School #1, participants’ experiences signify that first-year teachers need support from administration in order to be more successful in the classroom.

School #2. Participants at School #2 had a significantly different experience with their administration than that of School #1. The experiences of Participant #5 and #6 indicate a school culture of fear among the teachers. According to Participants #5 and #6’s interviews and shared experiences, first-year teachers are unaware of how to navigate the unwritten rules of the campus due to experienced teachers being scared of repercussions and of being on the “hit-list.”

I think that there is a weird thing, when...you don't kiss your boss' butt you respect them. You just do your job. You do it well. You're not buddy buddy with them. You don't cross that boundary. You do your job the best you can, and if you screw up then you need to know. You definitely need to know right away. Like, "What don't you like about this?" I felt like, the principal did not go and say, "Hey this is what you're doing wrong and this is how you fix it." Then that was a problem I had. I felt like, if they had come and said, "These are the problems, this is how you fix it" instead of being like...let me kiss your butt. Be your buddy. I would see teachers like hanging out with the principal or whatever. Having lunch or whatever. I think that those people definitely did not get targeted. The ones who were [targeted] they just did their teacher job and went home or whatever instead of go and be the principal's best friend after school. The principal didn't like those teachers [the teachers who did not hangout].

My principal didn't like me. Being that I didn't know what was going on [unwritten rules] and all the issues with the one student really kicked my butt at the beginning of the year, the principal didn't support me. I don't really understand it to be honest. You've got to play the game in this district. Now I've missed the boat because I didn't know about that stuff. That's the kind of thing we need to know as new teachers, brand new teacher, brand new school. Me having to hop around to all these schools because of [family situation] so then I moved. Me moving around this much, you don't know about this kind of...you know as a new teacher at a new school with a new community. This is a different type of job. How do you brown nose? How do you play the game? Like sitting down in the breakroom at lunch and like chatting everyone up, and being all smiley sun shining face? that was not me this year, that was not me. I had so much stuff going on in my personal life, the last thing I wanted to do was sit there and rub my face in shit. And that's why, that's exactly why. The principal did not like me. The principal just had it; the principal did not like me.

What really upsets me, is the principal has done this to so many people. It's just, so disappointing to know, and all these other teachers. They keep their mouth shut. They don't help you at all. Probably because they don't want to be the next one [on the hit-list]. They're scared. They don't want to be on the hit-list. (Participant #5, Lines 444-478)

Participant #5 felt she was on what she referred to as the principal's hit list. A behavior situation happened with Participant #5's student in which the principal belittled the participant in front of her students.

There was one time where the student ran off. I had the rest of the class with me, the student had run off around the school and I was on my way to the classroom with all of my students. So, once I got all the students in the classroom, I don't have a walkie, so I was calling the office and what do you know there is my principal with the student and the principal goes "Why did you let the student run off? How come you didn't supervise the student?" and the principal was literally really upset with me. Like I had let the student run off and run around the school. I said "I was just calling the office right now"

and I had told the principal the whole situation with an entire class of students. What was I going to do, run after the one student, and leave the rest of my class?

So, I don't know, some of those things, those situations, where I was like what do I do in this situation and how do I handle this? I felt I did the best that I could. Sometimes, I feel like, you know, at that moment when the principal was...not yelling at me but berating me for not doing what she thought was good job of handling the situation. (Participant #5, Lines 215-226)

As a new teacher, Participant #5 was searching for what to do in a tough situation with a student with behavior problems, and she wanted feedback from the principal; however, Participant #5 felt as though she was not heard or understood. Additionally, Participant #5 shared an experience of when she asked for help from the assistant principal: "I asked my assistant principal if they would come and teach a lesson so I could watch, but the assistant principal never got around to doing that" (Participant #5, Lines 421-422). Participant #5 shared an example of the culture of the school in regards to feeling unsupported by the administration.

There has been a lot of problems at this school with a lot of different teachers. One of them, I know one of them has gone to [Teachers Union]. I know that the principal got slammed. Other teachers finally started coming up to me and talking to me about the problems they've had with the principal.

Like I said, there is this little secret thing going on and I didn't know about it. So, yeah, the principal could have done a better job. (Participant #5, Lines 404-411)

The unsupported culture of School #2 also was present in the staff members as, indicated by

Participant #5:

One of the janitors at my school told me all the shit he has to go through with the principal. The principal made the janitor, like one day somebody spread poop all over the bathroom. The janitor had to go clean it up, it [the poop] was on the janitor's clothes and the janitor asked the principal if the janitor could go home and change and the principal said no. The principal said no you can't. It just pisses me off (Participant #5, Lines 482-486)

Lastly, Participant #5 shared her thoughts on why the school's culture continues in a similar fashion: "Most of the teachers are scared of the principal, like to be on the principal's bad side. I

think that is the reason why the teachers are closed mouthed. They don't want to be next.

Everyone is quiet about it because they don't want to be next" (Participant #5, Lines 504-506).

Participant #6 shared an experience from her first year when she sought out support from the principal at School #2 with a severe behavior issue she was having with a student the first few weeks of school.

I went to the principal to ask for help, I was begging for help. The principal said we should talk to the assistant principal together, and I was excited. I feel guilty about it now, but I was excited to get help. When we went into the assistant principal's office and the principal told the assistant principal I need more help with this student.

In front of me, the principal began like, ragging on the assistant principal in front of me. The principal was blaming the assistant principal for not doing more and not helping. The principal then turned to me, and reminded me of an interview question I was asked, and I was shocked. The principal was telling me that I was hired because of this. The principal was acting like the behaviors that were happening in my classroom were normal, or just like simple defiance. This was beyond what I ever expected inside of the classroom. I'm still shocked at how the principal spoke to the assistant principal and me. This was my first year, and I didn't know what to do. I needed help. (Participant #6, Lines 51-62)

As a first-year teacher, Participant #6 was in the process of learning how to be a teacher, and was seeking support from administration. The principal's response of how to handle the student's behavior was not something Participant #6 shared, but how the participant and the assistant principal were treated was what the participant chose to be most important in that experience. Both Participants #5 and #6 had experiences in which they felt they were not supported with student behavior, and as new teachers as well. Each provided experiences where they were belittled in front of their students or the assistant principal. Participant #6 indicated that she did not seek out help from the principal after the first experience.

I'm not sure I receive any support from my principal. Like, I haven't really seen my principal in the classroom, like...ever. Maybe for evaluations, but even then, the feedback was like meaningless. Dumb stuff, I could tell you my first-year, like nothing remotely useful. I don't really see the principal really like interact with the students besides when like they have to for...behavior? The principal is always talking about like all the work they are doing, but when I look around...I'm like what? Anything I've really

asked for I've gotten "It's too much work" or responses like that. How am I supposed to grow and stuff if it's too much work?

To be honest, I haven't like asked for any other support. What's the point? I'm always told to go to someone else. So, I just go to someone else and ask other teachers when I can. I think the principal is just too busy with whatever else they are working on. I don't think the principal has empathy for the students and is so far removed that I don't know if the students actually know who the principal is. (Participant #6, Lines 235-247)

Both participants at School #2 shared similar experiences of working with administration. At School #1, three of the participants shared instances where they felt as though they wanted more support from their administration, and Participant #1 felt as though she received an appropriate amount of support. In contrast, School #2 participants shared experiences of feeling attacked and belittled by their administration. Participants at School #2 expressed that they wanted administration to support them and both had sought out help from administration; however, Participants #5 and #6 did not receive the support they were seeking.

Conclusion

Throughout the interviews with participants from Schools #1 and #2, each participant shared three significant pieces: (1) a mentor, (2) peer support, and (3) administrative support, which each participant felt would have helped them succeed in their first year of teaching, as shown in Figure 1. Participant #1 was the one participant who shared that she had all three supports in her second and third year of teaching. She worked at School #2 her first year, but only shared that the school culture was not as welcoming as School #1. Each of the other five participants shared either having none of the above supports or one or two. Every participant wanted one of the three supports—a mentor, peer support or administrative support—if they were not receiving them.

New Teachers' Feelings

Throughout each of the six participants' interviews, the same five feelings were expressed. All participants expressed feelings of surviving/drowning, fulfilling, stressful, exhausting and overwhelming in respect to their first year. Participant #3 gave an insightful description of being a first-year teacher.

First year was, like, a tornado that you can't escape from. You're just in it. Like the entire time. It's almost like a hurricane, you're in the eye of the storm, where you are calm, but everything around you is being ripped apart at the seams. That's kind of like how my first year felt. Like, sometimes you get a grip, but most of the time I don't know. It's like you have no idea the scope and sequence, you have no idea the curriculum, you have no idea, how do you even do your job. And every day I would question like, "Who let me come in here?" (Participant #3, Lines 35-40)

Who let me, this human that I am, come into this room and take care of thirty plus children, thirty-five last year? So, who let me? That's how I felt my whole entire first year, am I even qualified to do this? And like, we did make some waves. I had some kids jump huge bands on their testing, but still, overall, like, it was really hard. And like, you think "It's all about decorating my class" or "Making it, so I know all my lessons are planned" but it's really straight up here [School #1], about classroom management. (Participant #3, Lines 45-50)

Participant #3 captured the conceptual map of Figure 2 in her description of her first year of teaching. From the participants' experiences they shared in their interviews, each had stories of the difficulties and feelings they experienced in their first-year of teaching. Headden (2014) argues that the responsibility of classroom management is one of the more difficult areas a new teacher will need to master. In addition, classroom management is more imperative in urban schools in order to maintain learning environment that is positive for students (Milner & Tenore, 2010).

Figure 2: Conceptual map of New Teachers Feelings built from axial coding (Saldana, 2015) and how their feelings evolved their teaching.

Self-Reflection

Each participant throughout this study shared moments where they had self-reflecting on their teaching, classroom management, or their relationships with their students. Every participant had a story in which they were able to make a positive change in their classroom after reflecting on what was happening with their teaching practice.

Participant #1 shared, “It was, pretty, rough. I feel like, the training, [teacher preparation program] I don’t feel like I was trained really well for what I was thrown into” (Participant #1, Lines 41-42). Participant #1 also shared, “I wasn’t prepared to go home at, you know, four o’clock, five o’clock exhausted. Like I literally have to lay down after being with them [students] in the beginning of the year” (Participant #1, Lines 89-91). As Participant #1 began to feel exhausted, she self-reflecting on what she needed to be a better teacher: “I’ve gotten permission to go and observe other classes and even other schools. That has been super helpful. So just more

time to see, I feel like I learn best from the people that are doing the job” (Participant #1, Lines 71-72). Participant #1 shared she does well when observing other teachers in their practice, and felt as though she could better her teaching through these observations.

Participant #2 described her first-year experience as surviving.

I was more focused on just like surviving and meeting deadlines and just trying to do well in case anybody ever walked in. I wanted to seem perfect all the time, but as a first-year teacher like that doesn’t really happen. Like it’s okay to not be perfect, and I’m realizing that...daily. (Participant #2, Lines 59-62)

As Participant #2 shared her experiences in her first-year of teaching, she also began to share how she was self-reflecting on her practices.

I feel like I could do a lot of research on my own. I mean, I tried to, but you know with working there’s planning, and there is only so much that I can do. But I feel like if, I attended more professional development opportunities, more trainings, online courses, something like that could help me. (Participant #2, Lines 83-86)

Through reflection, Participant #2 understood that she was unable to learn through merely researching, but needs more training to be a better teacher.

Participant #2 used self-reflection through BTSA and her BTSA coach to understand the needs of her own classroom. These experiences helped Participant #2 become more successful in student behaviors and understanding classroom management.

I have my coach who is a third-grade teacher, and she is very supportive. We exchange resources, and like I said she provides a lot of support in my classroom. So, she will see me teach, and based on her observations she will provide me feedback that I may use, or may not use. Then I will observe her as well. I have gone twice to observe her. So sometimes I see, I see she has a token economy in her classroom. So just little incentives like that, classroom management that I have learned from her. I have taken some ideas from her too. (Participant #2, Lines 277-283)

Participant #2 used the feedback she receives from her BTSA Coach to reflect on her classroom and learned strategies of classroom management. As a new teacher, Participant #2 used the feelings of surviving to self-reflect on her practices inside of the classroom.

As previously stated, Participant #3 described her first year inside of the classroom as a tornado she could not escape from where she questioned her ability to be a teacher, as well as her ability to be in charge of thirty-five children. Participant #3's self-reflection of her first year's emotions led to what she found most difficult.

What I found to be most difficult, first, would be classroom management, because it's not really about like, it's about the kids and knowing them, and building that relationship and I just didn't know that yet. Second, would be like planning ahead. I could plan for my week, but I could never get ahead. Especially because I was hired a week before school started, so I was just like "Okay" basically survival mode all year. So, classroom management and planning ahead. (Participant #3, Lines 57-62)

Using self-reflection, Participant #3 understood that in order to be more effective in her classroom, she needed to work on her classroom management, and additionally, Participant #3 shared that in order to have positive classroom management, she need to have positive relationships with her students. Another example Participant #3 shared of using her feelings of being tired to motivate her to build better relationships.

I think because I just really tried hard all year. Like I tried every avenue of every option. All I did all year was just research all these different strategies, try that one, it failed and then moved onto the next cause I kept trying and didn't give up. Or become complacent or just keep like butting my head into the wall trying the same thing that I was able to like break through with some of them [students]. Then have those good relationships, and um like better, better vibes in my classroom. (Participant #3, Lines 155-160)

Participant #3 also shared what she found helpful about BTSA "There was a piece of value, and it was the reflection piece. Yes, I do value thinking about my practices, and reflecting on them. Seeing what worked and what didn't work, and how I've grown" (Participant #3, Lines 375-377). Figure 2 indicates that Participant #3 experienced feelings of drowning and used self-reflections on her teaching practice, thereby understanding that she needed to make relationships with her students to be more effective in her classroom management.

Participant #4 described her first year of teaching in reflection of her current year of teaching.

This is my first year take two, and it was entirely different than my first year take one. Just because, I'm sure it's like that for everyone though, even without all the stressful things that happened. I mean, next year is going to be better than this year. It's just like you, I don't know. I've learned so many things, like I'm going to look back and go "Oh my God, what did I do to those kids on year one? and those kids in year two?" and now I'm so much better. Now I'm looking at it, and I'm like...I could have done this better, and I couldn't have done this better, but I can do better next year, because I can do better now because I know something completely different. This year was better and I think every year will be better because I'm going to know things, I didn't have a clue about. (Participant #4, Lines 45-53)

Through Participant #4's experiences in her first year of teaching, she was able to reflect on her teaching practices and look at what she wants to improve and do differently. Participant #4 was clear that she will grow each year and do better for her students each year. In addition to self-reflecting, Participant #4 shared an example of how making positive relationships with her students helped her students to learn.

Just dealing with the issues of the kids would be the hardest thing, the teaching part, yeah that's...I'm sure at other schools they're not focused on that part like we are here. But that sort of overshadows everything, which is kind of, I don't know. I guess it's not really fair to the kids who don't have behavior issues, but then you can't really teach anyone until you look on that. No one will be listening to you anyways. Which is 100% true, and kind of what happened with one of my students. This student wasn't doing a single assignment at the beginning, and I really thought like it must be like he needed to be tested. There was an issue, but it wasn't that at all, it's like once we connected and that part changed. I'm not saying that it ended up being fabulous. But the difference from the beginning of the year to now. Then this student would do work, we could have a conversation and this student was walking while holding my hand. Not throwing stuff at me. It definitely made a difference and this student could learn at that point. This student was learning, doing work, it's just so unfortunate that it takes so many months to get to that point. (Participant #4, Lines 67-80)

Looking at this student's behavior, Participant #4 saw more than what the student was doing, and chose to build a relationship with the student. In doing so, she was able to teach this student who had previously thrown items at her in the beginning of the year.

Participant #5 was able to use her feelings of stress and exhaustion to self-reflect on how to better serve her students without the assistance of a mentor, peers or administration. The first year of teaching for Participant #5 was as an intern; therefore, she did not have the student teaching experience to draw from.

Technically my first-year was as an intern. That was really hard because I didn't have that student teacher experience, so it was really difficult to be a teacher when I didn't have anyone to follow or to lead.

I think that the most challenging thing I encountered was classroom management. That was really hard, especially with a class full of 23 kindergarteners by myself. So, trying to figure out that classroom management was really hard, and it was a PBIS (Positive Behavior Intervention Systems) school so there was a lot of restrictions on how you managed the classroom.

I finally figured out a system, a method and it mostly involved tangible rewards. Which also worked at the fifth-grade level too. So, I came up with the Classroom Dojo point system. So, for the kindergarteners, they would earn points during the week and then they would get to cash them in. For the fifth graders I had a little punch card, and especially at that school because those kids are so poor, they don't get rewards, and they don't, you know they really loved the fact that they could earn rewards for their behavior, for turning in homework and things like that. That was really effective for them. (Participant #5, Lines 39-51)

Without the support of a mentor or the experience of student teaching, Participant #5 was able to self-reflect on what her students needed in kindergarten and effectively build a classroom management system catered to their needs. Participant #5 changed pieces of her classroom management to meet the needs of the fifth-grade class she had in her second-year of teaching. Without support, Participant #5 was able to make changes through merely her own self-reflection for each class of students she taught through her experiences. In addition to self-reflecting on classroom management, Participant #5 shared how she builds relationships with her students.

I build that relationship at the beginning. Making sure that I listen to them, and was someone who could see beyond just the standards, you know? [I] know what my students needed, because of that, I knew them and we had set that relationship early in the year. Knowing how to give them the right tools. (Participant #5, Lines 307-311).

Participant #5 found it effective to see her students and build relationships with them. Due to building relationships, Participant #5 was able to understand what students needed in her classroom.

Participant #6 shared an experience of having a tough student entering into her classroom on the second day of school during her first year of teaching.

My first year I was very motivated and excited...it changed quickly. It was super...uh challenging. The second day of school I got a new student and it turned into...I don't even know. The student refused to listen. The student just would not listen, no rules were going to work for this student. The student was not speaking and would leave the classroom constantly. Most of the first day the student would stand by the door or run out of the class. I was shook. I tried all the strategies I knew, but I just didn't know very much yet. I asked the principal for help, and I was told other strategies to help. I kept trying, and trying, but I just couldn't figure it out. Even using what I was told to do. (Participant #6, Lines 35-42)

Through this experience, Participant #6 didn't have the opportunity to attempt to build a relationship with this student, but shared the importance of relationship building.

I think I had this great master teacher who showed me so much about students and not the academics. She would always like say anyone can teach a lesson, but the students won't learn if they don't care about who is teaching them.

Being a part of that classroom and like having the ability to learn about students, and who they were beyond how to teach them was worth more than any experiences that I had like learned in the credential program. It almost felt like busy work the credential program, now that I look back. It was like...there, and I get it, but after student teaching, I learned more than like the academics. I learned, I guess about the kids. (Participant #6, Lines 124-131)

Participant #6 shared that she had limited peer support at School #2, no mentor, and felt as though she had no administrative support, but through this experience shared, she was able to learn how to build relationships with students in her own classroom. In another story Participant #6 shared, she was able to self-reflect on her own actions with a student in her classroom.

A great kid came into class one day, and I'm not going to lie, I was not in the mood that day. [The student] totally started in right away giving me attitude. So, I called my friend and asked if the student could go to their classroom.

This teacher is known to be a fair hard ass. The kid goes over there, and like ten minutes later the teacher calls me and tells me the student didn't get breakfast and was hungry. The teacher gave the student an apple that the student ate. This teacher also believes if a student is hungry, they will eat a piece of fruit...not a sugary cereal bar.

I felt like the worst person alive. Why didn't I ask if the student was hungry? It didn't occur to me; I was also grumpy that day. When the student returned, I was able to chat with the student and tell them next time to talk to me instead of having an attitude.

I did like how the other teacher handled it though, they figured out the student was hungry, but also, that teacher had the student reflect on how to better handle the situation in the future. So, I felt like not only did the student learn that they will not go hungry at school, they know to talk to the teacher about being hungry. The teacher also talked to me about it, and I was like, ok I can ask next time. (Participant #6, Lines 188-202)

Participant #6 was not just able to self-reflect on the experience she had with this student, but she also questioned her actions because of the mood she was in. By understanding how Participant #6's peer handled a behavior situation with one of Participant #6's students, Participant #6 was able to learn how to better handle situations like it in the future. Using Figure 2, Participant #6 used her feelings to self-reflect and better her relationship with a student and the behavior that student exhibited within her classroom.

Want for Additional Training

Participants #1 and #4 indicated a want for more training, or trainings they had attended throughout their year. Participant #2 shared that she self-reflects on how she could do the research herself as stated in the Self-Reflection section, but she also needed more trainings. Participant #2 indicated she would have wanted more training, but she did not know where to go to find these trainings.

Participant #1 sought out additional trainings: "They have a lot of good trainings and I just noticed. I was thinking about going to" (Participant #1, Lines 125-126). As Participant #1

began feeling overwhelmed and exhausted, it also allowed her to seek out support, which allowed her to become more successful.

Participant #4 also shared the need for more training in reference to social and emotional needs of students: “Everything I was told about one of my students about how this student was being so mean to me, and I had no idea that RAD [Reactive Attention Disorder] was even a thing. I mean I went to one day of training and that was really good” (Participant #4, Lines 86-88). Given that Participant #4 is a second-year teacher and has never worked with a student who has a disability of this sort, she needed the extra training she received to work with this student more effectively. Figure 2 indicates a New Teacher is driven by their feelings of stress, overwhelming, and drowning, which leads them to seek information about how to be a better teacher.

Participants all indicated their lack of knowledge in areas, but many did not know how to navigate their campus or administration in order to sign up for trainings they could have benefited from in their first years of teaching.

Privilege/White Privilege and Teachers with Children

Participants within this study noted the privilege their children have in school and at home in comparison to the students that they teach in many different ways. Participants #1, #4, #5 and #6 shared feelings of empathy and/or sympathy for the students they work with daily. Participant #1 shared the emotional drain of being poor, and recognized how much stress her students’ parents are under by stating “They don’t have the supplies at home, a lot of parents are working a lot. Being poor, because I’ve been poor before, it’s emotionally draining. I think my parents are emotionally drained. That takes a toll on their kids because they’re not there for them how they need to be and it’s sad” (Participant #1, Lines 218-221).

In addition to the extra stress parents are facing, Participant #1 compares the privilege her son has to that of the students in her classroom “It just makes their job, as a student harder. They have to work a little bit harder. They start off kindergarten a little bit further behind than, let’s say, at [school Participant #1’s son goes to that is not Title I]” (Participant #1, Lines 233-235). Students’ behavior inside of the classroom was an issue Participant #4 faced throughout her first and second years of teaching, and she was able to acknowledge the privilege her children have in comparison to that of her students: “My kids don’t have issues like this, so I don’t have any knowledge about it” (Participant #4, Lines 85-86). One issue Participant #4 spoke of was being unable to know when to call Child Protective Services (CPS) for a student due to her privilege. Therefore, Participant #4 explained:

I mean, they don’t have a choice [poverty versus neglect]. That’s what they have, they make the best choice in the choices they have. I heard someone say that the other day and it struck a chord with me. Not everyone has the same choices, they have to make a choice with what they are given, and that is something I have to keep in my head. (Participant #4, Lines 108-111)

Participant #4 reflected on the differences of her experiences, and empathized with families who do not have the same choices she has due to her privilege. By reflecting on this statement Participant #4 heard, she didn’t just recognize her privilege, she chose to understand how someone from a low-income family lives.

The participant who questioned their privilege throughout the interview the most was Participant #5. Within the interview Participant #5 shared her privilege growing up, and acknowledged her students are doing the best they can in their living situations.

I grew up in [predominately white town] in a huge house. I mean I’m not lying; our house was like a mansion. It’s huge to these other kids, especially in the fifth-grade school. Those kids are just so underprivileged. They don’t have anything. It’s just crazy to see where they are coming from and all the stuff they have to deal with.

One of the kids this year [kindergarten] the student's attendance was really low, and come to find out that no one could walk her to school. This little kindergartener, and I'm thinking so she's at home alone, by herself because the student's mom has to work, the student has like four brothers and sisters that are older, and the student's sister basically takes care of the student. The sister takes care of the student and walks the student to and from school if she can. But then if she can't do it that day then my student stays home alone. Five years old. It shocked me; it blew me away when I found that out. Just how? Coming from a privileged family, my mom drove me to and from school or I took the bus, and in this district, families have to pay for buses, how are families supposed to do that if they can't afford food?

I never had to deal with that before. We had free bus service and getting meals. I never had to worry about a meal during the weekends. I never had to worry about that. Where am I going to get my meal? Where am I going to get breakfast, and it's, it is hard for me to empathize, because I just never...had to worry about that. (Participant #5, Lines 110-126)

Participant #5 was shocked to find out her student was staying home alone when she was unable to make it to school, but instead of blaming the parent, Participant #5 asked interesting questions. By asking why does bussing cost families who are struggling to feed their children, Participant #5 is looking at the oppressive system. In contrast, Participant #6 sees the differences between her students and her own son.

Students are from low-socioeconomics. Like a lot of them are in government housing and many just have it so tough. They need food on the weekends, and like snacks after school. It's so hard to think that they don't have food. Beyond like...there is food but they don't cook it or want it. I think that like some of them just don't have food. It's hard to imagine like my kid worrying about not having food to eat. He like, gets upset if we don't have the snacks he likes let alone food. I just...it's hard to think about. It was very eye-opening working with this population. (Participant #6, Lines 156-162)

Participants who had their own children could see the difference in their students' lives and that of their own child. Only Participant #5 questioned her own privilege, but Participant #4 began to understand her privilege when she internalized that families that are low-income make the best choices they can with the choices they have. Participant #6 recognized that her students at times do not know where their meals will come from, while her own child is not only privileged in

never having to worry about not having food, but has the ability to choose his food. The contrast between these participants and Participants #2 and #3 can be subtle.

Participants #1, #4, #5 and #6 were closer to understanding their privilege through their interview answers, while Participants #2 and #3 displayed more feelings of worry and pity for the students they teach. The feelings that Participants #2 and #3 shared did not address their privilege or the privilege of students who are from affluent homes, but they were aware of the income disparities.

I know, half, to the majority of my class is lower income. When they are eligible for free lunch, so I know that, that means that they're like almost basically lower economic status. So, I know that means that there are a lot of parents that work multiple jobs. Maybe that's because some parents don't work, so these kids come from all kinds of different backgrounds that I know of. That it's lower socioeconomic background and that could mean, you know different things. (Participant #2, Lines 163-168)

Participant #2 is aware that her students' parents need to work additional hours to make ends meet; however, Participant #2 does not have the experience or knowledge to have the ability to empathize with her students from low-income families. The understanding of poverty Participant #2 has of her students is somewhat superficial based on her interview answers.

Some parents work and they actually, when the parents came in for their conferences they told me "oh I work night shift so when they come home from school I'm tired and I can't help them with their homework" or "Me and their dad work all day and all night. We don't have the support at home to support them" so they come from different backgrounds, whether that be the parents are just, you know maybe uneducated, or maybe don't help, or maybe don't have time to help, or maybe are busy doing other things. They aren't getting the support they need at home. Majority of them (aren't getting support) for whatever reason that may be, and that does show in the classroom. (Participant #2, Lines 176-183)

Within this example shared by Participant #2, she understands parents are unable to support their child academically due to their work schedule, and she states that students' progress is affected in these circumstances. Participant #2 is seeing how low-income families do not have the same opportunities as those of more affluent families as Participant #1 shared. Participant #3 sees how

her students are affected behaviorally by their home life as she shared an experience with a student.

I know, like, when we build our relationship, they share things about their life, and I'll go "he's acting crazy today, but I know he was at his dad's where they're sharing a one bedroom, in someone else's home. It's him and a brand-new baby, and the dad who he said drinks a lot, and the mom and them" and then I think "You're acting crazy because your house is crazy" and I'm like okay. So, like let's try and work on that. Yeah, it's definitely way better. Last year I was just like more of like a yelling, or a it's my way or the highway type of deal, and I don't care what's going on in your life. Well I don't even know; I was just kind of like ignorant to it. So, yeah this year is just like so much better because of the relationships. They want to tell me more too, and it's because I'm softer, more open. "Alright, tell me what's happening, we've all been there." Poor babies. (Participant #3, Lines 119-129)

Participant #3 questioned a student's behavior due to their home environment, and what that student is going through. In addition, Participant #3, sees the connection to behavior, but is unable to empathize with the student's reality, but is able to sympathize or has pity for the student's living situation. Participant #3 also shares how she feels about her teaching position.

I feel like, almost, like my job is a little bit more treasured not by, maybe not by parents or society but for myself, and I've been watching this show. Have you seen The Good Place on Netflix? Well, she goes to heaven on accident. Then they are going over the things, and I'm like no, I'm a teacher, and I'm out here in the trenches with these kids who need me the most, and it's almost makes this position feel a little be more special than like a position at a high-income school. Those students don't need their teachers like these students need us. I feel like that one day, it will become a lot for me, like a teacher last year. A teacher had to leave and she had a whole family, and she was trying to save the world for so long and it just drains you. I could see that. But right now, it feels way more special. Last year I was ready to transfer, and by the end of the year as soon as I'm like...February comes, I'm transferring. I'm ready. I can't do this. These kids aren't for me, and this year I'm like "OMG, I can't wait, I hope I stay in fourth-grade forever, I love my space, my kids, my team." I'm content. Until I get you know, another crazy year. My kids are still crazy, but I don't know. I just like, I just love them. (Participant #3, Lines 226-238)

Throughout this experience Participant #3 acknowledge students at Title I schools need more from their teachers than at a more affluent school, but she nearly idolizes herself for the work she

is doing with her students. Participant #3 has not quite acknowledged her privilege throughout her interview, but she is aware of the differences her students face.

Conclusion

Through each of the participants' interviews, they spoke of the many struggles students have within their classroom. The connection to the behavior issues students at Title I schools have due to their socioeconomic level was addressed within participants' interviews.

Low Socioeconomic Status Students

Each participant who participated in this study recognized the three difficulties many students from low income families face if certain needs are unmet. Three common phrases I coded were: (1) social emotional needs unmet, (2) basic needs unmet, and (3) trauma a student has witnessed or endured which was often the cause of student behavior. Research indicates that students from low-income families face feelings of low self-esteem, hopelessness, and helplessness (Brooks-Gunn & Duncan, 1997; Brown, 2009). In addition, low-income families generally work their hardest to provide what they can for their students; however, at times they are unable to meet all of their children's needs (Brooks-Gunn & Duncan, 1997; Cicchetti & Toth, 2005). Therefore, many of the students attending Title I schools may present behaviors inside of the classroom tracing to one of the three coded sub-themes.

Figure 3: Conceptual map of students from low socioeconomic families. Built from Axial Coding (Saldana, 2015) and the bigger picture identified by participants.

Figure 3 illustrates a conceptual map of students from low SES families. These students must be from a non-affluent family who may or may not support the student's needs. Participant #1 shares what supporting a student from a low-income family can look like: "They [low SES students] need a lot of support and they are not getting it at home. So, then you have to do a little extra in the classroom" (Participant #1, lines 198-199). Additionally, Participant #1 elaborates

They [low SES students] come in emotionally, not supported. So, you have to be, there for them emotionally. Teach them how to control their emotions, deal with them [emotions], they don't get that at home. Verbal, they don't get talked to a lot at home. So, in kindergarten it's important, you just have to, you're teaching them how to communicate. Talk, in almost all areas. Cause they don't get it at home. (Participant #1, Lines 203-207)

As kindergarteners are learning to communicate appropriately in the classroom, Participant #1 gives an example of what emotions students learn to communicate at the kindergarten age in

Title I schools.

They're [low SES students] not good at articulating what they want to say and telling someone. So, a lot of times their anger comes out like [imitating a young child growling in frustration] instead of "Wait, we can talk about that?" You know? They don't learn that. (Participant #1, Lines 211-214)

At a young age, students from low socioeconomic families need more support in academic areas as well as social emotional areas. Student tantrums at times come from not having the skills to communicate the feelings they have.

Participant #2 shared that in second grade, students are continuing to learn social and emotional skills inside of the classroom: “Students do not have in-home support where they can get those social and emotional skills, or practice them at least” (Participant #2, Lines 106-107).

In addition to the social emotional skills students are learning at a young age, Participant #2 indicated there is a need for more training in regards to student trauma.

We did a trauma training, and that was considered PBIS, and we need more like that. Like social emotional, and not just a few hours, maybe a three-day training. You know? Or like once a month or something, just to kind of remind us of all the things that we see. (Participant #2, Lines 153-155)

Participant #4 also indicated the difficulties of working with students with behaviors.

Dealing with behaviors. Trying not to take it personally, like the negative behaviors like...and just coming home feeling like “Gosh I’m putting in all my effort for that kid and like why are they taking it out on me? I’m here trying every day; your parents aren’t even here caring! I’m trying!” That’s the hardest thing. (Participant #4, Lines 63-66)

Participants indicated it was emotionally draining on themselves to work with behaviors they did not understand, and would at times react incorrectly to the situations they were facing in their classrooms. Participant #4 shared her reflection on how she responded to student trauma

behaviors after attending a training for student trauma.

They [A trauma training Participant #4 attended] tell you kids with trauma, and how to deal with it. Things you don’t even think of, and how, and I mean, I made so many mistakes like “Okay, just calm down, just calm down” and “Just stop” or “Don’t do that” and you just don’t...no one is going to be listening to me while they are throwing a fit and screaming. So, me trying to talk to them at that point, but I didn’t ever think of that. Getting information on how [to work with students with trauma]. Throwing someone into a situation, like the kids at this site, when you have no clue, and you’re a brand-new teacher. It’s difficult because you don’t know how to respond. Then you’re responding the wrong way and it is actually making it worse...not better. (Participant #4, Lines 89-96)

Participant #4 shared how she was making her students' behaviors worse due to not understanding the needs of her students who have suffered trauma. Without prior knowledge of what a student is going through and why they are behaving as they are, new teachers at Title I schools are seeing—many times, as Participant #4 indicates—that they are not helping the student, but making the behavior worse. Participant #6 also shared that she would have benefited from understanding better how to work with students who come from low-income families with behaviors.

I could have used help with how to like deal with students and their behaviors. It's not something I see at home with my kid and I don't think I even saw it growing up. It was shocking to see what was happening, and I didn't know if it was just me having this problem. I mean, it's hard to get support from students' families too. Like, getting someone to answer a phone call is so hard sometimes. I feel like I have to walk the student to dismissal to finally talk to someone and it's not even helpful sometimes. Then the same kids are like socking each other on the playground. We need help with some of these students. They need help, and I need help to learn how to work with them. And the things these kids see too. (Participant #6, Lines 143-151)

Students who suffer from trauma at Title I schools exhibit poor behaviors at times, but Participant #3-#6 shared a student's mentality in regards to their ability to learn under these circumstances. "I think it [low-income] effects maybe their mentality, on like, 'Is this stuff important when my mom isn't home for three-weeks because she was 5150ed. Why do I care about this stuff that you're doing' you know?" (Participant #3, Lines 242-244).

Participant #4 shares the mentality of her students from low-income families:

When they come to school and they are hungry, they're not listening to a thing I say. When they come to school and they are tired they don't care anything about what I'm saying. When they are worried about their mom who didn't answer the phone because she's in jail. They don't care a thing about what I'm saying. (Participant #4, Lines 224-227).

Participant #5 shares the trauma her student was suffering from, and how that affected the student in the classroom:

Remember at the Mexican border when they did all that, I can't remember, pepper spray or something and they closed it off? Well this student's dad had gotten stuck on the other side and couldn't get back over. So, this student was really worried. They had been down to Mexico, dad got stuck on that side, and they were down there just waiting to get him. This student was just really upset about that, and I didn't even know about it. What do you now, that's why this student was being nasty to everybody? This student was upset about what was going on at home, and was bringing that to school. (Participant #5, Lines 89-95)

Participant #6 shares how students enter the classroom without their basic needs met, and shares how she wonders what is happening at home to her students.

I have students who come to school and their most basic needs aren't met. Like, they didn't have breakfast, they didn't have dinner, they didn't get to sleep. What is happening at home? All these things effect if they're learning. Without these basic needs met, kids aren't learning. They don't care what I'm saying, they don't care if they are writing whatever sentence they're supposed to write. (Participant #6, Lines 182-187)

Students who are experiencing trauma, have social emotional needs, and do not have their basic needs met are at a disadvantage in the classroom, as indicated by participants' interviews.

Participant #6 shares the abilities of students from Title I schools despite the challenges they face.

I think that students in this school can achieve like anything they want, but then at the same time, they have so many more hurdles than students at other schools. It's like they have all these extra challenges to overcome that like students at high-income schools or like White students don't have to fight against. I just keep thinking of how difficult it is to get parents to be involved in their student's education and get their support, and then I hear at other schools that like their PTA is huge (Participant #6, Lines 166-171)

Each participant shared their interactions with students from low-income families and the many ways in which that affects their mentality in the classroom as well as their ability to work past what they are fighting against before entering the classroom daily.

Conclusion

The research questions this study sought to answer are: (1) What are first, second and third-year teacher experiences in a Title I, K-5 school? and (2) What struggles do these first,

second, and third-year teachers face both inside and outside of the classroom? The significance of this study was to learn what needs teachers have in order to work effectively with all students no matter the socioeconomic background. This phenomenological study found: (1) new teachers need a support system of a mentor, peers, and administration to be most successful in their first-year, (2) new teachers' feelings of being stressed, overwhelmed, and drowning lead them to reflect on their classroom practices to make positive changes in their practice, and (3) low SES students have additional needs that can be unmet due to their socioeconomic status that directly affect their behavior as well as their mentality while in school.

Chapter Five

Summary, Conclusions, and Implications for First-Year Teachers

Introduction

In this phenomenological study, I investigated the experiences of six first, second, and third-year White female teachers in Title I schools. The goal was to better understand what struggles new teachers face in Title I schools and how to best support them. Through interviews, participants shared their experiences about their beginning years of teaching in Title I schools. I built three conceptual maps by coding the participants' interview transcripts in Chapter Four. These three conceptual maps are helpful in presenting the phenomenon of first-year teachers' experiences in Title I schools.

The three conceptual maps represent the three main themes to emerge in axial coding (Saldana, 2015): (1) New teacher supports or desired supports, (2) New teachers' feelings, and (3) Low SES students. I developed these conceptual maps by focusing on the emerging themes from coding, while using critical race theory, intersectionality, and cultural capital lens.

I indicated that first-year teachers at Title I schools are in significant need of a mentor, peer support and administrative support through participant interviews; however, this is a far more apparent need for new teachers in Title I schools due to student needs, as illustrated in Figure 3. Additionally, the level of stressful feelings participants felt due to the elevated stress of a Title I school created an environment in which they were able to change their practices inside of the classroom through self-reflection.

Summary of Findings and Connection to Literature

Chapter Two explored research specific to Title I funding, designation of Title I, first-year teachers, low-income students, the achievement gap, and Anyon's (1980) hidden

curriculum. It also presented critical race theory, intersectionality, and Bourdieu's (1986) cultural capital as the theoretical lenses used for this study. The literature in relation to first-year teachers was not specific in the socioeconomic status of the schools the teachers were placed. With this study, the researcher sought to understand the lived experiences of teachers who are beginning their careers in Title I K-5 schools with a qualitative focus of phenomenology. To provide these teachers with a voice, the researcher wanted to hear each participants' story in the phenomena of working in Title I schools. Each participant had a distinctive story to share, with many different experiences specific to Title I schools; however, each participant shared similar themes of types of support, being overwhelmed, and their students' socioeconomic status. Through this study, I achieved a true snapshot into the lived experiences of new teachers in the stressful environment of a Title I school and therefore achieved the goal of the study.

Each participant shared their experiences of having support needed when working in a Title I school, or wanting more support (a mentor, peer support or administrative support). Whether a participant received all three pieces of support in their first-year at a Title I school or not, every participant wanted more support if all three were not present. The level of stress participants experienced with the least amount of support expressed the dire need for support from their peers on how to navigate through the unwritten rules of their new campus. In addition to support, each participant shared that they had many feelings of drowning, surviving, being overwhelmed, stressed, or exhausted due to the high stress environment of Title I schools, which led participants to self-reflect on their teaching practices. These overwhelming feelings led participants to self-reflect on what they could work on in their classroom, which led participants to their classroom management skills-building as well as relationships with their students. Participants with children of their own began to see their privilege based on what the students at

their school receive in comparison to the school of their own kids. These teachers were beginning to develop a sense of their privilege, as well as its intersectionality in relation to the identities of the students they teach at Title I schools. Additionally, teachers at Title I schools with children attending schools in the district had their own children attending higher income schools. Lastly, every participant expressed the difficulties of working with students from low-income families. All participants cared for their students and agreed that circumstances made it harder for the students. Each theme connects to the literature presented in Chapter Two, with their additional need for support in regards to the additional needs of students at Title I schools.

Low-Income Students at Title I Schools

Many students from low-income families who attend Title I schools come to school with needs unmet at home. Families from low-income households frequently work their hardest to meet the needs of their children, but at times are unable to provide for their children in the way they want to or are expected to by society (Brooks-Gunn & Duncan, 1997; Cicchetti & Toth, 2005). These low-income students often suffer from low self-esteem, hopelessness, and helplessness, which means they can face mental health issues before they arrive in their classroom (Brooks-Gunn & Duncan, 1997; Brown, 2009; Doll & Lyon, 1998; Wadsworth et al., 2008).

Each of the four schools invited to participate in this study had a Title I population percentage of 70% or higher. Of the two schools that responded, both had a Title I population in the 90th percentile. Therefore, the six participants within this study work with more than 90% of their students coming from low-income homes. When participants were asked “Do you believe the economic status of your students affects their ability to learn?” they shared the many ways in which students are able to learn, but their circumstances are stacked against them. They

expressed their students being able to accomplish anything, but they have to fight against coming into school behind others their age, as stated by Participant #1: “It just makes their job as a student harder. They have to work a little bit harder. They start off kindergarten a little bit further behind (Participant #1, Lines 233-234). It also makes the new teacher’s job just a little bit harder when they are learning to teach as well as learning the additional needs of their student population. In addition to starting school behind their peers from higher-income families, participants shared that their students from low-income families often do not have the same support at home from their parents. Participants shared their students’ mentality toward learning often was divided between the stress of their home life, and basic needs being unmet before coming to school.

Figure 3: Students needs being unmet can lead to behaviors.

Figure 3 indicates students who are labeled low socioeconomic status, who make up 90% of the population at Schools #1 and #2, that are exhibiting behaviors inside of the classroom can be linked to three possible reasons: (1) the student’s socioemotional needs unmet, (2) the student’s basic needs unmet, (3) trauma experienced by the student. I designed Figure 3 from participants’ interviews and their views on students at Title I schools. As seen in Figure 3, students at Title I schools who do not receive enough attention outside of the classroom will

come to the school looking for their teacher to fill that need they did not receive at home. This can look similar to a student consistently wanting to hold the teacher's hand, seeking out positive affirmations, or negative attention-seeking behavior. New teachers who do not carry the same cultural capital or experiences as their students from Title I schools do not have knowledge of what low-income students need. Therefore, new teachers at Title I schools will not understand that negative student behaviors can be linked to their social emotional needs. These teachers will seek out support from their peers, administration, and mentor; however, as indicated in this study, these supports are not always available to the teachers who need it most. Brown (2009) argued that students from low-income families will struggle with their self-esteem before entering the classroom along with their emotional needs not being met at home. Participant #1 shared that her students came in to her classroom unsupported emotionally, and how that affected how she had to learn to teach her students. Participant #1 shared that her students do not get talked to as much in their home, and she needs to try and make up for that in her classroom. This is something new teachers are not ready for when they enter the classroom.

Contrary to social emotional needs, students who do not have their basic human needs met at home will come to school looking for those needs to be met as seen in Figure 3. Blaustein (2013) stated students who are worried where their food will come from or who are worried if there is food at home will struggle to learn inside of the classroom. A student who has not received breakfast may exhibit a negative behavior and a teacher without experience will be unable to understand why their student is acting out; as Participant #6 shared, "I have students who come to school and their most basic needs aren't met. Like, they didn't have breakfast, they didn't have dinner, they didn't get to sleep" (Participant #6, Lines 182-183). Participant #6 is at School #2, where the both participants expressed being scared of being on the principals "hit-

list.” They are being asked to learn how to teach while learning to meet the needs of their low-income student population. Teachers at low-income Title I schools need administration that will guide them in their journey of learning how to teach, because in the end, the students at low-income schools need their teachers to be supported. The better supported the teacher is, the more supported the students in the classroom will be.

As shared in Chapter Four, Participant #6 shared a story about a student who was misbehaving in her class and she had sent the student out not understanding that the underlying reason for the behavior was that the student had not eaten breakfast. Had Participant #6 learned what to look for in behaviors, she would have been able to help her student instead of punish the student by sending them to another class. However, instead, since Participant #6 did not carry this knowledge, she focused on her own grumpy mood than the needs of the student that she did not understand. The most telling part of Participant #6’s story is how she acknowledged her gap of knowledge when she stated “Why didn’t I ask if the student was hungry? It didn’t occur to me” (Participant #6, Line 195). What if this gap of knowledge was addressed with trainings for teachers in their first years? Without training, or someone to explain to Participant #6 what was happening with her student, she did not carry the same experiences or cultural capital as her student to understand his needs (Bourdieu, 1986). Brown (2009) and Wadsworth et al. (2008) indicate that a lack of nutritional food leads to students’ inabilities to focus while in the classroom. Participant #4 shared a student’s mentality in the classroom when their basic needs are unmet before entering her classroom: “When they [students] come to school and they are hungry, they’re not listening to a thing I say” (Participant #4, 224-225). Support for Participant #4 could have gotten her to understand her students’ needs so she could have supported her students. Participant #4 touched on trauma students experience as well as students coming to

school without eating. Wadsworth et al. (2008) indicates that students face stress when they are faced with food uncertainty at home, which lowers a student's ability to concentrate in the classroom. The participants' students are unable to concentrate when they do not know where their food will come from outside of the lunch provided by the school.

Lastly, students who have experienced any type of trauma will bring these experiences with them to the classroom, where they will manifest in different types of behaviors, as noted in Figure 3. The needs of students not being met, often manifested in different manners, as the participants expressed in their interviews. Pettit and Arsiwalla (2008) argued that students from low-income families are more likely to develop behavior problems due to the stress of living in poverty. These students were needing more from their teachers than a new teacher was prepared to know. Participant #4 was in her second year of teaching and was able to attend a trauma training. She admitted that before this training, she was not responding to students' behaviors appropriately because she did not have the knowledge of how to handle it. With additional training, Participant #4 learned how to work with her students who were suffering from trauma, but she did not have this experience in her first year.

Christenson and West-Olatunji (2008) argue that the cultural gap between White teachers and students of color can hinder the teacher's understanding of trauma a student has experienced due to differing experiences through childhood. Participant #5 shared this story of why a student was acting out in her second year of teaching due to the student's father being held on the other side of the Mexican border. Without trauma training, Participant #5 still needed to be able to understand why a student was acting out in her class. Teachers at Title I schools are expected to understand students who come from a different cultural background and carry cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986). These new teachers are also expected to work with students suffering from

traumatic events at home without training or understanding. In addition, White female teachers have a completely different embodied capital they were raised with, and are unable to know a student is acting out due to a reason that may not occur to a teacher who has never experienced what their students have (Bourdieu, 1986; Christenson & West-Olatunji, 2008).

New Teachers at Title I Schools

Title I schools have a higher population of low-income students who often come to school with additional needs beyond the classroom setting (Brown, 2009). First-year teachers in Title I schools will be navigating their own struggles of learning how to teach and the additional needs of their low-income students. Kane, Rockoff and Staiger (2008) state that a teacher's first-year of teaching is predictably more challenging than the years that follow. Each of the six participants had different experiences through their first years of teaching; however, the results of this study indicate the phenomena of working at a Title I school in their first-year displayed similar experiences. Participant #3 shared, "I feel like you kind of just got to sink or swim your first-year" (Lines 66-67) and "[D]oing it on your own in your first year, like you know, I literally have no idea what I am doing" (Participant #3, Lines 70-71). First-year teachers are expected to perform all the functions of an experienced teacher in their first year (Raine, 2005); however, new teachers at a Title I schools are expected to meet these same expectations in addition to the high demands at a Title I school. Funding provided to Title I schools is based on the need to close the achievement gap in English Language Arts and Mathematics (Chen & Yu, 2016), yet new teachers are being asked to help close these gaps when teachers "Literally have no idea what I am doing" (Participant #3, Line 71).

Figure 2: What new teachers need, specifically at a Title I school.

As the participants in this study were beginning to understand the mentality and struggles students in their classroom face, they had to also begin to understand how to better work with their students. Figure 2 indicates that participants who began to understand their relationships with students, their classroom management, and their understanding of privilege helped to negate their stressful feelings in the classroom; however, well-supported teachers could have been trained to understand these aspects instead of figuring them out on their own.

Participant #3 shared what she found most difficult in her first year: “I found most difficult, gosh, well first would be classroom management. Um, because it’s not really about like, it’s about the kids and knowing them, and building that relationship and I just didn’t know that yet” (Participant #3, Lines 57-59) and “[I]t’s really straight up here [Title I School], about classroom management” (Participant #3, Lines 49-50). As participants began to understand that relationships with their students were effective, they began to learn the needs of their students. Supportive administration, peers, and a mentor could have guided these new teachers.

Additionally, consistent training throughout the year in these areas could have guided these new teachers.

Classroom management as a new teacher is difficult, but at a Title I school teachers need to build stronger relationships with their students due to the additional needs of their students. Evertson & Weinstein (2006) explain that the routines a teacher puts into place at the beginning of the school year can mean the difference between a disorderly classroom environment or an organized classroom that promotes student engagement. Each participant shared their self-reflection on their classroom management, which indicated that they struggled to implement positive routines from the beginning of the year. They had to use trial and error to develop the positive environment that Evertson and Weinstein (2006) describe. Classroom management is argued to be one of the most difficult skills to master (Headden, 2014), and as Participant #4 shared, it is the most important skill at a Title I school.

Support for New Teachers at Title I Schools

The responsibility of a new classroom is a shock to new teachers at any school (Veenman, 1984). Due to the shock first-year teachers face, the program BTSA was created to mentor new teachers and guide them through their first two-years of teaching. Participants shared the supports they had, or they wish they'd had, in their first and second year of teaching at a Title I school. These supports were a mentor, administrative support, and support from their peers at their school. The needs of students at Title I schools with a high population of low-income students indicate that new teachers at Title I schools need these supports to be successful in working with their students to close the achievement gap Title I funds aim to accomplish.

Participants at Schools #1 and School #2 shared the many ways in which their students have to work harder and face more challenges than students from higher-income families.

Participants even compared the needs of their own children to those of their students. The participants with their own children shared how they never worry about having food, they do not face trauma, and their children's experiences in school are much different from those of the students they teach. As indicated in Chapter Two, many of the students at Title I schools enter the classroom with more needs, and therefore new teachers are being asked to learn how to teach, as well as learning to meet the needs of their students.

Figure 1: First-year teachers need support from a mentor, administration and their peers.

Figure 1 indicates that participants at School #1 had at least one support available to them, while at School #2 the participants indicated limited to no support along with a school culture of fear. Both Schools #1 and #2 teachers need each of these three supports to feel supported in working with students their first years. However, a first-year teacher is expected to perform all of the duties of an experienced teacher (Raine, 2005), and the participants in this study were expected to do this along with the elevated needs of their student population. When participants were asked the question, “How could first year teachers at your school be supported

in a way that will help them succeed inside and outside of the classroom?” Participant #2 shared that merely the dialogue of being asked how she was doing would have been beneficial, or if there was anything she needed help with. Participant #2 felt as though she was not supported by her administration throughout her first years of teaching. Participant #3 shared that her team members were paramount in her success and learning to use self-care. In addition, Participant #3 shared that she didn’t know what could have helped, but since she did not receive more administrative and mentor support, she is unaware of what could have been more helpful to make it through her first year of teaching. Participant #4 shared that it would have been helpful to be partnered up with a more experienced teacher on campus to learn the unwritten rules of the campus. Understanding how the campus is run was very difficult for Participant #4 to get the hang of, and she was under the impression that she was supposed to know these things, so she had a hard time asking others for this information. Participant #5 felt as though any support in her classroom from a mentor, peer or administration would have been beneficial in her first year. It is at School #2—where teachers felt they were alone to figure out how to teach—that support of any type would have been welcomed. A poor school culture made it difficult for teachers to reach out to peers for help, administration was categorized as toxic by participants, and the district-assigned mentors were unavailable or unhelpful to their needs. It is at School #2 where the need of support for new teachers became even more clear. New teachers cannot be scared to contact their administration for fear of being on what was called the “hit-list”—it creates a toxic environment for teachers, but more importantly for the student population. Lastly, Participant #6 shared that she did not know who she could trust on campus, and it only hurt her students’ ability to learn more because she was not being supported in a way that would assist her students.

New teachers at Title I schools face so many more obstacles with their students than teachers from high income schools. Each participant felt they could have been more successful in their first year with some more support. These teachers need every support possible when working in a Title I school due to the needs of the students. Overall, when any support that is given to a new teacher, then the people that benefit most from this support are the students.

Implications of the Findings for Practice and Policy

This study provided an inside look into six White female teachers in the first three years of their teaching careers at Title I schools from a single school district. The participants shared their experiences in Title I schools which gave great descriptions of the level of difficulty that first, second, and third-year teachers face while learning to teach. These new teachers are being asked to address the needs of low-income students at Title I schools along being asked to learn to be a teacher. The following recommendations are based on the themes that developed from the participants' experiences in this study. In Chapter One, I described the significance of this study and its purpose, which is to: understand what a first-year teacher needs to be more successful at a Title I school, how new teachers can work with students better who carry more needs than their peers from higher-income schools, and to better understand how to support new teachers who do not share the same cultural capital as their students in Title I schools.

In teacher preparation programs, low-income students' needs are briefly addressed; however, Title I schools are rarely discussed at length. Additionally, within the teaching community, working with low-income students is often seen as self-sacrificing. What is not discussed is how Title I schools are often seen as a stepping stone to "better" schools or the great possibility of beginning a career in teaching at a high stress school environment that is seen within high Title I schools.

A recognition of the additional responsibilities of teachers at Title I schools, which often go unseen by administration, district leadership, and law makers, allow the achievement gap to widen. Also, recognizing differences in cultural capital and White privilege will help a new teacher as well as students at Title I schools. New teachers who are struggling significantly can be overlooked at high Title I schools due to the additional needs of students on campus. By using critical race theory, intersectionality, and cultural capital as a lens, leaders need to recognize the high-stress environment new teachers are being put in and discuss ways in which to better support new teachers along with experienced teachers. Administration, district leaders, and law makers must acknowledge the inequities for students who need more support and yet receive the most inexperienced teachers at a higher rate. Title I schools need to be considered the highest priority, and leaders need to stop using the budget to indicate they have done enough, personally and academically, for marginalized students.

For a school district to be successful in supporting new teachers at Title I schools, district leaders need to understand the environment of Title I schools. District leadership must acknowledge there is a lack of understanding from staff of socioeconomic differences and cultural differences between staff and students. This study suggests that districts need to either (1) address school culture, (2) design training programs to address (a) White privilege, (b) classroom management/student relationships, (c) trauma informed teaching training and/or (3) make Title I schools desirable for experienced teachers. Ways in which school culture can be addressed are:

- District leaders need to make an explicit effort to understand the culture of the schools under their leadership.

- District leaders must recognize when a school has poor culture and make an active effort to rectify damage poor school culture has done. With poor school culture, the people who suffer the most are the low-income students being served at Title I schools.

Ways in which new teachers at Title I schools can be better supported are:

- Develop explicit White privilege training as well as cultural sensitivity training for all staff. There needs to be an explicit focus on new teachers entering Title I schools with a high population of low-income students to address any teacher gaps of knowledge in these areas.
- Provide intentional, trauma-informed trainings to staff. These need to be mandatory paid trainings, not voluntary.
- Develop training for new teachers in classroom management and student relationships in regards to what new teachers will face when entering the classroom at Title I schools with a high low-income student population. This program should extend throughout their first and second year of teaching. One training is not enough before entering the classroom. It is an ongoing learning process for new teachers, especially when working at Title I schools with high low-income student populations.
- Develop a silent mentoring program for new teachers at Title I schools: experienced teachers at the same school site as new teachers who need positive peer role models they can go to for advice without feeling insecure about their abilities.
- BTSA coaches need to be monitored for their effectiveness. If a BTSA coach is not effective in mentoring a new teacher, then they should not be allowed to continue coaching. BTSA coaches would be far more beneficial if they were at the same site as the new teacher they are mentoring.

- In order to provide effective BTSA coaches, the district should actively seek out positive/outstanding teachers. In order to be considered for the BTSA program, the participant should be required to interview and provide letters of recommendation from their administration.
- Use anonymous questionnaires for BTSA participants to inquire how a BTSA coach was effective or ineffective.
- District leadership needs to address the inequitable practice of putting administration at Title I schools who do not actively care about the student population. The practice of placing poor administration at Title I schools should be addressed and changed.

If an entire policy change is possible, I recommend:

- Make Title I schools the most desirable school to teach at.
 - Offer additional stipends to exceptional teachers.
 - Provide technology that is legitimately used inside of the classroom.
 - Only allow teachers with at least five years of experience to work at high Title I schools.
- Offering a stipend will motivate more experienced teachers to work at Title I schools; however, the policy needs to change. Teachers would need to be interviewed for the position and provide letters of recommendation.
- Make Title I schools enticing to the best administrative leadership, not a punishment.
- Move ineffective teachers out of low-income schools, and do not allow these schools to be a “dumping ground” for teachers waiting for retirement.

All American districts will continue to face the achievement gap at Title I schools due to low-income students beginning their educational career at a disadvantage in comparison to higher-

income peers; however, the way a district chooses to address the needs of these students will determine if the achievement gap closes. While district leadership, administration and teachers cannot change the factors student face when they leave the classroom, they can address the quality of education the student receives while they are there. Title I schools need staff who believe in their students' abilities and care about who they are. Districts place a high value on the California Dashboard numbers, but one of the easiest changes they can make is place staff who care in schools that need them most. These suggestions are Title I and student focused. In order to make effective change to support new teachers placed at Title I schools, a policy change is needed—otherwise the people who suffer most are the students.

Limitations

This study was limited due to the use of phenomenology as an investigative tool. I focused on the participants' experiences in their first years of teaching, and therefore these experiences can be influenced by the participants' own bias. The research for this study focused on the experiences of new teachers at high Title I schools at one school district in Southern California. This study was conducted at two school sites at this district; however, four schools were invited to participate in this study who qualified for the study parameters. All four principals at these sites were emailed, and all four agreed to allow the research to take place on their campus. Of the four principals who agreed, only one principal forwarded the email to their staff as requested. A committee member obtained contact information for two participants at the second school site. Each of the other three principals were elusive to distributing the information. Another limitation this study faced was having six participants. While saturation was achieved the sample, pool was at the minimum needed for phenomenology.

As addressed in Chapter One and Chapter Three, I recognize my own biases of working at a Title I school, as well as completing my first year of teaching at a Title I school. I recognize that personal biases and presumptions may have influenced the data; therefore, member checking was used to check for honesty (Patton, 1990).

Implications for Future Research

Due to the many factors that can change the experiences of a teacher's first year, there are many ways future research can turn. There is very little research on new teachers in Title I schools, while there is copious research on first-year teachers and low-income students respectively. The majority of the research indicates that new teachers need mentors, and low-income students come into the classroom with more needs than their higher-income peers. Very little research investigates new teachers navigating their first year and low-income students together.

The participants within this study indicated the difficulties of working at Title I schools and the need for support from administration, peers and mentors. Further research is recommended on advancing the leadership skills of administrators working at Title I schools and how BTSA could be more effective in supporting new teachers. Additionally, further research is recommended on the benefits of having positive peers work closely with new teachers.

There is copious research on classroom management, but very little research is dedicated to classroom management in low-income schools. Further research is needed in best practices for how teachers can effectively work with students from low-income families. Within the same realm, the process of building relationships with students who carry different cultural capital is needed.

Lastly, I recommend that future research focuses on teachers' White privilege and cultural sensitivity. All six participants within this study indicated that their students were low-income, or that their own child did not face the same difficulties, but no participant acknowledged their White privilege. Only Participant #5 acknowledged their students' cultural differences through their interview, while the other five made no such acknowledgement. Therefore, more research is needed in the area of White teachers working in low-income schools and their impact on their students when cultural sensitivities are not addressed.

Conclusion

First-year teachers are focused on learning how to teach. At a Title I school, new teachers are being asked to learn to teach as well as learn how to teach students who do not match their cultural capital. Teachers at Title I schools need supportive administration, positive peers, and a supportive mentor to offer beneficial feedback. In order for teachers to be most effective in educating students, administration needs to foster a positive school culture that cultivates a constructive learning environment for students and staff. Participants were able to be successful without all three support systems, but all participants indicated they could have been more successful if they had the missing piece. Through reflection on their practices, participants indicated that they were able to make positive relationships with their students. Participants shared that their classroom management also was a major factor in their first years of teaching. They shared that there was trial and error when learning to manage their classroom, and many shared that they could have done a better job if someone had been there to help them develop these strategies.

The district is unable to change the income of their students at Title I schools. They are, however, able to provide training for first-year teachers going into Title I schools. Districts have

the ability to train new teachers about White privilege, cultural sensitivity, classroom management, and how to build positive relationships with students. A district also has the ability to change its policy on the teachers who are hired for these schools. They can make a Title I school a positive place to work and a coveted position at the district. The district can acknowledge the difficulties that come with working at a Title I school, and begin to make changes to better educate the staff who work with these diverse students.

Teachers face many difficulties when working at low-income schools that often go unnoticed by the vast majority. Neglecting the needs of students from low-income families by allowing inexperienced teachers to “survive or drown” in these schools indicates where the worth of the students—along with teachers—stands at Title I schools. The cost of this is the students’ education, because a teacher can leave, but these students do not carry the privilege of that choice. While every teacher in this study fought to give their students the best education they could, how much better could they have done with more support, classroom management training, building positive relationships with their students, understanding their White privilege, and cultural sensitivity? The support participants had within this study differed from each other, but they all learned how to better serve their students through reflection or trial and error. The district should be mindful of what supports new teachers need at Title I schools, and ultimately how these supports will reflect on the success of their students. This all must be done with a critical race theory, intersectionality, and cultural capital lens.

The district needs to recognize that continually allowing new inexperienced teachers to populate Title I schools, and allowing poor school culture to continue on these campuses perpetuates deficit thinking toward how the district feels about the students at Title I schools.

When low-income schools are continually treated as though they are unimportant, it breeds this mode of thinking and it is pushed onto the staff and students.

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Appendix A

Email to Potential Participants

Hello,

My name is Ashley Tiedemann. I am currently working on an Ed. D from the University of Redlands. One of the requirements is to complete a dissertation. I have chosen to do a phenomenological study of the experiences first-, second-, and third-year White female teachers have at Title I schools.

The purpose of my study is to better understand how to support new teachers in the rigorous environment of a Title I, K-5 school. In order to do this, I have chosen to interview White, female second- and third-year teachers to hear their first-year experiences working with a low-income student population. This interview will take place near the beginning of the school year. The goal is to understand any common experiences these teachers are having, and how new teachers can be supported in the future to help them be more successful in the classroom. All information will be confidential.

All interviews will occur outside of instructional time. This interview can be held inside of the participant's classroom. This will allow the participant and the primary researcher to feel more secure. Each participant will only be interviewed once. The transcripts from the interview will be returned to the participants for their approval.

Participation will include:

1. Emailing the primary researcher from a personal email account (This will used to maintain your privacy. All emails through district email are saved on a server, and your informed consent form/demographic survey/transcripts will be completely confidential).
2. Returning a signed informed consent form through your personal email.
3. Returning your demographic survey through your personal email.
4. One interview near the beginning of the school year (in their second and third-year). (I will come to you).
5. Reading your own interview transcripts to ensure confidentiality has been kept, your personal experiences have been recorded correctly, and the opportunity to add or change anything will be given during this time.

If you are interested and willing to participate in this study, please email me back at Ashley_tiedemann@redlands.edu and I will forward you the informed consent form and a short survey. Additionally, I will set up an interview day and time that will work best for you.

Thank You,

Ashley Tiedemann
Ed. D Student
University of Redlands

Appendix B

Demographic Survey

Thank you for participating in the criteria questionnaire. Please fill out all answers to the best of your ability.

1. How long have you been teaching?
 1. 1 year
 2. 2 years
 3. 3 years
 4. 4 years
 5. 5 years
 6. 6+ years
2. What University did you obtain your California Multiple Subject Teaching Credential from?
 1. _____
3. What is your age:
 1. 20-24
 2. 25-30
 3. 31-35
 4. 36-40
 5. 40+
4. What ethnicity to you identify with?
 1. _____
 2. _____
5. What gender do you identify with? (This does not have to be a binary answer).
 1. _____
6. What grade do you teach?
 1. Kinder
 2. First
 3. Second
 4. Third
 5. Fourth
 6. Fifth
7. Are you willing to be interviewed on your experiences in the classroom near the beginning of the school year?
 1. Yes
 2. No

Thank you for your participation with this questionnaire.

Appendix C

Consent to Participate in a Research Study

(For use with adult subjects only)

What follows is a consent form that explains what will be happening if you choose to participate in this research study. The first section (Investigator Information) should have been completed by the investigator. If this section is incomplete, do not continue with the study. Do not participate if this study has not been assigned an IRB approval number. The information you need to provide begins on Page 2. Please read each section carefully.

Investigator Information (to be completed by Principle Investigator)

IRB approval
number:

Title of
proj
ect:

A Phenomenological Study of White First and Second-Year Teachers in
Title I Schools.

Name of principle investigator
(PI):

Ashley A Tiedemann

Email of PI:

Ashley_tiedemann@redlands.edu

Telephone number of
PI:

Department or major
of PI:

Doctorate in Leadership for Educational Justice

Position held
by PI:

☐ faculty

☐ administrator/staff
☒ student

If PI is a student or staff, complete the remainder of Investigator Information, otherwise go to next page.

Name of faculty or administrator sponsor: Ann E. Blankenship Knox, J.D., Ph. D

Department or office of sponsor: Department of Leadership and Higher Education

Position held by sponsor:

☒ faculty
☐ administrator

General information about this study

You are being asked to participate in a research study. Whether you do is entirely up to you. You may refuse to participate, or you may stop participating at any time for any reason without any penalty.

The purpose of this study is to understand the experiences of first and second-year White female teachers in Title I, K-5 schools. I want to understand the daily struggles teachers face when they are new to the profession. Additionally, I also want to know what supports first- and second-year teachers can be provided to help them be more successful in the classroom.

I have chosen to explicitly work with White female teachers due to the possible differences in cultural capital, and/or possible socioeconomic status differences between teachers and students. White females represent 80% of teachers in the United States (Tale & Goldring, 2017). Therefore, there is a higher likelihood a student will be working with a White female teacher in school. With the possible gaps in the intersection of cultural capital and possible differences in socioeconomic levels, there may be difficult interactions in the classroom between students and teachers.

In order to do this, I have chosen a phenomenological approach. This means, I am wanting to hear the stories and experiences of second and third-year teachers of their first one to two years teaching. I will do this by interviewing second and third-year teachers at the beginning of the school year who work at Title I, K-5 schools, recording the interview and then transcribing the interview to be analyzed. You will be asked to review the transcripts of your interview, and check for continuity. You will also be given the chance to add or change parts of the interview transcripts to reflect your meaning and intentions.

After the study is complete the results will be provided to you upon your request.

This study will use 6-20 participants.

How long this will take (i.e., duration of participation)

If you choose to participate in this study, your involvement will take about 1-2 hours.

What will happen if you participate in this study

If you have agreed to participate in this study it will include: Participation in a short demographic survey. The purpose of the demographic survey is to determine if a participant is eligible for the study. There will also be one interview that will last between 1-2 hours. After the interview, I will transcribe it. When I transcribe the interview, it is at this time I will change names to maintain confidentiality. I will then email your transcribed interview to your personal email for you to verify all information is correct. Your personal email is used to maintain confidentiality, this way your personal interview will not be on an institutional server. It is at this time you will have the opportunity to make any changes to the transcript, confirm the integrity of the interview that it has been transcribed appropriately and reflects what you have shared. You will also be encouraged to add any information you may have thought of after the interview.

Audiotaping

You will be audiotaped.

Protecting your privacy

All demographic surveys will be destroyed after eligibility has been determined. All recordings will be done with a Sony ICD-PX370 Mono Digital Recorder with Built-in USB. These recordings will only be heard by myself, Ashley A Tiedemann while I transcribe them. When transcribing the interview, I will give you a pseudonym, in addition to any other persons you speak of. Once I finish transcribing the interview, I

will provide you with it to approve it. To approve it, I will ask you to read through the questions and answers. If you feel as though your answers are not representing your intended meaning, then you will be asked to make changes to reflect your intended meaning. If you wish to add to it, or change it that is your right. After you have approved the transcripts, they will be read by myself, my chair, Dr. Ann Blankenship Knox a faculty member at the University of Redlands, and Dr. Mikela Bjork a faculty member at the University of Redlands.

All files will be moved to my personal password protected computer. Additionally, the files will be password protected. Five years after the study is completed, I, the primary investigator will delete all files.

People who participate in this study will not be identified in any report or publication about this study. Although every effort will be made to keep the research records private, there may be times when federal or state law requires the disclosure of such records, including personal information. This is unlikely to happen, but if disclosure is required, the investigator will take whatever steps are allowable by law to protect the privacy of your personal information. In some cases, your information in this research study could be reviewed by representatives of the University of Redlands, research sponsors, or government agencies for purposes such as quality control or safety. However, this information will be labeled by the names given to participants when they return this informed consent. Each participant will be named "Participant 1, Participant 2 etc." Therefore, any transcripts read will be de-identified.

Participants at the same school as the Principal Investigator:

Working at the same school as the principal investigator does limit the level of privacy that is maintained throughout the interview process. Participants should understand the principal investigator possibly has prior knowledge of events on campus, people being addressed in the interview and administration. Participants at the same school as the principal investigator does limit the level of privacy that is maintained throughout the interview process. Participants should understand information divulged within the interview will not be divulged to anyone inside or outside of the district."

What will happen if you experience any problems or discomforts during or after your participation

It is possible that there are unknown risks or discomforts. Please report any problems immediately to the researcher.

Anything you do, including participating in research, carries with it some chance that something problematic or unwanted may happen. Although the researcher may direct you to medical, psychological, or other services, any costs related to such problems are your or your insurance company's responsibility.

Questions about this study

You may ask and have answered any question about the research. If you have questions or concerns, you should contact the Principle Investigator (PI) or faculty or administrator sponsor (if the PI is a student).

Questions or concerns about the investigators, staff members, and your participation in the study

This study was approved by the University of Redlands Institutional Review Board (IRB). This board tries to ensure that your rights and welfare are protected if you choose to participate in the study. If you have any questions about your role or how you were treated by the research personnel, you may contact the Chair of the IRB at jessica_hehman@redlands.edu or by telephone at 909-748-8469.

Participant's Agreement

I, _____,
Print Name Above

have read the information presented above. I have asked all questions I had at this time. I voluntarily agree to participate in this research study.

Signature of Research Participant	Date

To be completed by researcher:

Print Name of Person Obtaining Consent

Signature of Person Obtaining Consent	Date

Appendix D

First Year Teacher Interview Protocol

Part I.

INSTRUCTIONS

Good morning/afternoon. My name is Ashley Tiedemann. Thank you for allowing me into your classroom, or meeting me here. This interview involves me asking questions about your experiences as a first or second-year teacher. You were selected based on the criteria you provided on the demographic survey you filled out. I have chosen to work with White female teachers because they make up 80% of the teacher workforce in the United States. I have also chosen to interview teachers at Title I schools due to the additional needs students have in this population, and to understand how new teachers are learning to work with this population. The purpose of this interview is to hear your perceptions of your first or second-year of teaching in a Title I school inside and outside of the classroom. Please feel comfortable in saying what you really think and feel. There are no wrong or right answers in this interview. I want to hear your story.

RECORDING INSTRUCTIONS

With your permission I will be recording our conversation on a Sony ICD-PX370 Mono Digital Recorder with Built-in USB. The purpose of recording our conversation is to give you my full attention without missing details of our conversation. All comments made throughout the interview will be confidential. I will compile all comments from all participants without referencing participants by their actual name. Please verbally consent yes if you agree to be recorded.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Q1. What grade do you teach?

Q2. Why did you choose to become a teacher?

Q3. Tell me about your first year of teaching.

Follow up:

Tell me about what you found most difficult.

How do you think someone in your position could be better supported?

What would you have wanted to know before starting this year?

Q4. Please share any other difficulties you have been faced with this far in the school year.

Follow up:

How do you think you could be better supported in overcoming these difficulties?

Q5. What has been the most rewarding in your first year of teaching?

Follow up.

Why do you think you are able to have this rewarding experience?

Q6. How could first year teachers at your school be supported in a way that will help them succeed inside and outside of the classroom?

Q7. What do you know about the student population's economic status at this school?

Q8. Do you believe the economic status of your students effects their ability to learn?

Follow up:

Yes: How do you think it affects them? And in what manner?

No: Why do you think it does not affect them?

Q9. What supports do you currently receive in your classroom? Are there school wide supports/programs offered at your campus?

Follow up:

Do you think you could be successful without these supports?

What supports would you want if you do not receive any?

Q10. Do you feel as though you receive direct or indirect support from your administrator?

Follow up:

What do they do to support you as a first-year teacher?

Why do you think you are not receiving support from your administration?

What could they do better?

Q11. Are you currently participating in BTSA?

Follow up:

Is BTSA supporting you in your first year of teaching?

Q12. What type of support do you receive from other teachers on campus who are not a BTSA support provider?

Q13. Is there anything else you would like to add?

TRANSITION:

Thank you for your participation. I hope you feel comfortable sharing your experiences inside and outside of the classroom. I will be emailing you transcripts from this interview to your personal email to maintain confidentiality. When you receive them, please read them and verify all information has been transcribed correctly. If you need to make any changes, they will be welcome, also you are encouraged to add anything you may have thought of after the interview. Again, thank you for your participation.

Appendix E

Email to Principals

Dear Principal _____,

My name is Ashley Tiedemann. I am currently working on an Ed. D from the University of Redlands. One of the requirements is to complete a dissertation. I have chosen to do a phenomenological study of second- and third-year White female teachers at Title I, K-5 schools.

The purpose of my study is to better understand how to support new teachers in the rigorous environment of a Title I, K-5 school. In order to do this, I have chosen to interview second- and third-year in the beginning of the 2019-2020 school year to hear their daily experiences of their first years working with a low-income student population. The goal is to understand any common experiences these teachers are having/had, and how new teachers can be supported in the future to help them be more successful in the classroom. All information collected in the interviews is confidential. Additionally, interviews with teachers will be scheduled outside of instructional time. These interviews will be conducted within the participants' classroom to promote safety for the teacher and myself, unless they would like to meet elsewhere.

I am emailing you, the principal, because your school is within the Title I parameters for my study. I am looking for schools that are 70% or higher of low-income students.

I would like to reach out to your second- and third-year teachers to ask if they are interested in participating in my study. Should they say yes, their involvement would include an interview of 1-2 hours, as well as reviewing their interview transcripts once they are typed.

Attached is a letter to potential participants. Please, at your convince forward the attached letter to teachers who have been teaching two to three years.

Thank you,

Ashley Tiedemann
Ed. D Student
University of Redlands