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The Danielson Evaluation System in Two Mid- South High Schools: A Case Study

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The Danielson Evaluation System in Two Mid-South High Schools: A Case Study

The Danielson Evaluation System in Two Mid-South High Schools: A Case Study

A dissertation proposal submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Education in Education Leadership

by

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to answer the question: How do pilot users of the Danielson Evaluation System perceive this model in two mid-south high schools? The study describes the perceptions of teachers and administrators who implemented the Danielson Teacher Evaluation Model. The primary focus was on teachers and administrators experience with the pilot of the new Arkansas Teacher Excellence and Support System. In an effort to meet requirements under the ESEA flexibility waiver Arkansas developed a comprehensive evaluation model to meet state and federal accountability standards. Arkansas Department of Education developed a pilot school program in which they were afforded the opportunity to explore the teacher evaluation tool in four pilots across the state. The researcher conducted structured open-ended interviews with teachers and building principals. Observations were conducted with research participants. Documents were collected throughout the study to meet triangulation of this phenomenological study. The significant themes (axial codes) that emerged from the data collected were (a) role of the students, (b) teacher evaluation system, (c) emotions of teachers, and (d) reflection of the process.

This qualitative study adds new research to the field on the perceptions, experiences, and essence of piloting the Danielson Framework for Teaching Evaluation Model. This research will be instrumental in facilitating more long term research on the perceptions of the framework as a teacher evaluation model. Through this study, readers can gain new insight on the struggle of teachers and administrators as they shift their thinking from the Danielson Framework which guides teacher practices to an evaluation tool. This study provides new research of the everyday challenges of teachers and their effort to improve student achievement.

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I first want to say that through it all his grace and mercy were sufficient to bring me through. I now can give testimony that I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. He has always been the head of my life and a constant source of strength. Through this process I have learned that he is truly there for those who seek him. It has been this assurance that has made the difference.

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I offer my appreciation and gratitude to classmate Anita Farver for helping me cross the finish line. When at times I know she felt like she had to carry me there. To Roy Turner our other partner in crime, we said we would finish this together and we did.

To all of my other classmates I would like to say thanks for your phone calls, texts, and words of encouragement. This has truly been a team effort as we celebrated when each one of us crossed the finish line and encouraged those who were still in the race. It is this network of individuals that will work hard to make a difference in the lives of students across the state of Arkansas. To my dear friend who said "Laura you need to get this done"; his words and support meant the world to me. I know that a brother had my back.

Finally I would like to say thank you to the teachers and administrators of the schools researched for this case study. You welcomed me with open arms and I gained valuable insight on what great teachers and administrators are doing in Arkansas schools.

DEDICATION

This is dedicated to my family. My parents, Henrietta and Edward Bailey... Their passion about students and the value of education continues to influence my decisions to this day. To my children, Jennifer, Meagan, Kenneth and Katie.... It's over, life can go on and by the way I did finish what I started a long time ago. I love you very much.

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Chapter One:

Organization of the Chapter

Chapter 1 begins with an introduction and background that describe the adoption of the Danielson model in Arkansas as part of the Teacher Excellence and Support System. (TESS) Literature suggests that teacher accountability for student success has become more rigorous under the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB, 2002). The three million teachers in the nation need evaluation programs that support their growth and professional-development needs. After the introduction, the researcher presented a statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, and the research question and sub questions. These are the basic foundations for the study. In the next part of chapter 1 the researcher defined “comparative case study” and stated the significance of the study. The intention of the study was to gain insight into educators’ perceptions of the Danielson framework for teaching, and how it impacted their instructional practices and professional growth. Following the significance of the study, the researcher cites additional foundational information about the role of teacher evaluations on student achievement and professional growth and explained the workings of the Danielson model. Throughout this study, the researcher provided data-driven research about the perceptions of administrators and teachers regarding the effectiveness of the Danielson model.

The next topic in Chapter 1 is the conceptual design for the study. In this segment, the researcher defined the study boundaries. The theoretical sensitivity section, as suggested by. Strauss and Corbin (1998), is an explanation of the role of the researcher as a study instrument. The researcher assumed the role of research instrument, interviewer, observer, and document collector by using Strauss and Corbin’s taxonomy of personal and professional experience, as well as literature in the field, analytic rigor, and general assumptions about the study (Marshall &

Rossman, 2006). In the final section of this chapter, the researcher discusses the organization of the dissertation.

Introduction

In 2011, Arkansas adopted Danielson's (2007) *Framework for Teaching* to create the state's first uniform teacher evaluation system. (ADE, 2011). A successful teacher requires planning and preparation, classroom management, instruction, and professional inquiry (Danielson, 2007). The 2011–2012 pilot study was conducted in four school districts in the state (ADE, 2011; Danielson, 2008, 2011). In this dissertation, the researcher examines the experience of teachers and administrators at two high schools in Arkansas that piloted the Danielson method.

Under NCLB legislation, schools have been mandated to increase the passing rate of all students in literacy and mathematics on standardized tests. Emphasis on “rigorous accountability” will prepare students for college and career paths; however, the law provides no clear manner to implement teacher accountability for achieving these goals. Increased pressure to meet NCLB guidelines has resulted in teachers leaving the profession. This loss has created instability in the educational system for children. To meet the needs of students rather than cater exclusively to intensified demands of standardized testing, educators must find ways to distinguish sound instructional practices from those that are mediocre. A transparent evaluation must be constructed that clearly and fairly outlines the components being assessed. This evaluation should delineate a course of effective professional development to improve the instructional skills of these educators who do not meet given standards (Barnes & Miller, 2001; Bernstein, 2004; Colby, Bradshaw, & Joyner, 2002; Danielson & McGreal, 2000).

Since the United States moved toward accountability for schools and teachers to educate all children, focus has shifted to teacher performance in directly impacting students' academic success. The quality of teaching has a pronounced impact on student learning (Brophy & Good, 1986). Researchers identified a direct relationship between teacher quality and student achievement (Archer, 1998; Ferguson & Ladd, 1996). Schwartz (2003) argued that the goal of every teacher should be to work for professional growth in the classroom to enhance student performance.

Nottingham and Dawson (1987) outlined three purposes for the supervisor-evaluation process: school improvement, staff development, and personnel decisions. They listed specific functions of teacher evaluations: to assess teaching and teacher behaviors, to improve teaching by identifying ways to change teaching systems, to protect students from incompetence, to reward superior performance, to validate school teacher-selection process, and to lay a foundation for teacher career planning and professional development. Because the impact of an effective or ineffective teacher can last for years (Sanders & Rivers, 1996), these methods for evaluating teacher effectiveness have become increasingly more important. The goal of every teacher should be to work for professional growth to enhance student performance (Schwartz, 2003). However, teacher-evaluation processes are not designed to deal with the majority of teachers who have serious performance problems. For improvement to occur, teacher evaluations must be objective and fair (Schwartz, 2003).

An evaluation tool for teachers is critical in the development of a rigorous curriculum because of the direct correlation between teaching skill and student achievement (Marzano, Toth, & Schooling, 2011). Evaluation is beneficial to both teachers and administrators to help identify ways to impact achievement gains. In an empirical research study, "5 to 15 percent of the 2.7

million teachers in public school classrooms perform at incompetent levels” (Tucker, 2001, p. 52). Thus, superintendents have prioritized teacher accountability for student performance as one of the most important elements in the changing tide of failing schools. School districts and state educational departments work hard to determine ways to measure teacher accountability through evaluation processes, working to improve teachers’ professional growth and increase high-quality instruction in the classroom. The evaluation process allows all stakeholders (teachers, students, parents, and administrators) to measure academic goals and objectives with an assurance the curriculum is being taught in a manner that promotes success.

The State of Arkansas has joined more than 15 other states, including New York, New Jersey, and Washington, in developing an evaluation system based on Danielson’s (1996) *Enhancing Professional Practice: A Framework for Teaching* (hereafter *Framework for Teaching*). According to Danielson (2007), planning and preparation, classroom management, instruction, and professional inquiry are the building blocks of a successful teacher:

Quality teaching begins with a teacher’s formal education, but it grows through a process of continuous growth through experience, targeted professional development and the insights and direction provided through thoughtful, objective feedback about the teacher’s effectiveness. (ADE, 2011, p. 1)

Teacher-evaluation methods have evolved in the past half century. In the 1940s and 1950s, teacher performance was evaluated according to teacher traits. Those traits included voice, emotional stability, appearance, trustworthiness, warmth, and enthusiasm (Danielson & McGreal, 2000). Numerous individuals at the time believed that teachers who possessed those traits were more likely to perform effectively; thus, the traits became the centerpiece in local teacher-evaluation models (Danielson & McGreal, 2000). New research in the field of education shifted the focus of teacher evaluation from emphasis on traits to emphasis on skill acquisition, with

particular focus on mathematics and science (Danielson, 2011; Gordon, Kane, & Staiger, 2006; Mathers, Oliva, & Laine, 2008).

In 2000, Danielson & McGreal, developed a set of prescriptive teaching practices designed to improve teacher decision making, known as the *research on teacher effects* (Danielson & McGreal, 2000). These practices created teaching strategies that focused on student retention, motivation, and transfer (p. 13). Hunter's research started the trend toward instructionally focused staff development with emphasis on teacher-centered structured classrooms (1982). In 2009, the U.S. Department of Education launched a reform program called *Race to the Top*. According to Gibbs (2009), key priorities included the following: (a) revamping assessments for rigor, (b) recruitment of high quality teachers, (c) data driven decision making in both the classroom and school, (d) researched models of school turn-around methods and (2) model and sustained educational reform (p.1). The passage of NCLB, along with the *2010 Race to the Top* grants linking student achievement to teacher evaluation, pushed school districts and states to build accountability into teacher evaluation.

Statement of Problem

Applying for Race to the Top Dollars has prompted the State of Arkansas and the Arkansas Department of Education to develop and implement a systematic teacher-evaluation system, with the goal of holding teachers accountable for student achievement. In anticipation of the 2013–2014 school year, ADE piloted the Danielson model of teacher evaluation to test its efficacy. The pilot study was conducted in four school districts in the state (ADE, 2011; Danielson, 2008, 2011). This dissertation conducted a comparative case study of two schools in Arkansas that have piloted the Danielson evaluation system.

Purpose of the Study

This study qualitatively examined two high schools that piloted the Danielson framework for teaching-evaluation model. Both of these public coeducational schools are located in small rural districts in Arkansas. This study investigated how teachers and administrators perceived the effectiveness of the Danielson evaluation system, as well as their understanding of the model, system of implementation, and impact on professional growth and development.

Research Question

How do pilot users of the Danielson Evaluation System perceive this model in two mid-south high schools?

Importance of the Study

The importance of this study examines how the Danielson evaluation model was implemented at two high schools in Arkansas. Nationwide, teacher evaluation is viewed as having a direct correlation with student achievement. This study provides important data to examine the Danielson framework for a teaching-evaluation model at two high schools that participated in the pilot study of the Arkansas Teacher Excellence and Support System. This study examined teachers and administrators perceptions of the pilot, and then aligned the findings to the 22 components of the *Framework for Teaching* at two high school sites. This study explored the strengths and weaknesses of implementing an effective evaluation model. Data from this study provided support for other districts and schools that were interested in adopting the Danielson evaluation model.

Conceptual Design

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to examine how two schools used the Danielson evaluation methodology. “Phenomenology is the interpretive study of human

experience. “The aim is to examine and clarify human situations, events, meanings, and experiences” (Seamon, 2000, p.1). The framework for this phenomenological research will be used to explore themes evolving from two schools, based on the assumption that an equitable and fair teacher-evaluation system for teachers may impact the academic success of students through teacher feedback, professional development, and opportunities for professional growth (Danielson & McGreal, 2000). A qualitative approach was used to explore the lived experiences of faculty in the school districts where the Danielson model was piloted.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework used for this present study is phenomenology. Bogdon and Taylor (1975, p. 266) suggested that “phenomenological research is widely used in the social science(s) to describe a distinct research perspective to a more positive form of inquiry.” In this philosophy, the researcher practices three methods to encourage participant responses: (a) Participants describe an experience as they find it in the past, (b) participants relate their experiences to features in context, and (c) participants analyze to define the experience.

Table 1 describes the phenomenological process of qualitative research. The procedures outlined in this table will be utilized throughout the research process.

Table 1

Phenomenology Overview

Purpose	Research and philosophy approach
Data collection	In-depth or group interviews
Data analysis	Researchers gain an understanding of the phenomenon by listening to interviews and reviewing transcripts
Outcomes	Exhaustive description of meaning

Note: An overview of phenomenology research.

Theoretical Sensitivity

Theoretical sensitivity is the characteristic of a researcher to maintain “objectivity and sensitivity” to the research and the data “necessary for making discoveries” (A Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 43). Theoretical sensitivity is comprised of four components:(a) personal experience, (b) professional experience, (c) personal knowledge of the literature, and (d) analytic rigor.

Personal experience. For the past five years, I have personally experienced the work and schooling conditions in which the study was conducted. This inside perspective was valuable to the research.

Personal knowledge of the literature. School administrators, officials, and policy makers should encourage the restructuring of teacher-evaluation systems. Research shows that student achievement in the classroom benefits from a system of support and professional growth for teachers. Teachers are more likely to support the implementation of an evaluation model when they are empowered as professionals and included in the process (Sweeley, 2004).

Professional experience. The researcher has 15 years of combined experience working as a teacher, principal, instructional coach, and central-office administrator.

Analytic rigor. There are eight attributes of rigorous analysis that form the rigor metric: There are eight attributes of rigorous analyses that form the rigor metric (Zelik, Patterson, & Woods, 2007). Those attributes are displayed in Figure 1 and described below:

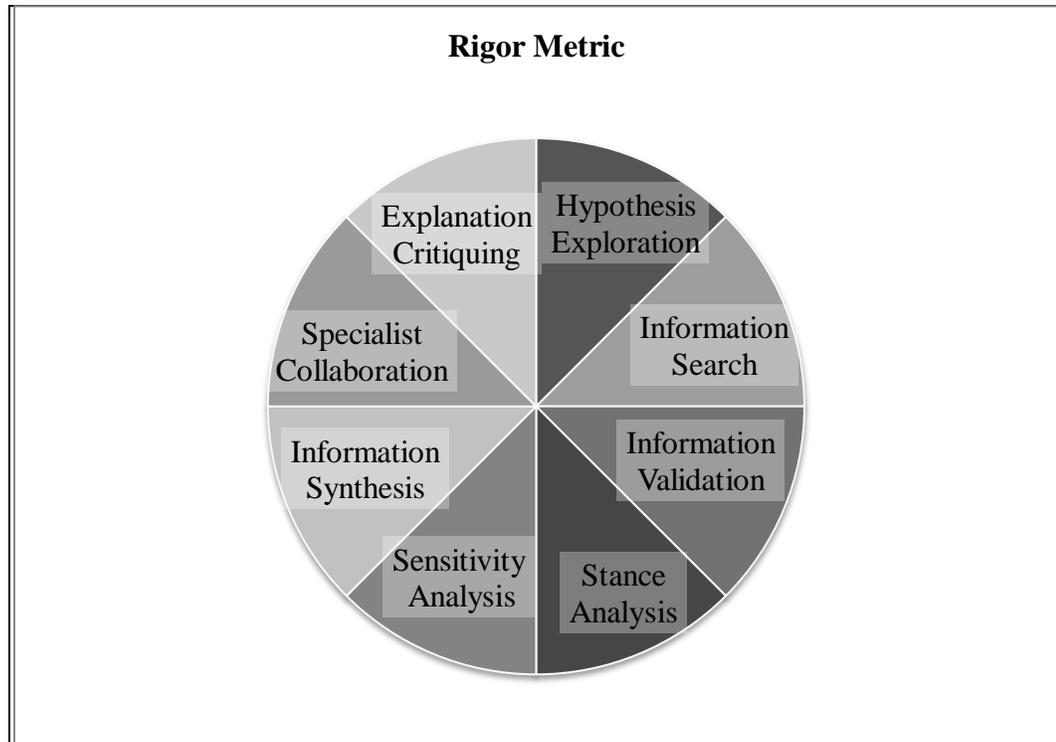


Figure 1. Rigor metric.

1. Hypothesis exploration: In explaining the data, the researcher considers multiple hypotheses. The study seeks to broaden understanding beyond the initial hypotheses by seeking understanding from teachers, administrators, and other identified stakeholders concerning the research question.
2. Information search: The process in which data were collected in the search process. This is the depth and breadth of the process. Through the literature review, and conversations with identified stakeholders and experts in the field, all data were explored to support the significance of the study.
3. Information validation: The level at which information is cross validated, verified, and corroborated for research. The researcher applies this principle throughout the study to the literature review by exhaustive data base searches for scholarly articles that are relevant and add

value to the study. In the analysis of the data all survey instrument are verified and rechecked for accuracy.

4. Stance analysis: The identification and placing of the perspective or stance of the source into a broader context for understanding. Through observations and questioning the researcher systematically reviews the stances of the participants for broader understanding of how their backgrounds might have influenced their stance on the evaluation model.
5. Sensitivity analysis: Considers the extent to which the researcher considers and understands the assumptions and limitations of the study. During the study, if it was found that supporting resources were invalid, a strategy has been developed to consider strength of explanations.
6. Specialist collaboration: The degree to which the researcher includes perspectives of experts in their assessment. I consulted with the dissertation committee, colleagues, and experts in the field to gain understanding of the literature, current practices in the field, and qualitative research methods to conduct the study.
7. Information synthesis: The extent to which the researcher goes beyond simple data collection. I sought to explore multiple types of evaluation models to understand current practices being used by districts throughout the United States.
8. Explanation critique: The use of multiple perspectives in examining the primary hypothesis. The research during the conducting of this case study applies chain of reasoning. The achievement of this goal is done by identifying weak and strong inferences (Zelik et al., 2007).

Parameters of the Study

The foundation for this study began in the fall of 2013 with the selection of the district's high school in the pilot for teacher evaluation in the State of Arkansas. This examination were

conducted in the case-study school district during the 2013–2014 school year. During late fall of 2013, the findings, recommendations, and data analysis were developed.

Assumptions of the Study

This study was based on three assumptions:

1. The researcher assumed that teachers and administrators in this study have been exposed and have some knowledge of the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* evaluation model.
2. The researcher assumed that all teachers participated in the ADE evaluation pilot.
3. The researcher assumed that perceptions of the Danielson evaluation model shared by the participants will be truthful, candid, objective, and factually accurate.
4. The researcher assumed that all teachers have been trained in the Arkansas evaluation model.

Consideration of the Study

Consideration for this case study include the following: (a) purposeful site selection included two school districts in southeast Arkansas where the Danielson model was used as part of the Arkansas evaluation pilot, b) results cannot be generalized from the studied district and schools, and (c) other factors may have prevented implementation in the schools and district.

Definition of Terms

The following definitions, found in the *ADE Rules Governing the Teacher Excellence and Support System* (2012), are pertinent to this study and enhance the readers' understanding:

Artifact: A piece of evidence selected by a teacher or administrator to assess teachers' teaching abilities.

Danielson's four domains: The categorization of teachers' practice and responsibilities in four areas: (1) professional responsibility, (2) classroom environment, (3) instruction, and (4)

preparation. These domains are then divided into 22 subcategories with components that are domain specific (Danielson,2007).

Danielson's model of evaluation (framework): A supervision framework that outlines the differences between the roles of supervision and evaluation.

Evaluation: The district procedures followed to evaluate what teachers understand and are doing in the classroom.

Evaluation framework: A standardized framework used in the teacher-evaluation process.

Evaluation rubric: A set of performance descriptors for each teacher-evaluation category in the evaluation framework (ADE, 2012).

Evaluation: The administrator designated by the local school district as an evaluator of teachers.

External assessment measure: An outside scored assessment given to students.

Formal classroom observation: A scheduled visit to a classroom by a principal or trained evaluator.

Formative assessment: An evaluation of a student's learning, given through a course to assess student learning and growth on information taught by the teacher.

Informal classroom observation: An unscheduled observation by an evaluator to measure growth toward instructional goals.

Interim teacher appraisal: A form of evaluation that takes place between formal evaluations.

Novice teacher: A teacher who is new to the classroom and has less than one year of experience.

Post observation conference: A conference held between a teacher and the principal to review objectives for a lesson before the formal observation.

Preobservation forms: Forms used prior to the classroom observation to gather information on what will be seen during the lesson that will be observed by the administrator.

Teacher: An individual who has met all the requirements to be licensed by the ADE and is contracted with a public school, or an unlicensed teacher who teaches at a public charter school under a waiver of teacher-licensure requirements.

Teacher excellence and support system: The Arkansas evaluation system provides support, feedback, and ongoing professional-development opportunities for teachers in an effort to improve student academic success.

Summary

With the increased level of accountability from NCLB and the new Arkansas Teacher Excellence and Support System, teachers must provide increased rigor in the classroom. Districts and schools are requiring teachers to be more accountable for the achievement level of students on state-level standardized tests. Teacher evaluations can be used to enhance professional development by properly assessing teaching systems. Evaluation is beneficial to teachers and to administrators in helping identify ways to impact achievement gains. This study examined the experiences of administrators and teachers in two high schools in Arkansas that piloted the Danielson model.

Organization of the Dissertation

Chapter two offers a review of the literature on teacher evaluations and the Danielson model. In Chapter three, I describe the proposed methodology for the study. Chapter four is a report of findings and data analysis. In Chapter five, I discuss the study's implications and provide recommendations for future research and practical implementation, as well as all conclusions.

Chapter Two:

Review of the Literature

Introduction

The implementation of federal fiscal initiatives, such as the Race to the Top program, has prompted school districts across the country to reexamine the support and evaluation of public school educators. Rewarding teachers who perform at or above the standard has created interest in identifying professional-development needs and providing targeted intervention when necessary. This chapter includes a review of literature focusing on teacher evaluation and professional development tied to evaluation models. Danielson's (1996) *Framework for Teaching* is reviewed with an explanation of how it was applied in the State of Arkansas. This study identified key elements of quality professional development, as perceived by the participants.

This literature review provided a current, comprehensive, and evaluative analysis of research related to teacher-evaluation systems for educators and policymakers. The review of literature is categorized into the following major components:

1. Background
2. Methods
3. Search strategy
4. Literature defining teacher evaluation
5. Literature describing the purpose of teacher evaluation
6. Literature describing the correlation between effective teaching and student achievement
7. Literature describing teacher evaluation and supervision
8. Teacher evaluation in the 21st century

9. Literature review of the “*Framework for Teaching*”
10. Significance
11. Conclusion

Background

Table 2.1 shows the literature reviewed for the background of the evaluation. Within this section of the literature review an overview of the history of teacher evaluation and supervision in the United States.

Table 2.1

Background of the Evaluation

Author	Research	Methods	Conclusions
Blumberg & Jonas, 1987	Article	Information analysis/Literature review	Described teacher control of supervision
D’Alfonso, 2006	Dissertation	Literature review	Listed concerns of suburban teachers using Danielson evaluation
Danielson, 1996	Book	Literature review	Discussed professional practice
Danielson, 2011	Book	Document/Literature review	Presented overview of a <i>Framework for Teaching</i> model
King, 2003	Dissertation	Literature review	Described teacher perceptions and professional growth
Schachter, 2013	Article	Literature review/ Information analysis	Listed new concepts in teacher evaluation
Toch, T. 2008	Article	Information analysis	Discussed fixing teacher evaluation

Note. A review of the current literature of the background of teacher evaluation within educational systems.

King (2003) discussed the historical nature of school evaluations, which were once based on numbers and statistics surrounding architecture, expenditures, and staffing (pp. 16–17). Teacher “quality was based on such criteria as good grooming, loud voice, proper speech, good looks, and personality” (King, 2003, p. 17). The evaluation process has changed over the years to become more focused on academic outcomes. King noted that evaluation instruments should be varied to properly appraise different kinds of data from the perspective of accountability and growth.

In 1985, results of a national research study encompassing 100 of the biggest school districts in the United States emphasized using the data collected about teacher evaluation in a summative, rather than formative manner (King, 2003, p. 18). Data showed that evaluation programs lacked clear performance and training standards, and were therefore unable to make dependable assessments regarding classroom learning and education (King, 2003, p. 18).

An evaluation system must be staffed and built on a system that instills confidence in the teacher. (Blumberg & Jonas, 1987). This increases staff’s willingness to accept the evaluation process and grow from the process. Evaluations are meant to provide quality assurance and professional development. Other systems have failed to achieve these goals in the past (D’Alfonso, 2006, p. 40).

In 2009, the ADE contracted with Danielson to oversee the strategic planning and implementation of the *Framework for Teaching* evaluation program. Four school districts volunteered to pilot the Danielson evaluation program: Jonesboro School District high school and middle school, Pocahontas School District high school, Magnolia School District high school, and Lee County School District high school. The ADE provided resources and materials for training and sponsored Danielson’s visit in January 2010. In a span of two years, Arkansas

increased the initial pilot program from four to about a dozen schools in 2011–2012. Twelve schools were added during the 2012–2013 calendar year (Schachter, 2013).

Improving the evaluation of teachers and their growth as instructional leaders will assist reform in low-performing schools in America. The current evaluation tools used in many school districts provides little feedback. Teachers are rated as *outstanding*, *needs improvement*, or *satisfactory*. There is a lack of classroom observation.

Today, most school districts lack a credible system of measuring the quality of teachers' work. A host of factors ... lack of accountability for school performance, staffing practices that strip school systems of incentives to take teacher evaluation seriously, teacher union ambivalence, and public education's practice of using teacher credentials as a proxy for teacher quality . . . have produced superficial and capricious teacher evaluation systems that often don't even directly address the quality of instruction, much less measure students' learning. (Toch, 2008, p. 32)

Instead of serving as an instructional-improvement tool for teachers, the evaluation has become a document for compliance in a personnel file. Standardized evaluations often assess teacher performance as high, without taking professional growth or classroom practices into consideration (Danielson, 2011). Danielson (2011) recommended adding self-evaluation and peer-evaluation components to teacher assessment. The Danielson model purports that the evaluation system will become more effective if teachers find the experience meaningful and use it as an opportunity for learning and growth.

The Danielson method is unique in that it makes the components of professional development public, which encourages communication and awareness between the staff and administration (D'Alfonso, 2006, p. 41). Teachers may do many of the same things in the classroom, but they do not always meet those goals or expectations in the same manner. The relationship between the administrator and teacher is important to creating a successful

evaluation system. A typical evaluation under the Danielson model includes the following components:

1. The principal meets with the teacher to discuss the upcoming lesson.
2. The administrator goes into the classroom and records observations.
3. The principal gives the teachers the notes from the observation.
4. The administrator compares the notes against the rubric and assigns a score.
5. A preconference meeting is held with the teacher. The teacher may reflect on the lesson and administrative notes. Ideas are shared through a collaborative process.
6. Steps are established for the teacher's professional growth.

The Danielson method of evaluation is supported by the Measures of Effective Teaching Project funded by the Gates Foundation. The Measures of Effective Teaching Project found that classroom observations, student feedback, and student-achievement data create a triangular foundation to support a good evaluation system (Atkinson et al., 2012).

Four criteria were employed to determine which studies would be analyzed in this literature review: (a) scholarly; (b) empirical; (c) relevant; and (d) high quality. To evaluate the relevance of a source, I compared it to a study and to the Danielson model of teacher evaluation. The selection of qualitative and quantitative studies was based on sample size, validity and relevance, and rigor and relevance. The review includes professional organizations and legislation found to be relevant to the study.

Search Strategy

In using research for this dissertation, relevant information collected from electronic databases was utilized to provide relevant information for this dissertation. The University's research librarian expertise was sought to identify the key words that focused down to correlate

with the identified research question. Databases such as Eric and ProQuest databases were a key component in the research process. When the researcher searched the database for key words in the study from ProQuest dissertations and theses¹⁰, 246 potential related topics were available. The researcher kept narrowing the search down until 15 topics were identified. This process was continued to narrow the research, until there were nine topics identified relevant to the study. Other search tools used for this study were educational journal articles, Internet sources such as Google Scholar, books, educational abstracts, and state reports. The Danielson website and Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) provided timely and relevant information on teacher evaluation and the *Danielson Framework for Teaching*. Due to the prodigious number of studies and articles available, selection of studies and articles were based on their direct relevance to the research question.

What is Teacher Evaluation

The goal of this section is to provide current research that defines teacher evaluation as it relates to administrators and teachers. Table 2.2 details the literature defining teacher evaluation.

Table 2.2

Literature Defining Teacher Evaluation

Author	Research	Methods	Conclusions
Danielson, 2001	Article	Literature review	Described trends in teacher evaluation.
Danielson, 2011	Book	Document/ Literature review	Presented overview of <i>Framework For Teaching</i> model
Hiller, 1986	Article	Literature review	Listed issues and practices in teacher evaluation
Scriven, 1981	Book	Literature review	Discussed summative teacher evaluation

Note. A review of the literature used in defining the teacher evaluation systems.

Researchers Darling-Hammond and others (1983, p.285-328) described the process of teacher evaluation as “collecting and using information to judge.” Danielson (2011) defined it as the judging of a teacher on their performance in the classroom. Teacher evaluation can be categorized in two major areas: summative and formative (Hiller, 1986). Formative evaluations are intended to improve instruction. Summative evaluations, in contrast, are tools used to make decisions concerning employment. Danielson (2011) described evaluations as a method intended to ensure teacher quality and promote professional development. The *Framework for Teaching* outlines the components for good teaching standards so that assessment is consistent. Within the Framework for performance are outlined by Danielson: basic, proficient, and distinguished. (Danielson, 2011, p. 37)

Purpose of Teacher Evaluation

To understand the importance of the evaluation of teachers, we must first identify the purpose and the goal of the evaluation process within schools and districts.

This section discusses the purpose of teacher evaluation, with sources listed in Table 2.3.

According to Scriven (1981), teacher evaluation has two main purposes: (a) as a formative assessment of teachers that uses data as feedback to develop teacher performance, establish new practices, or change existing practices, and (b) summative evaluation, in which decision are made on the retention of teachers. When discussing the evaluation system, Danielson (2001) stated that: “an evaluation system should recognize, cultivate, and develop good teaching” (p. 13).

Teacher evaluators must have a clear understanding of the purpose of becoming successful. They must have a clearly defined statement of purpose in which the function and design of the teacher-evaluation process is aligned with the needs and goals of the school district.

When there is a clear statement of the purpose of teacher evaluation, teachers are more likely to feel a partnership and are less threatened by the process (Peterson, 2000).

Table 2.3

Literature Describing the Purpose of Teacher Evaluation

Author	Research	Methods	Conclusions
Danielson, 2001	Article	Document/ literature review	Described current trends in teacher evaluation and their impact on teacher professional growth.
Darling-Hammond & Ball, 1998	Article	Literature review	Discussed testing policies and the National Commission report
Ferguson, 1991	Article	Literature review	Provided cost and impact of public education
Gallagher, 2004	Article	Literature review	Related teacher evaluation and student scores
Goldhaber, Brewer, & Anderson, 1999	Article	Literature review Information analysis	Analyzed educational productivity
Peterson, 2000	Book	Literature review	Comprehensively reviewed teacher evaluation
Ryan & Hickcox, 1980	Book	Literature review	Reassessed teacher-evaluation practices.
Sanders, 1998	Article	Literature review information analysis	Described value-added assessment
Scriven, 1981	Book	Literature review	Provided a handbook of teacher evaluation

Note. An overview of the research which identifies and supports the correlation of evaluation systems to education.

Researchers Ryan and Hickcox (1980, pp. 10–11) cited the following purposes for teacher evaluation:

- Recommending probationary teachers for permanent status:
- Assisting teachers in identifying areas that need improvement:

- Complying with local, state, and federal educational policy
- Encouraging improvement in classroom performance.

Educators generally agreed that the purpose of teacher evaluation is quality assurance (Danielson, 2001). Danielson stated that “as trustees of public funds who are responsible for educating a community’s young people, educators in public schools must ensure that each classroom is in the care of a competent teacher” (p. 13). So in this area of accountability and educational dollars declining teachers must understand the impact of what happens in the classroom.

Student Achievement and Evaluation

The goal of this section is to provide understanding of the correlation between effective teaching and student achievement. The review of literature provides additional insight on the importance of the classroom teacher in the teaching and learning process and provides a correlation between achievement and classroom practices. The effectiveness of the teacher has a profound impact on student learning (Darling-Hammond & Ball, 1998). The other significant determinant of student achievement is teacher quality (Goldwater et al., 1999).

Based on research findings, if a student was taught by an ineffective teacher for three consecutive years in elementary school, test scores would be significantly lower than for students taught by a highly effective teacher (Sanders, 1998). Darling-Hammond and Ball (1998) and Ferguson (1991) confirmed that the variation in achievement in students is impacted by qualifications, teacher knowledge of subject matter by teacher, education, and experience. Further supporting the earlier research, Gallagher’s (2004) study found that the “teacher evaluation system had a statistically significant relationship to classroom effects, that is value-added learning growth” (p. 100). A standards-based evaluation system showed results that

correlated student achievement with a teacher’s ability (Gallagher, 2004). Table 2.4 shows the literature describing the correlation between effective teaching and student achievement

Table 2.4

Literature Describing the Correlation between Effective Teaching and Student Achievement

Author	Research	Methods	Conclusions
Borman & Kimball, (2005)	Journal	Literature review	Correlated assessment of teachers and student achievement
Darling, (1998)	Book	Literature review	Described policy makers role in teacher evaluation
Dawson (1993)	Dissertation	Literature review	Compared teacher and principal perceptions of teacher evaluation
Ferguson (1991)	Journal	Literature review	Discuss the impact of money on school districts
Gallagher, 2004	Journal	Literature review	Reviewed one school’s evaluation system and its impact on student achievement
Goldhaber et al., 1999	Journal	Literature review	Provided insight on productivity in education
Mullen & Cairns, 2001	Paper	Literature review	Described mentoring school administrators
Sanders, 1998	Journal	Literature review	Discussed curriculum-development processes and the nature of 21st-century education reform
Sergiovanni & Starratt, 1998	Book	Literature review	Correlated student achievement and evaluation

Note. A current review of the literature which supports the correlation between teacher effectiveness and student achievement.

Although educators understand the complexity of teaching and learning, it is important to acknowledge the role of the teacher in the process. While a teacher may increase the achievement levels of most of his or her students, he or she may be unable to reach some

students whose home backgrounds are so chaotic as to cripple their ability to concentrate on academic tasks. (Sergiovanni & Starratt, 1998, p. 278). Therefore it is important that teachers are supported and nurtured as they try to impact the lives of students who have struggled to gain academic success.

Teacher Evaluation and Supervision

Table 2.5 features literature that describes teacher evaluation and supervision. The role of the administrator in the teacher-evaluation process is a critical component. As the role of the principal transitions, the principal now must become the transformational leader of their building.

Table 2.5

Literature Describing the Evaluation and Supervision

Author	Research	Methods	Conclusions
ADE, 2001	Paper	Document	Provide mentoring guidelines
Barnes & Miller, 2001	Article	Literature review	Discuss data collection through observation
Bernstein, 2004	Article	Document	Commented on the teacher evaluation role in the school system
Colby et al., 2002	Paper	Document	Comprehensively reviewed literature on teacher evaluation
Danielson, 2011	Book	Document/ Literature Review	Provided an overview of the <i>framework for teaching</i>
Danielson & McGreal, 2000	Dissertation	Literature Review	Reviewed evaluation impact on professional practice

Table 2.5

Literature Describing the Evaluation and Supervision continued

Author	Research	Methods	Conclusions
Dawson, 1993	Dissertation	Literature Review	Compared teacher and principal perceptions toward evaluations
DeSander, 2000	Article	Literature Review	Consider teacher evaluation and merit pay
Goe, Bell, & Little, 2008	Book	Literature Review	Listed approaches to evaluation teacher effectiveness
Holland, 2004	Digest	Document	Described key features of accountability systems
Kaline, 2002	Dissertation	Literature Review	Provided an overview of Pathwise classroom
Moran, 2006	Dissertation	Literature Review	Examined instruction in digital classrooms
Mullen & Cairns, 2001	Paper	Literature Review	Described role of administrator as an evaluator
Nolan & Hoover, 2008	Digest	Document	Described features of supervision

Note. A review of evaluation models used within the educational system.

The understanding of the role has moved from instructional leader to transactional leader to its current role as transformational leader. The role of the principal has become less clear, more complex, and increasingly overburdened in the past decade (Mullen & Cairns, 2001).

Experienced teachers are sometimes asked to play a role in the evaluation process. In 2002, the Arkansas Pathwise mentoring model was implemented throughout the state. The model called for all new teachers to participate in a district wide site-based mentoring plan providing professional development. Established teachers were required to formally apply for the position of mentor and, if accepted, compensated for their time and participation. Novice

teachers were given Professional-Development Plans to create a structure designed to guide them through initial licensure (ADE, 2001, p. 3). This program was established to further the belief that “Professional development must be tied to increasing student achievement, and should be of sufficient intensity and depth to have a substantial impact on teachers and ultimately on the students they serve” (ADE, 2001, p. 3). Experienced teachers were able to better their own classroom skills when they helped student teachers analyze their own practices (Kline, 2002). Other methods used to support beginner teachers included workshops, one-on-one support, scheduled time to meet with mentors, seminars, lower workloads, and time to plan lessons.

Dawson (1993) examined the difference in perceptions of teachers and principals regarding the teacher-evaluation process, to determine if public schools reached the goals set by the Arkansas State Board of Education. Dawson addressed two questions:

1. Are public schools in Arkansas, according to teacher and principals, complying with requirements for the evaluation of teachers as outlined by the Arkansas State Board of Education?
2. Do teachers and principals agree with regard to the focus, purpose, and process of teacher evaluation in Arkansas? (p. 76).

In answer to the first question, a majority of respondents agreed that teacher evaluations fell within the specified requirements dictated by the Arkansas State Board of Education. With regard to the second query, although principals and teachers believed evaluations were designed to improve instruction, many teachers did not think that it was the primary purpose of the evaluation process (Dawson, 1993, p. 79). At the time of publishing, this study determined that the State of Arkansas was following a solid plan for teacher evaluation, including elements of

faculty input, training, staff development, teacher observations, conferences, growth plans, and individual improvement plans (Dawson, 1993, p. 83).

In reviewing the literature, Danielson (2011) said there must be skilled evaluators who are supportive of teachers in various ways. They must serve dual roles as instructional coaches and administrators. Each evaluator must understand levels of performance and engage teachers in conversations that lead to change in practice. Moran (2006) discussed the role of technology in teacher-to-student and teacher-to-teacher interactions, stating that communication can be enhanced through e-mail, bulletin boards, and mobile devices.

In 2008, Nolan and Hoover defined supervision as the “organizational function concerned with promoting teacher growth, leading to improvement in teaching performance and greater student learning” (p. 6). They identified the goal of the supervision process to be a collective activity through which many different steps or activities enable teacher growth and development; not a process in which supervisors make decisions on teacher performance. In contrast, they defined teacher evaluation as “an organization function designed to make comprehensive judgments concerning teacher performance and competence for the purposes of personnel decisions such as tenure and continuing employment” (Nolan & Hoover, 2008, p. 6).

In this process, the instructional leader of a building holistically considers a teacher’s performance. The administrator considers instruction in the classroom and professional responsibilities in the academic setting to make a summative evaluation on the quality of a teacher’s performance. According to McEwan (2003), “Effective instructional leaders take personal responsibility for making sure that trustworthy research and proven practices are talked about frequently and demonstrated ably in their schools” (p. 36). Oliva and Pawlas (1997)

advocate for supervisors to provide internal consistency in subject matter and levels in the school system (p. 42).

Teacher Evaluation in the 21st Century

Since the NCLB mandate in 2001, discussion proliferated on how student academic achievement can be increased in American schools (Barnes & Miller, 2001; Bernstein, 2004; Colby et al., 2002; Danielson & McGreal, 2000; DeSander, 2000; Guskey, 2000; Holland, 2004; Lawrence, Vachon, Leake, & Leake, 2001; Ovando, 2001; Peterson, 2000, 2002, 2004a, 2004b, 2006; Peterson, Kelly, & Caskey, 2002; Peterson, Steven, & Mack, 2001; Peterson, Wahlquist, Esparza-Brown, & Mukhopadhyay, 2003) . This section reviews research in the 21st century, displayed in Table 2.6.

Goe et al (2008) stated that, teacher effectiveness cannot be accurately measured by students' test scores. Rather, certain characteristics define effective teachers, including setting high expectations for students, regular attendance, seeking promotions, cooperating with colleagues, using a variety of resources, regularly assessing student learning, and adapting instruction to meet student needs (Goe et al., 2008). Evaluation of teachers should measure all these factors, not only the standardized test scores of students. Goe et al. suggested these guidelines be followed for evaluation:

1. Multiple measures should be used for evaluation:
2. The purpose of the evaluation should be identified by the evaluator:
3. Validity should not be assumed by the evaluator:
4. Student test gains are only one component:
5. All stakeholders should be involved in the decision-making process: and
6. Factor in the cost of the evaluation system. (Goe et al., 2008, pp. 24–25)

Table 2.6

Literature Describing Teacher Evaluation in the 21st Century

Author	Research	Methods	Conclusions
Danielson, 2003	Book	Document	Outline the <i>Framework for Teaching</i> model and its components.
DeSander, 2000	Article	Literary review	Discussed merit pay and teacher evaluation.
Goe, et al., 2008	Document	Literature review	Synthesized the literature in the field
Gordon et al., 2006	Document	Literature Review	Assessed teacher effectiveness based on job performance
Holland, 2004	Digest	Document	Described key features of accountability systems
Mathers et al., 2008	Document	Information analysis	Described options for state and districts on teacher evaluation
Milanowski, Prince, & Koppich, 2007	Document	Literature review/information Analysis	Reviewed teacher observations in the classroom
Peterson, 2000	Book	Literature Review	Explored basic questions about the nature of education reform. Review data and presentation
Peterson et al., 2001	Article	Literature Review	Current Practices within the state of Pennsylvania
Pennsylvania State Education Association, 2010	Article	Literature Review	Reflected on the status of teacher evaluation
Toch & Rothman, 2008	Article	Literature Review	Current Practices within the State of Pennsylvania

Note. A review of current practices in Evaluation and accountability systems in K-12 schools.

Several problems are inherent in teacher evaluations (Toch & Rothman, 2008). The NCLB's definition of *highly qualified* has made some school districts value credentials over performance. Teachers with higher credentials earn larger salaries, providing no incentive for teachers with lower degrees to work hard. Thus, in some school districts, teacher evaluations have low priority. When these districts do implement evaluations, they may consist of a checkmark list performed by supervisors during a quick observation. Standardized test scores are a direct method of assessing performance. However, only half of teachers teach subjects that are assessed through standardized testing. Additionally, standardized testing usually assesses low-level skills. Evaluation programs should be linked to professional-development programs so teachers can be given an opportunity to increase their instructional skills (Toth & Rothman, 2008).

Gordon et al. (2006) argued that certification does not mean a teacher is effective. The efficacy of a teacher should be measured after they have been teaching. Evaluation must occur on the job and include reliable measurement. Gordon et al. stated that the way to evaluate teachers is by first reducing entry barriers to the teaching profession. Certification should not be the most important factor for incoming teachers. It is their content-area knowledge that is important for their professional success. Tenure should not be granted to those who consistently underperform in the classroom. Gordon argued that principals and districts should rank teachers based on student-assessment data. Districts would only rehire low-performing teachers by requesting permission from the district and public notification (2006, p. 45). This policy should only be applied to newly hired teachers, not tenured teachers.

Gordon et al. (2006) advocated offering bonuses to high-quality teachers working in poverty-stricken areas. These bonuses would be reserved for teachers with the highest

evaluation scores in schools serving a demographic 75% or above the poverty level. Gordon et al. also argued that evaluation should be comprised of several different measures of teacher performance. Examples of these measures are student scores and evaluations conducted by peers, principals, district evaluators, and parents. Teacher portfolios would also be evidence of teaching practices. According to Gordon et al., licensure, degrees, coursework taken, score on tests, and data from one period in time are all ineffective measures of teaching quality. To ensure the goal of fair evaluation measures, teachers and other stakeholders must be allowed to participate in the design of the evaluation, and the measure needs to be subject to public review (Gordon et al., 2006). Such measures of evaluation would improve students' academic achievement and buoy teachers' status.

Mathers et al. (2008) noted that research consistently has shown that effective teaching equals student achievement. Evaluators should factor in all student outcomes: behavior, content-based student learning, and strategies used by students during the evaluation process: (a) lesson plans should reflect rigor and goal-specific content and objectives, (b) observation should be performed by a trained evaluator, (c) portfolios should be developed by the teacher to reflect their professional growth and students' academic achievement, (d) data should be tracked and kept over time to evaluate student growth and improvement, and (e) samples of students' work should be kept for evidence of instruction and data.

Milanowski et al. (2007) argued there are benefits to using observations as a measure of evaluating teacher performance. Observations make more sense than relying on test scores, which are not the sole responsibility of teachers. Observations are helpful in providing feedback and direction for improvement. Milanowski recommended the following ways to make observations an effective measure for teacher evaluation:

1. Ensure that detailed rubrics are used, clearly defining levels of performance.
2. Be clear about which evidence shows good teaching and how that evidence will be collected.
3. Evaluators must be trained in the process of collecting evidence.
4. Several evaluators should be used, trained to be consistent in how they conduct evaluations.
5. Evaluators' performance must be monitored and held accountable.

Ultimately, Milanowski et al. (2007) argued that the evaluation process, regardless of the instruments used to evaluate teachers, must include fairness and evenhandedness in how evaluations are conducted, irrespective of teachers' tenure or longevity in a teaching position.

The questions that should be asked about any evaluation system used should include the following:

1. Does the system clearly outline for teachers what is needed to get a positive evaluation?
2. Is the system aligned to support evaluation results by providing concise feedback?
3. Are evaluators highly trained and can they give relevant feedback?
4. Is their district building teacher support for the evaluation process?
5. What does professional development look like and is it available to everyone?
6. Will the teacher and the evaluator be mutually accepting of the process? (Milanowski et al., 2007, p.112)

As Milanowski et al. (2007) showed there is some consensus about the elements of a quality teacher-evaluation system. Test scores are not accurate indicators of teacher effectiveness in the classroom, as many factors outside the teacher's control play a part in how students perform. Additionally, evaluation should not be seen as a method to punish teachers for poor performance; instead, evaluations should be used to gauge what type of professional development is needed to help the ineffective teacher become a highly qualified one. As

Danielson (2008) noted, teachers should not stop learning how to be better teachers and how to improve and create new instructional strategies. The next section will examine alternative evaluation models.

Alternative Evaluation Models

Two alternative evaluation models will be discussed in this section: Resources for these models are shown in Table 2.7.

Table 2.7

Alternative Evaluation Model

Author	Research	Methods	Conclusions
Arens & Urquhart, 2012	Article	Information analysis	Used data in teacher-evaluation benefits and challenges
Davis & Goodwin, 2011	Article	Information analysis/Literature review	Presented an overview of the McREL teacher-evaluation model
Goodwin, 2012	Article	Literature review	Discussed reforming schools through effective teacher-evaluation systems
Marzano, 2009	Article	Literature review	Provided the role of school leadership in the evaluation process
Marzano, 2010	Article	Document/Literature review	Reflected on teacher excellence
Marzano & Walters, 2009	Article	Literature review	Described the impact of district leadership on evaluation
Schooling, 2011	Article	Literature review	Presented new concepts in teacher evaluation
Tuzzeo, 2012	Article	Literature review/analysis	Evaluated evaluation models most used by districts
Urquhart, 2012	Article	Literature review	Described the evolution of school reform in reference to teacher evaluation

Note. A review of the literature that supports the importance of effective school leadership on evaluation.

The Marzano model is currently being used in 44 states (Schooling, 2011). It promotes a collaborative environment among educators through a central focus on feedback between teachers, administrators, and peers. Teachers receive professional-development services in the form of online, in-person, and facilitated study groups.

Teaching is challenging and cognitively complex work that requires a deep understanding of each student, curriculum, instruction, and assessment in ways that enable all students to be successful. Our definition of an effective teacher is one who makes instructional decisions that produce student learning gains. (Schooling, 2011, para.12).

An effective teacher is one who has an understanding of the big picture of the educational system and continues to grow and develop as a professional. Marzano focused on the relationship of cause and effect in model and student learning. The model includes four domains: (a) classroom strategies and behaviors; (b) preparing and planning; (c) reflecting on teaching; and (d) collegiality and professionalism (as cited in Schooling, 2011). The domains are interdependent and include 60 elements. Domain 1 is the most complex, containing 41 of the 60 elements that focus on lesson segments and teacher activity in the classroom. There are three main categories in Domain 1: (a) lesson segments involving routine events, (b) lesson segments addressing content, and (c) lesson segments enacted on the spot (Schooling, 2011). Marzano (2010) emphasized the importance of a well-articulated knowledge base in the classroom that is not only informed by a multitude of teaching strategies, but also knows the appropriate situations to use them. A framework of nine types of segments that commonly occur in the classroom are listed and analyzed to determine specific teaching strategies for each situation:

1. Communicating learning goals, tracking student progress, and celebrating success
2. Establishing or maintaining rules and procedures

3. Introducing new content (critical input lessons)
4. Practicing knowledge and deepening lessons
5. Generating hypotheses and testing lessons (knowledge-application lessons)
6. Increasing student engagement
7. Recognizing and acknowledging adherence and lack of adherence to classroom rules and procedures
8. Establishing and maintaining effective relationships with students
9. Communicating high expectations for every student (Marzano, 2010, p.1).

Marzano and Waters (2009) described high-quality teachers as possessing experience, licensure, and advanced-level professional certification (p. 2). “Fostering high levels of pedagogical knowledge can also dramatically enhance the quality of teaching in a district” (Marzano & Waters, 2009, p. 3). Marzano and Waters (2009) found a positive relationship between teachers with high-quality characteristics and the effective establishment of firm rules and goals for the classroom.

To help teachers assist students in processing information, Marzano (2009) outlined five elements that create an effective strategy (pp. 86–87). The first element, “chunking,” involves breaking down information into smaller pieces that are easier to grasp. The second element, “scaffolding,” organizes the smaller pieces of information into a logical and systematic order. “Interacting” facilitates the processing of information as students work together to identify content and clarify any areas of confusion. The fourth element, “pacing,” identifies the speed at which the teacher goes through the material: neither too quickly nor too slowly. “Monitoring” is when teachers check with the students to ensure information is understood, and reteach if necessary. “When executed well, this process dramatically increases students’ understanding of

new information across content areas and at every grade level, which makes it a strategy that all teachers can use to great benefit” (Marzano, 2009, p. 87).

Davis and Goodwin (2011) discussed the McREL teacher-evaluation instrument as an evaluation system that is driven by a rubric, is formative in nature, and is web-based (para. 1). Designed by teachers, principals, and researchers, it is regulated to the In TASC standards. The McREL evaluation system has been used by more than 10 states, including Colorado, Indiana, and North Carolina. More than 40 years of research has gone into the pilot testing of this program. Although there is currently no rigorous data on the effectiveness of McREL, Davis and Goodwin reported that “Surveys of teacher working conditions in North Carolina found higher levels of job satisfaction among teachers in those districts using the instrument than in those that were not” (para. 3).

McREL defined “good teaching” as highly effective teachers that challenge their students, are intentional in their teaching, and create positive classroom environments (Davis & Goodwin, 2011, para. 4–6). Tuzzeo (2012) stated that excellent students become high-quality teachers, but “only 23 percent of teacher recruits in the United States come from the top third highest-performing college students” (p. 9). In the McREL model, rubrics support good teaching by providing teachers and principals with specific goals, as well as opportunities to evaluate their own skills and performance (Tuzzeo, 2012). Quality instruction of teachers and administrators is ensured through 2–3 days of training to create comprehension of the evaluation process, rubrics, and how to navigate the web-based application (Davis & Goodwin, 2011, para. 9). The McREL system does not have to operate independently of other instructional models:

Although McREL’s instructional framework guided the creation of our system, we do not require schools and districts to adopt our model of instruction as a condition of using the tool. Indeed, school systems that use other instructional models have found that our

instrument nicely complements and reinforces these other models for creating more uniform approaches to instruction. (Davis & Goodwin, 2011, para. 8)

Rather than base teacher efficacy solely on student achievement, the McREL model uses several methods of feedback to evaluate and assist teacher performance in the classroom.

Urquhart (2012) suggested that productive schools that show significant and stable increases in student performance are those with established clear and rigid academic guidelines (pp. 2–3). To support school districts that evaluate teacher performance on student test scores, the McREL research team incorporates the test scores into an algorithm to account for a certain percentage of a teacher’s complete evaluation score (Davis & Goodwin, 2011, para. 10).

The McREL model addresses the issue of student failure. If students do not attend class or suffer from failing grades, they are more likely to drop out of school. Arens and Urquhart (2012) use the McREL model to focus on how to predict and prevent students from dropping out of school. Indicators include (a) 80% or less attendance; (b) out-of-school suspension; and (c) failing mathematics or English (p. 4). The most critical factors in preventing failure are student attendance, academic achievement, and providing academic and social support for students who are at risk (Arens & Urquhart, 2012, p. 4). Goodwin (2012) stated that “Making and uncovering mistakes is all part of the improvement process” (p. 12).

In the next section, I discuss Danielson’s *Framework for Teaching*. This model of evaluation is soon to become the standard for teacher evaluation in Arkansas.

The Danielson Framework for Teaching

According to Danielson (2008, 2011), there are inherent flaws in the ways teachers have been evaluated:

1. Evaluators rarely go beyond the surface when conducting evaluations. They focus on a small number of teacher behaviors that are easily observed, rather than making thoughtful professional judgments.
2. Evaluations are compliance pieces rather than conversation focused on good teaching and professional practices.
3. Evaluations lack follow up and action taken by administrators. Most teachers are dubbed excellent and poor teachers are transferred from school to school.
4. There is no difference in the system between the evaluation of new and experienced teachers.
5. Evaluation tools accommodate the limited knowledge of the principal or assistant principal.

Administrators have knowledge of content, student population, and best practices are limited in scope. (PSEA, 2010, p. 3)

This is demonstrated in Table 2.8

Table 2.8

Literature Describing the Danielson Framework for Teaching

Author	Research	Methods	Conclusions
Danielson, 1996	Book	Document/Literature review	Presented the framework for teaching
Danielson, 2008	Book	Literature review	Guided using the <i>Framework for Teaching</i> .
Danielson, 2011	Article	Literature review	Described the role of evaluation in teacher professional growth.

Note. Outlines the history and implementation of the Danielson Framework in educational systems globally.

In contrast, Danielson’s (1996) vision of a professional-evidence framework supports teachers developing comprehensive portfolios of any professional work (PSEA, 2010). Their portfolios then may be used to support them in the evaluation process, to support mentoring and coaching, and to help teachers reflect on their own teaching experiences. Some items that Danielson suggested be included in a portfolio are classroom video tapes, units of study, weekly

lesson plans, assessment plans, various artifacts that show evidence of student assignments and homework, evidence that teachers understand which resources are available and can match students to those resources based on their needs in the classroom, student work samples, and reflections on their teaching experiences. Other important evidence that teachers can include are parent-contact logs, professional-growth plans, and contributions made to the professional community. Table 2.9 illustrates the components of the Danielson Model.

Table 2.9 *The Danielson Model*

Domain 1: Planning and Preparation	1a	Demonstrating Knowledge of Content and Pedagogy	Domain 2: Classroom Environment	2a	Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport
	1b	Demonstrating Knowledge of Students		2b	Establishing a Culture for Learning
	1c	Setting Instructional Outcomes		2c	Managing Classroom Procedures
	1d	Demonstrating Knowledge of Resources		2d	Managing Student Behavior
	1e	Designing Coherent Instruction		2e	Organizing Physical Space
	1f	Designing Student Assessments			
Domain 4: Professional Responsibilities	4a	Reflecting on Teaching	Domain 3: Instruction	3a	Communicating With Students
	4b	Maintaining Accurate Records		3b	Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques
	4c	Communicating With Families		3c	Engaging Students in Learning
	4d	Participating in a Professional Community		3d	Using Assessment in Instruction
	4e	Growing and Developing Professionally		3e	Demonstrating Flexibility and Responsiveness
	4f	Showing Professionalism			

Note: The Danielson Framework for Teaching Evaluation.

According to Danielson (2008), following this model helps teacher understand the evaluation process better and facilitates their recognition of how they can best improve their instructional skills. She goes on to state that (2011), the evaluation of teachers should begin with a shared definition of a good teacher. Danielson argued that most people do not know how to verbalize the attributes of a good teacher, but know what they are. Everyone must share the understanding of a good teacher—teachers, mentors, coaches, administrators, and supervisors (Danielson, 2011). By recognizing examples of the different components of classroom practices, skilled evaluators should be able to align those practices with specific levels of performance. Then evaluators must engage teachers in productive conversations about instructional practices. Evaluators have to be objective in assessments so teachers accept the judgments as valid and other stakeholders have confidence in the results (Danielson, 2011).

Evaluations must promote professional learning (Danielson, 2008, 2011). As Danielson (2011) noted, “Teacher evaluation typically serves this more developmental purpose through professional conversations between teachers and colleagues who observe in their classrooms and between teachers and supervisors following formal or informal observations” (p. 37).

Professional development is not a program to fix the teacher whose instructional skills are poor, but because teaching is difficult, there is always room for improvement. Every lesson can be improved in some way. Teachers need, like other professionals, to be engaged in lifelong learning so their instructional skills can match the needs of an ever-changing school population (Danielson, 2011).

Evaluation of the Evaluation Models

This section evaluates the teaching evaluation models discussed in Chapter 2: Marzano Causal Teacher Evaluation, McREL Teacher Evaluation System, and Danielson *Framework for Teaching*. The three models are evaluated with regard to their measurement of achievement, incorporation of standardized test scores, and definition for what makes a good teacher. Table 2.10 discusses the evaluation models outlined in the literature review.

Table 2.10

Evaluation of the Evaluation Models

Author	Research	Methods	Conclusions
Gilbertson, 2012	Article	Literature review	Described the impact of teacher evaluation
Hatfield Hutchinson-Lupardus, &Hadfield Synder, 2012	Article	Information analysis	Reviewed policy alignment to teacher evaluation
Hazi & Rucinski, 2009	Article	Information analysis/Literature review	Discussed policy and evaluation
Marzano, 2011	Book	Information analysis	Comprehensively reviewed teaching as a profession
Marzano, 2012	Article	Literature review	Reviewed teaching as a profession
V. Strauss, 2012	Article	Document/Literature review	Described the value-added impact of teacher evaluation

Note. A review of the literature of the most prevalent evaluation models used by administrators and school districts

The Marzano model uses rating scales of 0–4 as an evaluation tool: 0—Not using; 1—Beginning; 2—Developing; 3—Applying; and 4—Innovating (Schooling, 2011, para. 2). This tool is meant encourage teachers to focus on their practice and receive feedback. McREL does

not use numbers as a rating system. Instead, it “identifies specific, observable behaviors that teachers can learn and master to improve their performance to become ‘proficient,’ ‘accomplished,’ and the top rating, ‘distinguished’” (Davis & Goodwin, 2011, para.8).

According to the Danielson Group (2012),

The Framework may be used for many purposes, but its full value is realized as the foundation for professional conversations among practitioners as they seek to enhance their skill in the complex task of teaching. The Framework may be used as the foundation of a school or district’s mentoring, coaching, professional development, and teacher evaluation processes, thus linking all those activities together and helping teachers become more thoughtful practitioners.” (Retrieved from www.danielsongroup.org)

It is important for a balance to be found between strict rating scales and more laid-back approaches, because when teacher evaluations are not conducted with integrity, students suffer. However, Gilbertson (2012) cautioned that evaluations must consist of more than student test scores, lest hardworking teachers be unfairly punished. Marzano (2012) wrote, “an evaluation system that fosters teacher learning will differ from one whose aim is to measure teacher competence” (p. 14). V. Strauss (2012) stated,

Policymakers have tended to look at the teacher evaluation problem like measurement experts rather than school leaders. Measurement experts naturally want validity and reliable measures—ones that accurately capture teacher effectiveness. School leaders, on the other hand, can and should be more concerned about whether the entire process leads to valid and reliable conclusions about teacher effectiveness. (Retrieved from <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/answer-sheet/wp/2012/12/04/the-future-of-teacher-evaluation-how-value-added-could-be-used/>)

Although these evaluation models agree that instructional objectives should be clearly communicated, Marzano’s (2011) found that some teaching approaches were ineffective or detrimental to student achievement (p. 86). Marzano focused on the relationship of cause and effect in the model and in student learning. Effective teachers produce better students, evidenced by a study reporting that students assigned to the most effective teachers achieved higher

academic grades on a consistent basis (Hatfield Hutchison-Lupardus & Hadfield Snyder, 2012, p. 16).

Hazi and Rucinski (2009) explained that evaluation was originally intended to improve base skills of the workforce to reduce the need for constant supervision. McREL operates on the assumption that good teachers are created, not born. Therefore, they should be supported by professional development and research-based strategies (Davis & Goodwin, 2011). The Marzano and Danielson models agree with this assessment, but also emphasize the responsibility of teachers to take initiative to be prepared in the classroom. Each of the evaluation models define “good teaching” slightly differently. McREL stated that good teachers are creative in the classroom, positive, challenge their students, and teach with intention (Davis & Goodwin, 2011).

The Danielson model is a bit more vague, suggesting that all people know what a good teacher is, although it may be hard to put into words. Danielson said it is most important for teachers and administrators to have a shared definition of the term, to aid communication and expectations. Marzano emphasized the complexity of teaching, and the commitment of teachers to understand students, curriculum, instruction, and assessment. Schooling (2011) offered, “our definition of an effective teacher is one who makes instructional decisions that produce student learning gains” (para. 8).

Significance

Summative evaluation has been the primary tool used by districts to evaluate teachers in the past. It has been a checklist system that has little or no value in advancing the professional growth of the teacher. The need for review of current district teacher-evaluation systems has been fueled by additional monies made available to districts through Race to the Top grants.

Also, as in the case of Arkansas, districts need to apply and receive waivers under NCLB while a comprehensive differentiated-evaluation system is being developed.

The goal of a teacher-evaluation system is two-fold. In having a systematic evaluation system, teachers and evaluators have an organized system of evaluation, monitoring, and support for novice and for experienced teachers. The most significant barriers to achieve that goal are the improper training of the evaluator, distrust of the process by teachers, and inadequate training of staff.

According to Peterson (2004b), if valid evaluations are to be conducted, evaluators must be experts in the areas of teaching and learning—with clear understanding of the relationship between the two—and also be able to script and record objective data. This data should then be used for meaningful conferences based on the evidence.

In a recent article by Darling-Hammond (2012), the author reported that the cornerstone of school reform is teacher evaluation. Using this foundational piece, regardless of all initiatives or efforts by districts, teachers are the key to success or failure of students' academic success. Skilled teachers and highly qualified administrators are fundamental to meeting the needs of schools growing diverse student populations (Darling-Hammond, 2012). Gates (2013) urged caution in rushing to establish evaluation systems in the nation. Gates contributed, "If we aren't careful to build a system that provides feedback and that teacher's trust, this opportunity to dramatically improve the U.S. education system will be wasted" (para. 6).

There is no uniform training and support for teachers in training to ensure they can teach a diverse population. The evaluation system begins at the very beginning of the teacher-training program. Donaldson and Stobbe (2000) identified that teacher evaluation is a process designed to increase the achievement of students while providing a collaborative process that focuses on

teachers' professional growth. However, historically, teachers controlled the process. Blumberg and Jonas (1987) stated that many teachers believe evaluation has no meaning and is more a compliance issue for the administrator conducting the evaluation than helpful to them in educating students.

Conclusion

The review of literature clearly showed that a more comprehensive type of evaluation system is need in school districts throughout the country. Although educators have several good models for evaluation, they are only as good as the system put in place to train, monitor, and hold staff accountable in using them.

Researchers consistently stated that teachers, parents, and the community must commit to a system of evaluation, and more importantly, have a part in its development. Key elements of quality evaluations systems were identified in the literature and many states have adopted and are successfully implement high-quality systems. The literature was favorable to the Danielson model and confirmed that it had all of the major components needed for high-quality differentiated teacher-evaluation programs.

Chapter Two included research on the reasons for a teacher-evaluation system and the advantages of implementation. It was found in the research that in the United States, approximately 65% of schools district use a checklist model of evaluation. Also reviewed was the impact of evaluation on student achievement. Lastly, the literature review considered teachers' perception of the evaluation system. Chapter Three presents the methodology for the proposed study.

Chapter Three:

Methods

Introduction

This qualitative phenomenological study examined the perceptions of teachers and administrators regarding the implementation of the Danielson's (2008) *Framework for Teaching* in two high schools in Arkansas. These high schools were part of the program chosen to pilot Danielson Teacher Evaluation System in the State of Arkansas. This chapter includes a discussion of the research design, sampling procedures, data collection, and data analysis, as well as considerations of the study and ethical considerations.

Data analyses were achieved through identification of categories which emerged across all data. The themes were identified when like themes were repeated four or more times. Classifications of themes were presented through axial and sample of open codes. I was able to display major themes by participants in a descriptive matrix.

Research Design

According to Creswell (2005), when a researcher is interested in understanding the meaning of a phenomenon, a qualitative methodology is the best choice. The quality in the data sought in a phenomenological study is concreteness (Wertz, 2005). When looking at a certain phenomenon, a researcher gathers details of person's lived experience rather than abstract interpretation of a situation. Thus, in a qualitative study like this one, the researcher uses open-ended interview questions as the primary data-collection tool (see Appendix A). The researcher asked participants questions about their experiences with the teacher-evaluation process, with emphasis on the newly accepted Danielson *Framework for Teaching*. Those questions included, "How has the evaluation process affected your instructional practice?" Questions helped me

ease participants into the interview so they were comfortable talking about how they perceived the teacher-evaluation process.

Research Question

How do pilot users of the Danielson Evaluation System perceive this model in two mid-south high schools?

Research Design and Timeline

This study employed a qualitative methodology design, guided by the theoretical framework of phenomenology. In this study, I examined the perceptions of teachers and administrators in the two high schools that piloted the Danielson teacher-evaluation system. In seeking out participants' perceptions of the Danielson teacher-evaluation system the following questions were included in the study:

1. Tell me about your teacher evaluation system.
2. Describe your feelings about the Danielson Framework.
3. Discuss your experience with the Danielson Model.
4. Tell me about your experience with the Framework and its use as an evaluation model in your classroom.
5. How does the Danielson Model affect your Classroom?
6. Does this evaluation system fairly reflect your experience in the classroom?
7. Are there other areas not covered by this methodology?
8. How would you compare this evaluation models to others?

The University of Arkansas Institutional Review Board application was submitted requesting permission to conduct the study. The University's Institutional Review Board approved the study in late October (IRB Protocol #13-10-194; see Appendix B). All participants

received an invitation to participate in the study that outlined the purpose of the study, the time commitment required of each participant, assurance of anonymity, and the right to withdraw from the study at any point before, during, or after data collection without any consequences (see Appendix C). Participants were also informed that their names and identities would not be disclosed during the reporting of findings. The data collected remains in the researcher's control, stored in a locked file cabinet for three years after the completion of the study. After three years, the data will be destroyed.

I utilized a data-driven design and timeline were implemented, to make certain that the study had prolonged engagement and persistent observations. I am a licensed teacher and administrator in Arkansas with 14 years of experience. I am a certified Teachscape evaluator of the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* evaluation tool.

An ongoing review of related literature was conducted throughout the study. Phase 1 of the study included seeking approval from the district superintendent and building principal. The letter granting approval of the study is located in Appendix B. Phase 2 consisted of teacher interviews, administrator interviews and observations by the researcher. Document collection was performed throughout the study, including school demographic data, teacher-profile data, and professional learning communities agendas. Table 3.1 provides a timeline of the phases that were used to conduct the study.

Table 3.1

Phases of Case Study

Phase	Date	Activities
Phase I	October 2013	Meeting with superintendent/building principal to seek approval to conduct study.
Phase II	October 2013	Standardized open-ended interview questions with principals and teachers
Phase III	October–November 2013	Document collection and data analysis

Note. Organization of the case study.

The principal phases of this qualitative case study were: (a) open-ended individual interviews with six high school teachers and two high school administrators; (b) document collection to confirm school implementation of the evaluation tool; and (c) observations.

The research was engaged with the schools throughout the three data-collection phases using the phenomenology theoretical framework to structure the study. According to Farber (1943), phenomenology provides meaningful reflection by the researcher and thick textual descriptions on the researched phenomenon. Table 3.2 displays the phenomenology characteristics that were used for the study.

Table 3.2

Phenomenology Characteristics

Date	Activities
Data-collection forms	Primary Source is interviews with individuals. Documents and observations also can be used by the researcher
Data-analysis strategies	Data Analysis using: Selective coding, Open coding, and Axial coding
Written report	Writing, rewriting and reflection reveal the essence that describes the lived experience.

Note. Defines the characteristics of phenomenological research.

Site and Sampling Procedures

This study used purposeful sampling to obtain participants for the research. Creswell (2009) noted that purposive sampling involves studying the entire population of a limited group. Two high schools that used the Danielson teacher-evaluation system were selected to reveal how the Danielson System was implemented in the two schools. The study aimed to discern the lived experiences of administrators and teachers in two high schools as they underwent teacher evaluations. Participants received a letter of invitation and explanation of the study. They agreed to volunteer for the study and to elaborate on their experiences while implementing the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* in their schools. Teachers and administrators were asked to answer questions based on their experiences with the new evaluation process.

The following procedures were followed for collection of data in this study:

1. Permission was obtained from the Institutional Review Board at the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville to conduct the study.
2. Permission was obtained from the district under study to conduct the study in the high school.
3. Invitation letters to participate in the study were sent to all administrators and teachers in the high school under study.
4. Six high school teachers and two high school administrators were selected to participate in the study from those who volunteered. All participants were asked to sign a letter of consent before any collection of data began (see Appendix D).
5. Interviews lasted between 45 minutes and an hour. The interviews took place at a convenient place for the interviewee at a mutually agreeable time. Participants were asked to consent to having their interviews recorded.

6. Teacher participants were given the opportunity to share their portfolios, and administrator participants to show the instruments they used in their evaluation of faculty.
7. After interviews data were transcribed, each participant was given the opportunity to look over the transcripts to verify that the transcriptions accurately reflected what had been stated during the interview.
8. The notes taken during interviews were used to aid in the analysis of the data.

Data Analysis

To achieve triangulation of the data, interview transcripts, documents offered by teachers and administrators, the researcher's journal notes from the interviews, document collection, and notes from school observations (Creswell, 2009). The data were read through in the first round of analysis. In the second round of analysis; the data was reread and sifted through for common words and phrases, to identify themes that were developed for reporting of the data (open coding; Creswell, 2009). The data were read for a third time to develop themes that was used to report the data. A quotation from each participant was selected to support any themes that might have been developed during data analysis.

The Role of the Researcher

Reflexivity is defined as the intersection of researcher, participants, and the interpretation of the data collected (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). Because my role is an educator and administrator, it was important that I not let biases about teacher evaluations sway the research study. For example, interview questions could not guide participants to answer questions in a particular way. It was important that I not indicate agreement or disagreement with the participants as they responded during the interview. In that way, it helped curb bias from

entering into the study. I, as a participant observer, conducted observations in the school setting. Through my lived experiences as a teacher and administrator was able to denote and accurately record data. My task was to collect the data without entering into personal discussion that would reveal personal feelings about the evaluation process.

Trustworthiness and Credibility

Interviews, document collection, and observations were used to ensure trustworthiness of the data. For research to be functional, it must have credibility. This concept was supported by informants and respondents who were credible, by triangulation, member checks, prolonged and persistent engagement, and the organization of an audit trail (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Patton, 1990)

It was important to establish trustworthiness in the qualitative data to demonstrate the credibility and relevance of the research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Patton (1990) stated that data should be collected in a manner that takes multiple perspectives into account. Lincoln and Guba (1985) used a set of criteria to evaluate the trustworthiness of research: credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability. Credibility is established by avoiding perceptual distortions and showing that the research was conducted in a manner that accurately represents the subject. Dependability is secured when the researcher considers any changing circumstances in the study, as well as how these changes could have affected the research. Conformability refers to the ability of the data itself to agree with the findings and implications of the research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). These criteria help ensure trustworthiness in the data. Lincoln and Guba (1985) identified six methods for assuring trustworthiness and controlling bias: prolonged engagement, persistent engagement, and triangulation, peer debriefing, member checks, and audit trail.

Prolonged Engagement

Lincoln and Guba (1985) stated that “The purpose of prolonged engagement is to render the inquirer open to multiple influences” (p. 4). Staying in the research field for a prolonged period of time would allow me to see and establish patterns from the data. The process of data collection was completed over a period of three months. The findings of the case study were validated throughout the various phases of the research design; including extensive interviews, observations, and document collection. I have more than 10 years of professional expertise in the teacher evaluation process, which allowed for extensive data collection in a short period of time.

Persistent Engagement

The second category of trustworthiness that Lincoln and Guba (1985) identified is persistent engagement. “The purpose of persistent observation is to identify those characteristics and elements in the situation that are most relevant to the problem or issue being pursued and focusing on them in detail” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 304). Examining the depth of data revealed during research guards against the human tendency to discard seemingly irrelevant information. In qualitative research, it is important to go through the process of identifying all data, then giving reasons for eliminating or accepting each item. This process helps guard against reasonable doubt.

Triangulation

Triangulation is described by Lincoln and Guba (1985) and Patton (1990) as a comparison. Researchers use triangulation as a tool to identify and understand the subject being researched. “It is a process by which the researcher can guard against the accusation that a study’s findings are simply an artifact of a single method, a single source, or a single

investigator's biases" (Denzin, 1978). Lincoln and Guba (1985) defined four modes of triangulation: methodical triangulation, data triangulation, researcher triangulation, and theoretical triangulation. After data collection the goal was to concentrate efforts on data triangulation. Observational data, interview data, and documents were collected during the study.

Peer Debriefing

Peer debriefing is defined by Lincoln and Guba (1985) as a method of testing working hypotheses with peers who may hold an opposing point of view (p. 310). In this study, graduate students scrutinized the research. Peer debriefing is a way to get feedback from people who understand research, and thereby help the researcher's interpretation of the data attained trustworthiness. This formative evaluation would be conducted with other graduate-student researchers. Committee members would provide summative judgment.

Member Checks

Member-check interviews allow researchers to verify their interpretation of interviews, observations and documents with the participants. This check increases the accuracy of data, interpretation of data, and also the quantity of data. Interviews and informal questions would be to help clarify data. Participants in the study were given the opportunity to clarify, expand, or make corrections to responses given to interview questions. Qualitative data and interviews were shared confidentially with respondents for their feedback to the interview.

Audit Trail

Lincoln and Guba (1985) identified an audit trail as the last category. The researcher will manage the audit trail for three years; then dispose of any data that is inconsistent with Institutional Review Board rules and regulations. The audit trail consists of the proposal, original data, the researcher's journals, notes that were taken, and the final report.

To confirm data, audit trails were established by the researcher. Data were stored securely on a USB storage device. Components of the data for this study include the following:

- Interview questions
- Recordings of interviews
- Interview transcripts
- Field notes
- Data-analysis notes
- Results of data analysis

Summary

In summary, interview questions used for this study were given to selected teachers and administrators in the studied districts. The focus of the interview questions was to investigate how administrators and teachers perceived the evaluation model, and if there were a felt relationship to student achievement. In addition, observations and documents were collected during the entire research process. The data collection, analyzing techniques, research design, and conversations of this study would hopefully contribute to understandings about how the study might reveal themes about use of the Danielson Model in leading the conversation or may not reveal any themes or interesting results.

Chapter Four:

Data Presentation and Analysis

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore two schools' journey in the implementation of the Danielson Teacher Evaluation System in a mid- south state. This case study of high school teachers' and building principals' involved interviews based on open-ended questions which asked about their personal experience with the piloting of the Danielson Teacher Evaluation System. This study explored issues regarding the piloting, implementation, perceptions and barriers to successful putting into practice of the Teacher Excellence and Support System in two high schools. This study of two high school's implementation of the evaluation system will supplement the research on the impact of a comprehensive teacher evaluation system. More specifically, the Danielson Evaluation system will assist other districts as they transition to the new evaluation model.

This chapter includes an examination and interpretation of the data collected, and a dialogue of significant findings from the study. This chapter will begin with two tables listing the audit-trail notations, a presentation of sample open codes, and selected axial codes. Following the data analysis section, a summary of the findings are presented. The primary sources of data used for this study were interviews with eight high school teachers and two building principals. Eight standardized open-ended interviews were conducted with participants. Interviews, observations, and document collection complete the triangulation for this study.

Audience

The audience of this study included building level administrators, district administrators, district superintendents, legislators, and educators. The goal is to supplement existing findings in

the field of education as it relates to the teacher evaluation process. The objective of this qualitative research study was to answer the research question and to provide other school districts and educational professionals who support the implementation of the Teacher Excellence and Support System, and more specifically the Danielson Evaluation Model.

Transcribed Interviews

For this study the interviews were recorded and transcribed. The reader should also reference the language used in brackets []. These brackets were used as a means of restating the meanings of educational expressions used by the participants. Caution was taken not to alter what the participants meant to share. Parentheses () were used to maintain the anonymity of participants and classify institutions in the school, district, city, and county.

Audit Trail Notations

Table 4.1 is audit- trail notations from interviews and Table 4.2 consists of a list of audit-trail notations of documents that were used in Chapter Four. The notations identify each of the participant's observations and collected documents used in this study. All participants and documents were identified in the notations through the utilization of a code containing letters and numbers. The letter T was used to identify teachers; the letters BP was used to identify building principals and the letter S to identify schools followed by a number to indicate school one and two. These letters are followed by a number that indicates the interviewee. Following the interview number is a slash and a number that identifies the page of the transcript in which the quotation is found. This process permitted me to retain structured data and ensuring that participants' identities were not revealed to anyone.

Table 4.1

Audit Trail Notations: Interviews

Notation	Participant
S1-T1	Teacher
S1-T2	Teacher
S1-T3	Teacher
S1-T4	Teacher
S2-T1	Teacher
S2-T2	Teacher
S2-T3	Teacher
S2-T4	Teacher
BP-S1	Building Principal
BP-S2	Building Principal

Table 4.2

Audit- Trail Notations: Document

Notation	Type of Document
Doc 1	Pre Conference Questions
Doc 2	Post Conference Questions
Doc 3	Observation Evidence Collection Form
Doc 4	AR TESS Teacher Evaluation Formative/ Self-Assessment Evaluation Form

Data Analysis

A process of organizing and managing the data were used to identify the themes and sub-themes. Each participant’s responses and artifacts were documented by notations. This process involved coding, which is the process of assigning a code to the data for the purpose of classification or identification of the data (Merriam 1998). The examination of the data was completed by hand. The process of coding was achieved by utilizing a three step process which included: open coding, axial coding, and selective coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

The process of coding was achieved by the repeated reading and word by word and line by line analysis of the data looking for repeated topics, themes, and words in the transcriptions. A coding process was utilized to construct and classify major themes from the interviews and transcripts. Open coding allowed key concepts to be labeled, defined, and developed to categories based on their properties to form the axial codes. Axial coding is the process according to Strauss and Corbin (1998) in which the data is put back together from data found during open coding. This procedure was completed on all of the interviews, field notes, observations, and collected documents.

Findings and Major Themes

The findings in this chapter were divided into two subsections: teachers and principals. Triangulation was achieved through interviews, document collection, and observations. This qualitative study focused on perceptions of teachers and administrators in two districts. The data generated four separate categories or major themes. The major themes (axial codes) that emerged from the data collected were (a) role of the students, (b) teacher evaluation system, (c) emotions of teachers, and (d) reflection of the process.

Presentation of Axial Codes for Teachers

The goal of axial coding is to reconstruct data found during the open coding. Axial codes began to surface from the data of the teachers. The axial codes were analyzed and combined to start the development of major themes. Figure 4.1 identifies a sample of the open codes and the four axial codes in the data from the eight high school teachers.

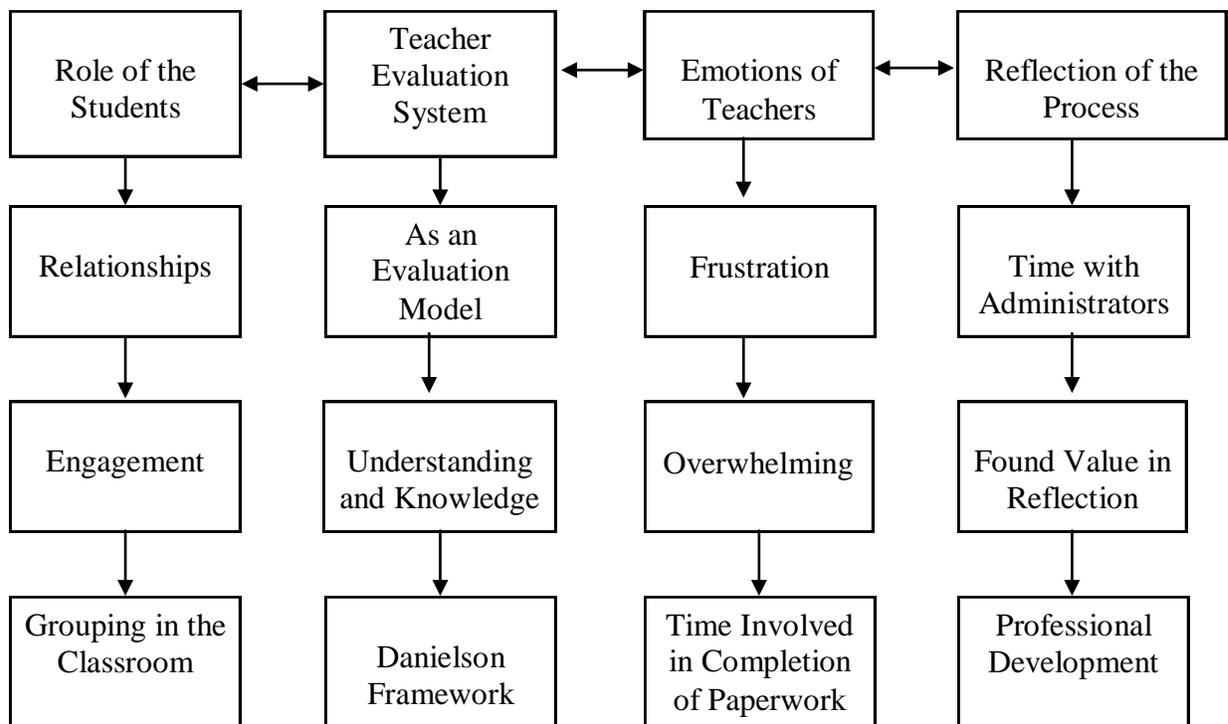


Figure 4.1. Axial codes and samples of open codes of teachers.

Descriptive Matrix for Teachers

Table 4.3 is a theoretically clustered matrix that provides a display of the axial codes, or major themes, which emerged from the collected data of the eight teachers. Data presented in the matrix represents standardized open-ended interviews. Each theoretically clustered matrix is followed by additional data and collected documents to support the major themes.

Table 4.3

Descriptive Matrix: Axial Codes (Major Themes) of High School Teachers

Participant	Role of the Students	Teacher Evaluation System	Emotions of Teachers	Reflection of the Process
S1-T1	Don't address the whole class address individual students, pick on individual students, and make sure they are answering.	Compared to others- It's more in depth. I think that would be my biggest - I've only had one other evaluation model.	I like it a lot. I had most of it when I was in school. It's pretty close to the same thing as the Praxis 3 was and all that.	It's shown me where I have kind of fallen short and what I can do to make my teaching better.
S1-T2	The students are moving around, they are loud but are they engaging in some sort of learning activity. Is the pacing changing frequently so that the students aren't losing attention or getting bored?	But most of the time with evaluations we have gotten to say we want this date and this particular lesson and they let us showcase a really well developed lesson.	It is very overwhelming with a system this large it is very Overwhelming. I guess for a lot of teachers. To sit down for PD and look at all these different items and figure it out.	Maybe not with the model itself, but maybe with the way the model is taught. This might just be some of the presenters that we had and the Professional Development over the past couple of years.
S1-T3	Looking at teacher knowledge of the students themselves all of that I think is very good.	The Danielson Model, because there are different levels, you've got those 4 levels you can realize I am doing it.	I know that going in the actual formal observation was pretty stressful experience for them.	So I think there is a chance for the results not to reflect realistically what's there.
S1-T4	Don't address the whole class address individual students, pick on individual students, and make sure they are answering.	Compared to others- It's more in depth. I think that would be my biggest - I've only had one other evaluation model.	I like it I'm very comfortable with the whole process. I think it covers all the bases.	I like it a lot. I had most of it when I was in school. It's pretty close to the same thing as the Praxis III was and all that.

Participant	Role of the Students	Teacher Evaluation System	Emotions of Teachers	Reflection of the Process
S2-T1	The students are moving around, they are loud but are they engaging in some sort of learning activity. Is the pacing changing frequently so that the students aren't losing attention or getting bored?	But most of the time with evaluations we have gotten to say we want this date and this particular lesson and they let us showcase a really well developed lesson.	It is very overwhelming with a system this large it is very Overwhelming. I guess for a lot of teachers. To sit down for PD and look at all these different items and figure out how to incorporate them.	Maybe not with the model itself, but maybe with the way the model is taught. This might just be some of the presenters that we had and the Professional Development over the past couple of years.
S2-T2	Looking at teacher knowledge of the students themselves all of that I think is very good.	The Danielson Model, because there are different levels, you've got those 4 levels you can realize I am doing it as well as I could.	I know that going in the actual formal observation was pretty stressful experience for them. (Novice Teachers)	So I think there is a chance for the results not to reflect realistically what's there.
S2-T3	All those domains wrap around the fact on how well you really know your students.	I was not exposed much to it very much in college because it is new. So I'm brand new to it.	Paperwork adds a lot of stress cause it is one more thing that I have to get done.	And of course we had our self-evaluation forms that he had us fill out.
S2-T4	And it's hard to let go and let the kids(students) run.	But this framework is going to be student led to be considered distinguished.	Honestly I'm not a fan of it; I think it has some really good point.	Very overwhelming very contradictory, distinguish comes across as impossible to get it.

Role of the Students

In 2004 a study was conducted on the relationship between the evaluation system and student growth and achievement. According to Gallagher (2004) the evaluation system had a statistically significant relationship to class effects that were value added to learning growth (p.

100). All teacher participants in this study made comments related to developing the role of the student in the teacher evaluation process. Gallagher stated that standards based evaluation system showed results that correlated student achievement with a teacher's ability (Gallagher, 2004).

One teacher stated,

As you critique your students, observe your students, and you make those decisions on how you are going to plan your next lesson based on what they achieved. You look at the overall, am I (the teacher) meeting all my frameworks, and are they (the students) achieving. Are the students achieving the outcomes I wanted them to? (S2-T2)

The teachers agreed that understanding and keeping the students' needs and abilities (prioritized) in the classroom was important to the implementation of the model.

One teacher stated,

The Framework helped her understand that she didn't always need to address the whole class, and that it was important to address the individual student and make sure they are answering questions (S1-T1/1).

These sentiments were expressed by another teacher,

I think that it helps reinforce things I was always doing like the assessment and student achievement. We've done that, you do that all through your career, you don't necessarily have the evidence. You do it yourself individual as you critique your students, observe your students. You make those decisions on how you are going to plan your next lessons based on what they achieved and you ask the overall question am I meeting all my frameworks, are the students achieving. (S2-T2/31)

Although teaching and learning were identified by research as key components, researchers (Sergiovanni & Starratt, 1998, p. 278) argued that we must realize that there are those students whose home backgrounds are so chaotic as to cripple their ability to concentrate on academic task. So it is important that teachers build relationships with students as they try to impact the lives of students who are struggling academically. The teachers' commentary voiced

that the teacher-student-relationship is one that must be established and nurtured for both teachers and students to be successful under the evaluation system.

One teacher specifically remarked,

It makes me more conscious, when that students walks in the door. I need to ask them how your day is. It's a reminder that: (1) this is part of my job I need to find out more about them; (2) I need to know more than that his name is Joe Bob (Student) and he sits over in that corner; (3) to me it is the best part of this evaluation system. It is making us learn our students. (S2-T3/37)

The No Child Left Behind (2002) legislation has emphasized the importance of teacher accountability to prepare students for college-and career readiness, but has left little room for the teacher-student relationship to develop a sense of trust and understanding that feeds into those goals. As seen in the above quote, the interview revealed that teachers profoundly felt this sense of loss.

The Teacher Evaluation System

The second major theme from the data was their understanding and opinion concerning the framework as it relates to the Teacher Excellence and Support System (TESS). According to Scriven (1981), a teacher evaluation system has two main purposes: (a) as a formative assessment of teachers that uses data as feedback to develop teacher performance, establish new practices, or change existing practices, and (b) summative evaluation in which administrators make decisions on retention of teachers.

It is also important to understand that beyond the purpose of the evaluation system we must understand the impact of teacher perception on its success or failure. Peterson in 2002 stated that teachers must have a clearly defined statement of purpose in which the function and design of the teacher evaluation process is aligned with the needs and goals of the school district.

He goes on to say that when there is that purpose, teachers are more likely to feel a partnership and are less threatened by the process.

The teachers agreed that the framework was a beneficial tool to reference in lesson planning and establishing their classroom environment.

One teacher stated:

I think that the framework itself when you look at doesn't explain everything but you sit down and you can look at one of the books and you can look at the examples it really goes a long way in explain what each component is and I think that is going to help principals. (S1-T3/7)

The same teacher added, I think pretty much everything is covered, some things are a little bit iffy as to where they fall in the frameworks but for the most part they are covered somehow. (S1-T3/7)

Another teacher commented,

So I think there is a chance for the results not to reflect realistically what's there. You would hope the teachers are professional and they would do that, but the reality is that if the evaluation is being used in terms of a professional assessment that put pressure on the teachers to do well. So unless the observations are unannounced or unless you have elements of the overall evaluations that are, it may not entirely accurate. (S1-T3/11)

They go on to add,

When you are evaluating teachers there is a lot of stuff you have to look at to understand what the teacher is actual accomplishing and the nature of the students they deal with it is part of the Danielson Model. To get Domain 1 you have to know your students and their backgrounds. But the degree to which you can effectively articulate that in a finite measurably way I think it's limited.... When you try to quantify that as the measurement of the evaluation based upon what he or she has done with the students. Depending upon the nature of their (students) background ... it differs from class to class student to student. So quantifying it is one of the things that just... It is an area of general concern on my part you can't quantify people I don't think. (S1-T3/11)

One teacher summed it up by commenting,

My behavior (teacher) lesson plans are more detailed at school. I think they are going to hold are feet to the fire that it needs to follow the framework of the TESS evaluation; technology, multiple variables of answering questions, varied approach for different sections because of blocked schedules ,what they (students) are doing and saying especially if you are being evaluated. (S1-T4/16)

Emotions of Teachers

The third major theme from the data were the emotions of teachers. The eight teachers commented on the emotional impact that the evaluation system has placed on individual teachers. According to the data, teachers have ranging emotions and feelings over the implementation of the model. Teachers identified this as an area that they were working through as they continue the implementation process.

One teacher voiced her opinion on the additional responsibilities that it has placed on teachers,

I hate to see teachers stressed; whenever teachers are stressed they can't help but show it in the classroom. So I really want you guys to realize when you are working on this, the teachers want to do well however too much stress shows in the classroom. (S2-T1/27).

A second teacher added,

Paperwork adds a lot of stress cause it is one more thing that I have to get done. It's one more thing I don't know how to do, so I have to go learn it and then do it. So it's not like somebody who.... a lot these teachers piloted this, they have seen it, they can throw it together, they know what it looks like, I've never seen it before so I have to learn it and do it. (S2-T3/39)

Another teacher added:

Not only was the implementation stressful by itself but with the added demands of a first year teacher and the impact the evaluation system had on them was identified as a concern of a mentor teacher and colleague in the building. One teacher summarized their feelings concerning the impact on new teachers in this way, for a teacher who hasn't gone through that [Danielson Framework] as a part of their undergraduate training, to get a job and walk into this when they are already stressed over having to develop content and lessons, you know this could be overwhelming for them. (S1-T3/13)

Finally, a teacher summed up the essence of time for both the administrator and teacher by stating,

To me this requires a huge amount of time on the administrator. Huge but I think it should, I think it should because as a teacher and I'm on both sides of it now as I complete my administration degree. The teachers spend a huge amount of time in the classroom preparing for them, so administrators should put at least that amount of time on the evaluation and it should be important. (S1-T4/18)

Reflection of the Process

The fourth major theme was Reflection of the Process. Through the evaluation process teachers felt that reflection of their practices was a key component.

One teacher stated,

It has made me reflect more. I've got a notebook that I put I guess ever substandard in and I try to put a little data in there so that I can reflect back. As much as possible some things work some don't but it is a good reflection from year to year. (S2-T1/25)

Another teacher added, you need to reflect on data to see kind of where your strengths and weaknesses are it just structured me more. (S2-T1/26)

The next teacher said,

The improvement plans are part of that reflection. Time is a big issue for me. I teach typically from bell to bell and there is just not a lot of time for that reflection. (S2-T1/27)

A third teacher summed up the reflection process in this way,

As a mentor, I mean yes there are things that I do differently now that I didn't do before, once again this nice compartmentalized systematic thing and as a teacher you start to look at what am I doing and what am I not, and you start to realize that there are certain things you are very good at and there are certain thing you kind of let slide and fall through the cracks. So I think the structure of the systems organization allows even experienced teachers to step back and look at what they do. (S1-TT3/10-11)

A fourth teacher made this comment,

TESS compared to other systems is making people more aware of what's going on, it's going to stop bad teacher for continuing now it's holding everybody responsible. It's holding the teacher responsible because they have to self-evaluate themselves. They have to dig in and become aware of their own work ethics, their own skills, and administration is evaluating them. (S2-T3/39)

Part of the data collected for this study included my review of the rubrics and documents used in the evaluation process. For the last three years, I have been a part of the implementation process in districts across the state. It was the responsibility of the building principals to lead discussion and completion of the documents for the evaluation process using the rubrics and

tools provided by the Arkansas Department of Education. Documents that were utilized by both administrators and teachers included Pre Conference Questions (DOC1); Post Conference Questions (DOC2); Observation Evidence Collection Form (DOC 3); and AR TESS Teacher Evaluation Formative/ Self-Assessment Evaluation Form (DOC 4). These documents were instrumental in the implementation of the model and also provide feedback for teachers and talking points for administrators on what is happening in the classroom as it relates to domains of the Danielson Framework. DOC 4 is a rubric which teachers can use to evaluate their score in all domains based on the rubric. The rubric allows teachers and administrators to assign a level of performance: (1) unsatisfactory, (2) Basic, (3) Proficient or (4) Distinguished.

Summary

From my analysis of interviews with teachers, data indicated that they were both overwhelmed by the paperwork and the implementation process of the evaluation system. However, they were positive of the benefits and impact on students in the classroom and their practices. The four major themes from the data offered perceptions from teachers on the Danielson Evaluation Model.

The second group of participants in this qualitative study included two principals in two northeast high schools in the mid-south. Data collected for this section included standardized open-ended interviews, member check, and audit trail notation to meet triangulation. As indicated in Chapter Three, the interviews were conducted with two administrators one from each high school that were selected for this phenomenological study.

Presentation of Axial Codes for Building Principals

Through the process of open coding, axial codes began to emerge from the data of the principals. The open codes were analyzed, combined, and narrowed to initiate the development

of the four major themes. The figure below identifies a sample of the open codes and the four major axial codes found in the data from the two principals.

Data were analyzed and axial codes emerged from the review of the transcriptions. The axial codes or major themes representing the data collected from the structured open-ended interviews included (a) time to complete, (b) evaluation model, (c) teacher engagement, and (d) students' role in the evaluation process.

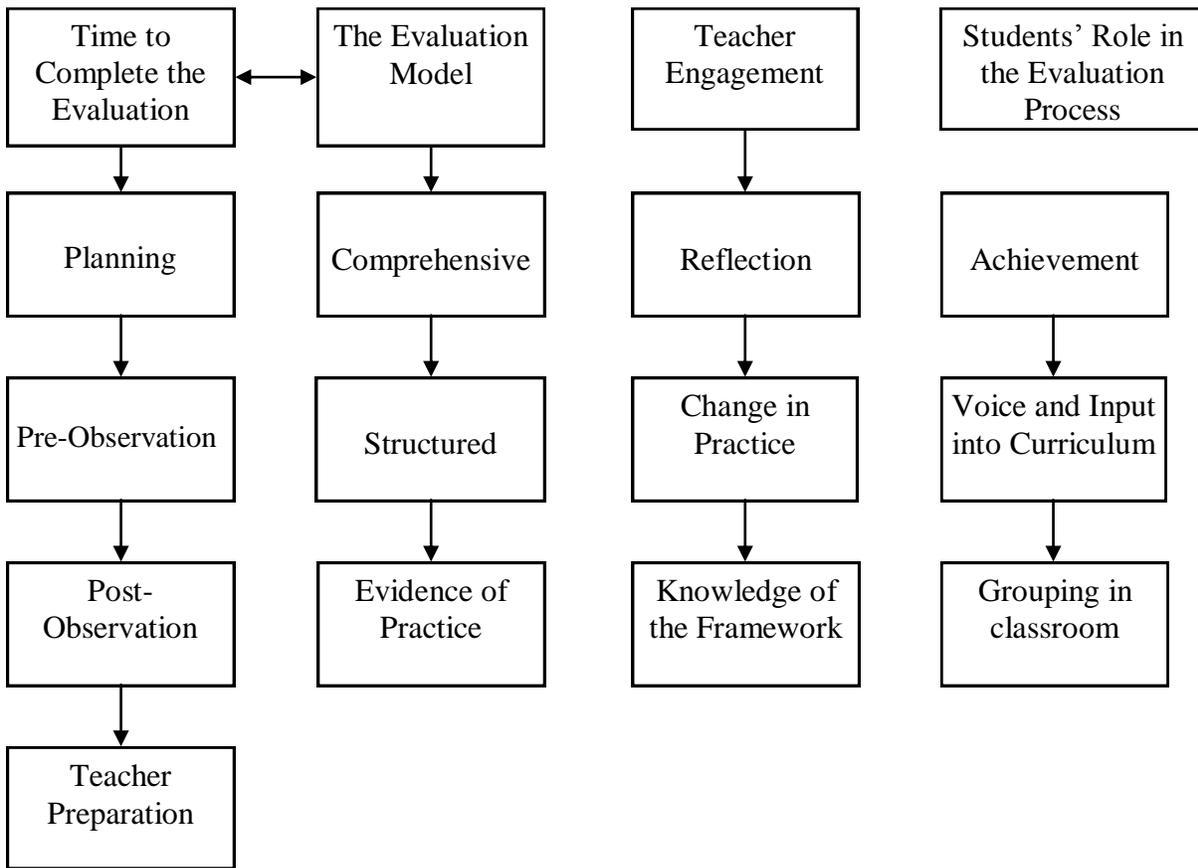


Figure 4.2. Axial codes and Sample of open codes of Building Principals.

Descriptive Matrix for Building Principals

Table 4.4 is a conceptually clustered matrix that displays major themes that emerged from the collected data of the two principals. Data displayed in the matrix is reflective of transcriptions from interviews conducted with the participants.

Table 4.4

Descriptive Matrix: Axial Codes (Major Themes) of Building Principals

Participant	Time to complete the evaluation	Teacher Evaluation System	Teacher Engagement	Students' Role in the Process
BP-S1	It is not the time per se. It is the ability for you to say for the next 90 minutes I need to be completely uninterrupted.	There are some things I like about it better than TAP but they are very equivalent models..	They need to feel like this is something positive. We are trying to emphasis that fact that you are not going to score exemplary on every domain.	To help them understand those areas that they need to improve and why and how it will help student achievement while supporting the learning.
BP-S2	It is a very detailed process. It is very time consuming.	I think it is more in tune with the Pathwise Model which I use for nontraditional and beginning teachers when I mentored them, It's better than a checklist.	I think that you are somewhat penalized by the Danielson System if you are a traditional lecture type teacher.	I think it lends itself to being student driven. It wants student to have input on curriculum, the evaluation, those kinds of things.

The administrator's role in the teacher-evaluation process is critical to student success. As the role of the principal transitions, the principal now must support teachers as they move from a checklist type of evaluation to a more comprehensive model. The understanding of the role has moved from instructional leader, to transactional leader, to its current roll as transformational leader. The role of the principal has become less clear, more complex, and increasingly overburden in the past decade. (Mullen & Cairns, 2001)

Time to Complete the Evaluation

The first major theme or axial code that emerged from the data were Time to Complete the Evaluation. It was agreed upon by the two principals that the time spent on the evaluation

process was an area of concern. These two building principals, directly involved in the evaluation process at the high schools, placed time as a barrier in the implementation of the evaluation model. This was supported by the research of Danielson (2011) which states “ we can’t create more hours in the day, but careful setting of priorities and judicious scheduling of both observations and conferences can make the best use of time available” (p.30). One principal shared his calculation on the time it would take to complete all of the evaluations in their building.

The assistant principal and I discussed it (how long it would take to evaluate all teacher), probably 40 days. 35 to 40 days for our staff.

The time per teacher, for example: (a) you meet with them for the growth plan that’s one day, (b) self-assessment- second day, (c) observation- third, and (4) post formal observation fourth... approximately nine or 10 days, for one teacher. (BP-S2/43)

The second principal expressed his concerns for rural small district that do not have the support that they have in completing the evaluation process:

I think there are some schools out there and some administrators if they do this with fidelity are going to rethink what they do for a living. Because it is so time consuming and I think that especially in those schools in which you have a single principal those smaller schools 300 , 250 in a building and their the lone ranger, how are they going to get this done effectively without adding help to the building. I think it’s going to be interesting to watch. It seems that either they will not do well or they will be overwhelmed with the time that is involved. (BP-S1/24)

Throughout my case study and analysis of the data, I learned that each case study school interpreted the use of artifacts differently (portfolios, lesson plans and student work) as part of the evaluation with varying requirements. For example, one school required a portfolio one did not. This plays a significant role on the amount of time both administrators and teachers spent preparing for an evaluation.

The Teacher Evaluation System

The second major theme to emerge for the open coding of the data and axial coding is The Teacher Evaluation System. The Teacher Excellence and Support System and more specifically the Danielson Framework for Evaluation Rubric was discussed often in the interviews with the building principals.

One principal stated:

I think that is better than any of the locally developed evaluation documents you have ever used, those have been horrible. The other one as both a classroom teacher and administrator was a checklist. The highest score on that was meeting expectations, so he never told someone that they were exceeding expectations and I think it is important to recognize that as well. That is one of the things I do like about this. So I think this is much stronger than anything I've used and there is no comparison to the district written documents I've seen. (BP-S1/22)

According to Danielson (2008), following this model helps teacher understand the evaluation process better and facilitate their recognition of how they can best improve their instruction in the classroom. She goes on to state that, the evaluation of teachers should begin with a shared definition of a good teacher (2008).

The second principal agreed with that statement by commenting,

However in a statement concerning the model and its purpose they added, Distinguished that really is proficient it describes most of your really good teachers. It really points them out, was it truly meant to be an evaluation system? I don't think it was. Ms. Danielson by her own admission actually wrote it to be a guide for good teaching. It was a way teachers could look at and say how can I do this to improve I see in my opinion from just doing observations. In the past and in other ways there are something's as far as a total evaluation system that might be missing. It's better than a checklist. (BP S2/44-45)

Teacher Engagement

The third major theme from the data of the principals was Teacher Engagement. Goe et al (2008) stated that, teacher effectiveness cannot be accurately measured by students' test scores. Rather that certain characteristics define effective teachers, (a) setting high expectations for

students,(b) regular attendance, (c)seeking promotions,(d) cooperating with colleagues,(e) using a variety of resources,(f) regularly assessing student learning, and (g)adapting instruction to meet students' needs (2008).

One principal shared the impact that teacher engagement has had on the conversation and discussion with teachers.

We are going through a process of training teachers that involves each domain and sub domain and having conversations with teachers about what that looks like in the classroom. We had one yesterday and we actually talked about 2c and 2d. That's been I think real good for the teachers. Because we can talk about it. We talked about what evidences look like a proficient, exemplary, etc. They are able to ask questions. What would this look like in an English classroom? What would it look like a math classroom? (BP-S1/20)

The second principal added how the evaluation model has increased the level of professional engagement in the evaluation process of teachers.

Well with a checklist it might be observed or not observed, but you might not converse about it nearly as much. But here as you talk about the questioning level you know you actually have to explain and you have to give examples that you might evaluate and the post observation conferences if you see that basic level of questioning of course one might ask them (teachers) what their thoughts were on the question in the lesson. Do they feel like I judge them a little bit lower? So what kind of questions did you think you were asking things of that nature? I discuss different types of children they are teaching and say if you are in a class that are not as high achiever, how might you ask questions on higher level with students like that as opposed to a class of students who are advance placement classes. (BP-S2/45)

Students' Role in the Evaluation Process

The fourth major theme to emerge from open coding and the analyzing of the axial codes was the role that students play in the evaluation model. Goe al, (2008) suggested evaluation of teachers should measure all factors, not only the standardized test scores of student.

One building principal summed it up this way,

I think we will see that in the long run that as we improve teacher practice, the research is solid that the most important factor in how students learn is the job the teachers does in the classroom. So I think as we improve teacher practice across the board and improve that consistency. Most every teacher know how to do everything on this framework in at least some context they just don't do it consistently. (BP-S1/21)

They go on to say,

We will start to see higher levels of student engagement because those classes are more engaging we will start to see a higher level of student performance on all the benchmarks and all of our formative assessments. Because the students are more engaged and they are learning material and students are starting to internalize their reason for learning and their own learning and they will stick with it a lot longer. (BP-S1/21)

The second building principal added that it is also about the climate of respect and rapport that the teacher creates in the classroom, they commented:

Here's one that always trips people up a little bit, it talks about creating a climate of respect and rapport. You're proficient if the talk between students is uniformed and respectful. Well it normally is so teachers get 3's, well if want to be distinguished you have to have knowledge about, caring about individual students beyond school. Well if for some reason you walk in to observe a teacher and she doesn't ask a question about someone's life beyond school day they don't get an exemplary score on the evaluation. (BP-S2.44)

Summary

The analysis of the data with principals indicated that although there were challenges, they supported the teacher evaluation system. Time, as a major theme emerged from the data representing building principals. The time spent on the evaluation was viewed as a crucial element in the implementation. Principals shared their concerns with how the process could be overwhelming for themselves as well as teachers. Although it took a large amount of time to complete, time spent was valuable in driving conversations on teacher growth, development, and teaching and learning in the classroom.

The data supported that building principals felt strongly about the evaluation model as an effective assessment of teaching in the classroom. They were supportive of both the process and believed in the impact that time spent on evaluations would have on instructional practices. This is validated by the research which states: The goal of the supervision process is to be a collective

activity through which many different steps or activities enable teacher growth and development (Nolan and Hoover, 2008, p.6).

Both principals agreed that teacher engagement were a crucial piece in the successful implementation of the evaluation. Data indicated that through district and building professional development, classroom walkthroughs, and conversations with teachers they had tried to involve them in the process. This process is supported by the research which states that “an evaluation system should recognize, cultivate, and develop good teaching” (Danielson, p.13).

The data indicated that the students’ role in the process was recognized by all administrators.

The teacher’s relationship with students in the classroom and their ability to engage them in instruction was identified as an area of the evaluation that had the most impact on teachers.

Although building principals had always understood the importance of their most important clients (the student) the evaluation model has made the focus on student learning more relevant.

The impact and need for this shift is supported by the research of Sanders who states if a student was taught by an ineffective teacher for three consecutive years in elementary school, test scores would be significantly lower than for students taught by a highly effective teacher (1998).

Summary of Chapter Four

Interviews, observations, and documents were collected to meet triangulation of the data. The process of open coding was used to analyze and find the axial codes or major themes. Open ended, standardized interviews were conducted with the eight teachers and two building administrators. Documents were collected throughout this study. The axial codes were identified and presented, and additional data were identified to support the major themes. Four major themes emerged from the teachers and four from the building principals. The four axial codes or major themes for teachers included: (a) Role of Students, (b) Teacher Evaluation

System, (c) Emotions of Teachers, (d) Reflection of the Process; and the four major themes for building principals were (e) Time to Complete the Evaluation, (f) The Evaluation Model, (g) Teacher Engagement, and (h) Students Role in the Process. These axial codes were supported by open codes.

In Chapter Five, the major trends in the data and selective codes identified using these eight axial codes are presented. The selective codes, along with the literature from the field, were used to validate phenomenological research and answer the research question. In addition recommendations to the field and further research will be outlined in Chapter Five.

Chapter Five:

Data Presentation and Analysis

Introduction

This qualitative phenomenological study examined the perceptions of teachers and administrators regarding the implementation of the Danielson's (2008) *Framework for Teaching* in two high schools in a mid-south state. The study focused on the perceptions of eight high school teachers and two building administrators. Structured open-ended interviews were conducted with teachers and building administrators. Observations were conducted with research participants. Documents were collected throughout the study to provide triangulation of this phenomenological study.

Interviews were conducted on two high school campuses. Standardized, open-ended interviews were conducted with four teachers and one building principal on each campus. Throughout this study documents were examined and studied for understanding of the evaluation process. Two main groups of contributors were a key part of this qualitative case study: teachers and building principals. Data were analyzed through open, axial, and selective coding. Chapter Five reported findings from the study. Findings described relationship to the literature in the field, and answered the research question. In addition, recommendations to the field of education for future studies were presented.

Phenomenological Case Study

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to understand the essence of the experience between two schools using the Charlotte Danielson Framework for Teaching Evaluation Model (TESS) "Phenomenology, is the interpretive study of human experience. The aim is to examine and clarify human situations, events, meanings, and experiences."(Seamon,

2000, p. 1). Bracketing is one primary element of phenomenological research, the suspending judgment preceding phenomenological analysis in the context of schooling or the natural world (Husserl, 2001). Husserl further explained how the perceived state and what is thought to be true of a phenomenon has to be uncovered after the study is conducted; the data are studied, and analyzed in pure form.

Creswell stated, “Building on the data from the first and second research questions, data analysts go through the data (e.g., interview transcriptions) and highlight “significant statements,” sentences, or quotes that provide an understanding of how the participants experienced the phenomenon” (p. 61). Next, clusters of meanings were developed from these significant statements into themes. There have been assumptions and generalizations made by the participants that must be put away in an effort to construct the most precise study.

This qualitative phenomenological study emphasized data collection, analysis of data, and allowing educators’ time for reflection. In Chapter Four, the themes begin to emerge as a result of the analysis of open ended interviews, review of the transcriptions, observations, and document collection. Interviews, observations, and documents were collected to meet triangulation of the data. The process of open coding was used to analyze and find the axial codes or major themes. Through step by step data analysis uncovered the four selective codes were uncovered which helped answer the research question.

Creswell (2007) stated, phenomenology data were analyzed through; “ (a) data managing; (b) reading, memoing;(c) describing; (d) classifying; (e) interpreting; and (f) representing, visualizing” (p. 156-157). He goes on to explain, The phenomenology researcher; (a) developed a textual description for answering the “what” question; (b) developed a structural

description for answering the “how” the phenomenon was experienced; and (c) developed an “essence” of the experience.

As an evaluation model, the Danielson Framework was utilized as an evidence- based model in both high schools. I observed through interviews, that participants valued the evaluation model and embraced the essence of the framework. Upon review of one participant’s portfolio, evidence was found of their understanding and knowledge as it relates to the Teacher Evaluation System of Support.

Discussion Theory One

Research Question: How do pilot users of the Danielson Evaluation System perceive this model in two mid-south high schools?

The first theme to surface from teacher data was the Teacher Evaluation System. Teacher Evaluation system were supported by three sample open codes, (a) as an evaluation model, (b) understanding and knowledge, and (c) Danielson Framework. Data indicates that eight teachers valued the evaluation system. Understanding and knowledge of the evaluation system were enhanced over time. According to Danielson (2011) “Evaluations must promote professional learning. She goes on to note “Teacher evaluation typically serves this more developmental purpose through professional conversations between teachers and colleagues who observe in their classrooms and between teachers and supervisors following formal or informal observations” (p 37).

One teacher stated; “When you are evaluating teachers there is a lot of stuff you have to look at to understand what the teacher is actual accomplishing and the nature of the students they deal with it is part of the Danielson Model” (S1-T3/11). While in the field I listened to the

teachers describe their concerns and feeling over the evaluation instrument. They shared their experiences with the model and identified areas of needed improvement.

Another teacher goes on to state,

It [Teacher Evaluation System] is very in depth, but we piloted the new teacher evaluation system so we have that for a while. When I first started it [previous evaluation models] was much narrower I guess you could say, so I like the fact that it is more in depth. (S1-T1/1)

They go on to say,

It means that it has several different identifiers [domains] as oppose to yes no answers [checklist evaluation] you have to actual say well this is how they [teachers] showed that[framework in the classroom]. (S1-T1/1)

Discussion Theory Two

The second theme to surface from teacher data was the role of the students. Role of the students in the evaluation process was supported by three sample open codes, (a) relationships, (b) engagement, and (c) grouping in the classroom. Data indicates that eight teachers valued the role of the students in the evaluation process. Teachers described the relationship with students as a crucial component of the evaluation system. The level of engagement and the grouping of students during the instructional process in the classroom was a key component of proficient teacher ratings on the evaluation. Researcher Marzano (2010) emphasizes the importance of a well-articulated knowledge base in the classroom that is not only informed by a multitude of teaching strategies, but also knows the applicable situations to use them. Teachers expressed concern that they felt the model sometimes forced them to do things in the classroom for better evaluations and did not value teachers' strengths and knowledge of students. This was the case in grouping of students.

One teacher summed it up by saying:

It has a lot of check points there. I mean as you go through each one you have to

show documentation of your objectives there are two or three check points for teachers to make sure they are doing everything they should do in the classroom.[for students] As far as feedback from the students as far as grouping the student's just regular things we know we are supposed to do every day in the classroom. (S1-T4/16)

The teacher goes on to state that the evaluation process has impacted their [teacher] practices in the classroom [with students]

Like our faculty meeting yesterday was going over domains two and three with the teachers. I've done this forever and ever; still I thought does the 2nd period really know what to do for (example) a pencil breaks just procedures. It keeps us in check on what needs to go on in the classroom. For it to function smooth. It puts the check points in place for the teacher to make sure they have covered all the grounds [for students in the classroom]. (S1-T4/16)

The more involved relationships with students were found to be a key benefit of the evaluation system expressed by teachers. They felt that they had really developed a relationship with their students beyond the classroom. Having gained that knowledge, had given teachers the ability to tie students likes into their classroom experiences. This made for a more relevant learning experience for students. The findings were supported through observations of the assignment students were asked to do at the beginning of class. The assignment tied back to the things the teachers had learned about students.

Student needs were a key component of the reflection and evaluation process, teachers and administrators clearly understood the importance of students in the evaluation process. Teachers expressed an awareness of collaborate groupings of students for instruction, relationships with students both in and out of the classroom and also an understanding of the use of student data in providing high quality instruction. Teachers identified this focus on students in the evaluation model made them more aware of their interactions. They agreed that it had forced them to get to know students on a more personal level. They learned about their families, what they like to do away from school; their hobbies, and their goals etc. The data also indicated that

this could some time penalized teachers on their evaluation, when the administrator came to do an observation and the opportunity did not present itself during the lesson.

Discussion: Theory Three

The third theme to surface from the building principal data was The Evaluation Model. The Evaluation Model was supported by three sample open codes, (a) comprehensive, (b) structured, and (c) evidence of practice. Data indicates that two building principals valued the Evaluation Model.

Researchers Darling-Hammond and others (1983, p. 328) described the process of teacher evaluation as “collecting and using information to judge.” Danielson (2011) defined it as the judging of a teacher on their performance in the classroom. She goes on to state that the evaluation is a method intended to ensure teacher quality and promote professional development. According to Scriven (1981), teacher evaluation has two main purposes: (a) as a formative assessment of teachers that uses data as feedback to develop teacher performance, establish new practices, or change existing practices, and (b) summative evaluation, in which decisions are made on the retention of teachers.

One building principal described it in this manner;

I think it's like anything else that if you were trying to use it to hit someone over the head with you can figure a way to do it. But I think when it's implemented the way it is designed, it is designed to reinforce those positive things teachers do. To help them understand those areas they need to improve and what and how it will help student achievement and support the learning. (S1-BP1/21)

Another building principal added,

Ms. Danielson by her own admission actually wrote it to be a guide for good teaching. It was a way teachers could look at and say how I can do this to improve. I see in my opinion from just doing observation in the past and in other ways there are some things that might be as far as a total evaluation system might be missing. (S2-B2/43)

Although the building principals like the essence of the model they were divided on the Danielson Framework for Teaching Evaluation as a teacher evaluation system. They described their experiences in different ways; one building principal felt that the evaluation was comprehensive in scope but in-flexible sometimes in its interpretation in certain domains. However both administrators agreed that certain components such as portfolios and teacher reflections were valuable evidence of professional practice.

Discussion: Theory Four

The fourth theme to surface from the building principal data was students' role in the evaluation process. Students' role in the evaluation process was supported by three sample open codes, (a) achievement, (b) voice and input into the curriculum, and (c) grouping in the classroom. Data indicates that two building principals understood the relationship of the student's involvement in the classroom and the evaluation process.

Danielson stated that “ as trustees of public funds who are responsible for educating a community's young people, educators in public schools must ensure that each classroom is in the care of a competent teacher” (p. 13). So in this era of accountability and educational dollars declining, teachers must understand the impact of what happens in the classroom.

This was confirmed by the building principals who stated.

I think we will see in the long run as that we improve teacher practice the research is solid that the most important factor in how students learn is the job that the teachers does in the classroom. (S1-BP1/21)

Summary of the Findings

The purpose of this research study was to survey eight high schools teachers and two building administrators' perceptions on piloting the Charlotte Danielson Evaluation Model in two mid-south high schools. The goal was to assist administrators and teachers through a

reflection process in which they described their perceptions of the implementation. Data indicated that four major themes emerged (a) teacher evaluation system; (b) role of the students; (c) the evaluation model; and (d) students' role in the evaluation process. Themes were supported with axial and open coded from the triangulation of data. Open-ended interviews, document collection, and observations were included in this process.

Interpretation of the Data

Though open, axial, and selective coding the eight major themes were utilized to identify the four selective codes that answered the research question. The conclusions to this study are present by answering the research question.

Research Question

How do pilot users of the Danielson Evaluation System perceive this model in two mid-south high schools? Data indicated the perceptions of teachers about the Danielson Evaluation System were as follows: Teachers in both schools felt the system had both good and bad components. Teachers felt that the time that it took to do all of the components was very time consuming. They felt that at times it took away from planning and instruction required a high level of commitment to the process. They said that administrators should spend as much time preparing for the evaluation as teachers did in preparation. Professional development was also described as an area that needs to be revisited by administrators. Teachers felt that some components of the model were ambiguous and there needed to be some clarification. Teachers felt the training location and size were not always conducive to being able to ask questions and get feedback on areas of concerns. Teachers felt that the peer observations were beneficial. Teachers felt that the additional time they spent with the principal during an evaluation year was also beneficial.

Data indicated that perceptions of the building principal were as follows: (1) The new evaluation process took up an enormous amount of time; (2) The evaluation was a good guide for teachers to follow; (3) Teachers felt that it was much better than the checklist system that they had used before; and (4) the evaluation tool allowed them [teachers] to have more in-depth focused conversations with other teachers concerning the Danielson framework.

Building principals expressed these additional concerns; (1) Expressed by two principals district struggle with the implementation due to the amount of time that it takes to complete the process; (2) that professional development was the key to the success of the pilot; and (3) that teachers were more student focused and understood the importance of their interaction with them was a key component of the framework.

The data indicated similarities that both teachers and administrators found between their current evaluation model and the old evaluation tool. Both models were mandated by the district and state to be performed with teachers; (2) post observation conferences were used in each model to provide feedback to teachers on their performance; and (3) student data was utilized to some degree in both models.

Looking at the difference, teachers and administrators felt that time was the factor that was the greatest difference. The old model which in many cases was a checklist, took significantly less time and the rubric/ instrument that was used was not as detailed. The new model takes a substantial amount of time and knowledge. The new evaluation is more comprehensive in providing research-based guidance and tools that can be used in the process for both teachers and administrators. It provides a depth of understanding of the value of evaluation for teachers and students that were not in schools in the past.

Recommendations to the Field

The purpose of this research study was to follow two high schools experience with the Teacher Excellence and Support System using the Danielson Framework for Teaching Evaluation Model. The study occurred in two districts that had piloted the program and had significant training on the framework and the evaluation process. The study was conducted to seek teachers and administrators perceptions concerning the implementation of the model and identify barriers and successes. This research is relevant to three groups of potential readers; the policy makers, building administrators and district administrators and teachers

Recommendation to Policy Makers

Policymakers should consider both the human capital and the financial capital needed to support the implementation and sustainability of the reform. Although educators understand the impact that highly qualified teachers have on students, these two districts had different views about implementing new requirements. The state will have to offer a level of support to districts that will allow them ongoing support to all levels of the district to ensure that the evaluation is implemented with fidelity.

Recommendations to Building Administrators and District Administrators

It is my recommendation that building administrators and district administrators should consider defining and pacing the amount and type of professional development that they provide to teachers. This approach would ensure that teachers were able to process and retain the information given to them. It is also important that there is a differentiated professional development model put in place so that it will meet the needs of all teachers. This would allow the district to more specifically offer multiple sessions that allow teachers to select based on their needs. It is also recommended that there is a reduction in district wide training.

The second recommendation is that teachers have the opportunity to select a teacher to become their peer partners. This person would support the teacher through the evaluation process along with the building principal who will do the evaluation. Secondly there should be a developed plan to help new teachers who come into the building to become adept in the policy and procedures of the Teacher Evaluation and Support System.

Recommendations to Teachers

I further recommend that teachers continue to do self-studies and attend as much professional development as they can to obtain a better understanding of the model and the evaluation rubrics. This study indicated that these groups of teachers were overwhelmed with the process, but found value in the model as a guide to classroom instruction and student relationships and engagement. As with any new implementation process, teachers should have patience with the process, there will be changes and modifications. Teachers should also understand that this is a learning process for the building principal, district administration and the Arkansas Department of Education as they move toward full implementation statewide. This study also revealed that teachers who created notebooks along with artifacts as well as evidence of their practice, found there to be great tool to use from year to year.

Recommendation for Further Research

The results of this qualitative case study suggest that further research is merited to adequately understand the perceptions of building principals and teachers on the Teacher Excellence Support System. The first recommendation is that this study be extended or include more high schools across the state. This responsive sampling included, but not assistant principals. There might be additional value in gathering data from multiple data sources.

The next recommendation is for a quantitative study to compare and contrast perceptions of building principals and teachers on the Evaluation System statewide. Although this study focused on high schools, it would be beneficial to see if the perceptions of elementary and middle school teachers and administrators aligned with the findings of the high schools. The third recommendation is a study on the academic achievement of students who have been a part of the district pilot be compared to students whose districts are utilizing another state-approved teacher evaluation model. The final recommendation is to conduct a study including district personnel on the evaluation model. Future research should explore the districts personnel perceptions of the new evaluation system. The district office and personnel play a key role in the implementation of the evaluation system. It is important to look at it from the district perspective in the areas of professional development, teacher support and resources for implementation.

Conclusion

The purpose of this case study was to gain the perceptions of two building principals and eight teachers in two high schools who had piloted the Arkansas Teacher Excellence Support System understand better the implementation of the Danielson Evaluation system. The study occurred in two school districts, and four theories emerged (two from teacher and administrators (a) teacher evaluation system (b) role of the students (c) evaluation model and (d) students role in the evaluation. Both high schools in this study had a highly qualified group of teachers and administrators who had worked faithfully to implement the model.

The goal of this case study was to gain an understanding of what the perceptions of the building principals and teachers were about the Danielson Framework for Teaching Evaluation System and the implementation within their schools. The pilot although it an on ongoing effort

throughout the school year, It had provided additional structure to student achievement and teacher accountability. It is too early evaluate the success or failure of the implementation process.

Contribution to the Field

The focus of this study is to inform districts and policy makers and schools of perceptual data for implementing the Charlotte Danielson Framework for Teaching Evaluation model. This study is timely and relevant as public education continues to reform evaluation systems across the United States. Research has shown that the quality of the teacher in the classroom has the greatest impact on student success. Hence, the selection and implementation of a standard- based evaluation system is critical to the support of teachers and their professional growth.

This study may influence the school leadership decisions and efforts in executing the evaluation model and school district implementation of the evaluation model. In addition, universities and teacher preparation programs may find the results from this study of interest in preparing teachers and future school administrators.

This qualitative study adds new research to the field on the perceptions, experiences, and essence of piloting the Danielson Framework for Teaching Evaluation Model. This research suggests that more long term research is needed about the perceptions of the framework as a teacher evaluation model. Through this study readers may gain new insight on the struggle of teachers and administrators as they shift their thinking about the Danielson Framework as a guide to teacher practices to that of an evaluation tool. This study showed perceptions of the everyday challenges of a group of teachers and administrators and their effort to improve student achievement.

Private, State, and Federal support for the success of this and other evaluation models are fully present on the scene as teacher evaluation moves forward in all stages of implementation.

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APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Tell me about your teacher evaluation system?
2. Describe your feelings about the Danielson Framework.
3. Discuss your experiences with the Danielson Model.
4. Tell me about your experiences with the Framework and its use as an evaluation model in you classroom.

5. How does the Danielson Model affect your Classroom?
6. Does this evaluation system fairly reflect your experience in the classroom?
7. Are there other areas not covered by this methodology?
8. How would you compare this evaluation models to others?

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APPENDIX B: INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL

October 24, 2013

MEMORANDUM

TO: Laura Strickland
Carleton Holt

FROM: Ro Windwalker
IRB Coordinator

RE: New Protocol Approval

IRB Protocol #: 13-10-194

Protocol Title: *The Danielson Evaluation System in Two Mid-South High Schools:
A Case Study*

Review Type: EXEMPT EXPEDITED FULL IRB

Approved Project Period: Start Date:10/24/2013 Expiration Date: 10/23/2014

Your protocol has been approved by the IRB. Protocols are approved for a maximum period of one year. If you wish to continue the project past the approved project period (see above), you must submit a request, using the form *Continuing Review for IRB Approved Projects*, prior to the expiration date. This form is available from the IRB Coordinator or on the Research Compliance website (<http://vpred.uark.edu/210.php>). As a courtesy, you will be sent a reminder two months in advance of that date. However, failure to receive a reminder does not negate your obligation to make the request in sufficient time for review and approval. Federal regulations prohibit retroactive approval of continuation. Failure to receive approval to continue the project prior to the expiration date will result in Termination of the protocol approval. The IRB Coordinator can give you guidance on submission times.

This protocol has been approved for 10 participants. If you wish to make *any* modifications in the approved protocol, including enrolling more than this number, you must seek approval *prior to* implementing those changes. All modifications should be requested in writing (email is acceptable) and must provide sufficient detail to assess the impact of the change.

If you have questions or need any assistance from the IRB, please contact me at 210 Administration Building, 5-2208, or irb@uark.edu.

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