ADDITIONAL INSIGHTS INTO THE *SUPERVISOR PERCEPTIONS OF THE*

QUALITY OF TROOPS TO TEACHERS PROGRAM COMPLETERS

AND PROGRAM COMPLETER PERCEPTIONS OF THEIR

PREPARATION TO TEACH: A NATIONAL SURVEY

by

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my parents: Robert Staten Jernigan and Myrtle Elma Gainer Jernigan. They are both deceased and will never read these words; nonetheless, I want any eyes that gaze upon this page to read their names and know that I love, appreciate, and respect these two strong people who made me into the person I am today. They were not easy parents; in fact, at times they were challenging, but they were remarkable people who survived tough times and who had tremendous grit and gumption.

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ABSTRACT

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QUALITY OF TROOPS TO TEACHERS PROGRAM COMPLETERS
AND PROGRAM COMPLETER PERCEPTIONS OF THEIR
PREPARATION TO TEACH: A NATIONAL SURVEY*

Jean Ellen Jernigan Roberts

The United States has a severe teacher shortage, especially in inner-city schools

and in the areas of mathematics, science, and special-needs. One answer is to hire

teachers who have completed the Troops to Teachers (T3) program; the T3 program's

mission is (a) to assist qualified veterans through the teacher certification process, usually

through alternative certification programs and (b) to assist the T3 teacher find a teaching

position. However, does prior military training equip individuals with skills that translate

into success within the classroom for both the teacher and the teacher's students, as

evidenced by the most important factor of all: increased student achievement? Is the T3

program a genuine source of highly qualified teachers, or are T3 teachers actually the

short straw? In a 2005 national survey, almost 90% of the T3 supervisors reported that

they think the T3 teachers they supervised are more effective teachers than traditionally

trained teachers with the same years of experience. However, would other T3 supervisors

agree with that assessment? The research from this dissertation answers that question.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter includes background information of the study, a statement of the problem, the educational significance, and the definition of terms. Covered in the background section is information on the *Supervisor Perceptions of the Quality of Troops to Teachers Program Completers and Program Completer Perceptions of their Preparation to Teach: A National Survey* report prepared by Drs. Bill Owings, John Nunnery, Steven Myran, and Mr. David Blackburn, of Old Dominion University (ODU) in Norfolk, Virginia; Dr. Leslie Kaplan of Newport News Public Schools, Newport News, Virginia; and Dr. Robert Marzano of Mid-Continent Research for Education and Learning, Aurora, Colorado. The statement of the problem reveals that the investigation is about expanding the *Supervisor Perceptions of the Quality of Troops to Teachers Program Completers and Program Completer Perceptions of their Preparation to Teach: A National Survey*. The researcher explored several research questions. The educational significance explains why expanding the *Supervisor Perceptions of the Quality of Troops to Teachers Program Completers and Program Completer Perceptions of their Preparation to Teach: A National Survey* is important for those individuals making Troops to Teachers (T3) funding decisions, looking to use the T3 program to assist themselves in gaining teaching certification, or considering hiring a T3 teacher. The final section of this chapter includes the definitions of key terms used in this dissertation.

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Background of the Study

The U.S. Department of Education reported that by 2008, American schools would need three-million new teachers (Council for American Private Education, 2000). Interestingly, Ingersoll (2003) contends there is no teacher shortage, just the failure of individual schools to successfully staff classrooms with teachers. Nonetheless, Carroll and Foster (2008) co-authored an article entitled "America's Schools Are About to Be Hit by the Largest Teacher Retirement Wave in History: Are We Ready?" Added to those stressors is the 2001 Congressional *No Child Left Behind Act* that mandated that by the end of the 2005-2006 school year, all teachers must be highly qualified (Feistritzer, 2005.). In short, there are two overarching problems: (a) the need for many more teachers and (b) a requirement that all teachers be highly qualified.

In response to the teacher shortage challenge, various programs have been established to assist qualified individuals to gain teaching certification through alternative venues—programs such as T3 (Feistritzer, 2005). It was 1994 when the U.S. Department of Education and the Department of Defense teamed up to promote the T3 program.

The goal was to mentor, to counsel, and to assist eligible prior military personnel to begin new careers as classroom teachers in inner-city public schools, where their honed skills, knowledge, expertise, competencies, and experience are most needed. There are some people who think prior military personnel bring vast amounts of life experience, professionalism, and discipline to the classrooms and are unusually effective, particularly in the areas of greatest needs, such as inner-city schools (Teach, study, experiment, 2005). Additionally, there are some people who think proportionally, a higher percentage of T3 personnel qualify to teach in high-demand core academic disciplines, such as

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mathematics, science, and special education than non-T3 teachers; two other positive factors are that 82% of T3 participants are male, and 37% of the T3 teachers are minorities (Feistritzer, 2005), thereby introducing a more diverse teaching population to the classroom. It is clear that T3 teachers help reduce the tremendous teacher shortage the United States is experiencing; however, are T3 teachers highly qualified, as mandated?

With the *No Child Left Behind Act*, all certification programs, traditional and nontraditional, were put under an academic microscope. Interested parties began analyzing and pondering questions such as these: What does it mean to be a highly qualified teacher? Which standards are required for a teacher to be certified as highly qualified, and who has the authority to set those standards? Do highly qualified teachers have more of a positive influence on student achievement than those teachers who are not highly qualified? If so, does it matter which path a highly qualified teacher uses in obtaining certification?

The search for answers to such questions raises a plethora of even more questions, especially in regard to the relationship between teacher quality and student achievement. If, as Rice (2003) points out that the number one influence on student achievement is teacher quality, then how important is it to determine which of the variables promotes teacher quality? Moreover, does teacher quality necessarily increase student achievement? Another question is whether teacher effectiveness is a matter of student assessment scores (Coble & Azordegan, 2004) or a combination of student assessment scores along with other measures, such as pre-post measures (Start-Wroblewski, Ahlering, & Brill, 2007).

To date, while there is no consensus on answers to such questions, nonetheless, there is some evidence that suggests a link between student achievement and particular teacher characteristics (Owings et al., 2005). Moreover, while no single formula explains the relationship between a student's achievement level and the quality of his or her teacher, the national goal of hiring highly qualified teachers is a national goal, so researchers continue to explore various educational programs. One such study is the 2005 *Supervisor Perceptions of the Quality of Troops to Teachers Program Completers and Program Completer Perceptions of their Preparation to Teach: A National Survey* (Owings et al.).

The data from that 2005 national survey were gathered from two sources: 1,282 T3 teachers who had successfully completed the T3 program and 875 T3 supervisors; participants were from 49 states and the District of Columbia. The focus of the study was on (a) feedback from T3 supervisors about how they perceive their T3 teachers compare in the areas of instructional and classroom management practices with traditionally prepared teachers with approximately the same years of experience, (b) feedback from T3 teachers about whether the T3 program prepared them for their new careers as teachers, and (c) feedback from T3 supervisors concerning the degree to which they perceived the instructional behaviors of their T3 teachers facilitate higher levels of student achievement than those levels produced by their traditionally trained teachers with approximately the same years of experience (Owings et al., 2005).

Concerning the 2005 national survey, the majority of questions asked of the T3 supervisors and T3 teachers were on a 5-point Likert-style scale, ranging from *Strongly Agree* to *Strongly Disagree*. While the majority of the responses from the T3 teachers

were analyzed and later published in a report prepared for Mike Melo, Director, Virginia Office of T3, some of the data were not analyzed and were given to the researcher of this dissertation to analyze to add insights into the 2005 national survey. The unused data were open-ended responses from T3 teachers in response to the following teacher-based research question (TRQ1): "Please describe how your experience in the military may have prepared you for your new career in teaching" (Owings et al., 2005, p. 85).

That question is the only teacher-based research question used in this dissertation. All other data used in this dissertation were gathered from the following three groups of T3 supervisors. The first group of supervisors was the group of 875 respondents to the 2005 national survey. The second group of supervisors was the group of 11 respondents to a 2008 study performed by the researcher; the supervisors were from Virginia Beach, Virginia, public schools. The final group of T3 supervisors was the group of 29 respondents to the 2009 study performed by the researcher; the supervisors were from public schools in two Florida counties: Escambia and Santa Rosa.

Of the 875 supervisors who participated in the 2005 national survey, almost 90% agreed that T3 teachers had a more positive impact on student achievement than other teachers with comparable years of teaching experience (Owings et al., 2005). When the researcher performed the 2008 study, 73% of the 11 supervisors who participated agreed with the 90% of the 2005 national survey that T3 teachers had a more positive impact on student achievement than other teachers with comparable years of teaching experience.

The researcher asked the respondents of the 2008 study to read four statements and respond by rating each statement on a Likert-type scale. The supervisor-based statements include the following:

1. A recent national study of Troops to Teachers (T3) reported that 90% of supervisors believed T3 personnel are more effective in the classroom than traditionally trained teachers. My experience with T3 teachers would indicate that finding to be accurate.

2. In my experience, there are distinct advantages to having T3 personnel in public schools.

3. I have seen higher levels of student achievement in T3 classrooms than in classrooms with traditionally trained teachers.

4. In your experience, please list up to three of the most important skills T3s bring to the classroom compared with traditionally prepared teachers.

While 73% of the supervisors in the study did agree with the results of the 2005 national study, more research was needed. The researcher designed a 2009 study with a broader group of T3 supervisors in an attempt to validate the previous research.

2009 Study

When designing the 2009 study, the researcher polled a larger group of supervisors. Clearly, more than 11 respondents were needed to make any significant conclusions about the feelings of T3 supervisors. The goal of the research was to determine if the T3 supervisors think T3 teachers have a more positive impact on K-12 student achievement than do traditionally prepared teachers with approximately the same

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years of experience; therefore, the researcher adjusted the questions asked in the 2008

study to more closely reflect this goal.

The researcher asked respondents of the 2009 study the following questions:

1. As a supervisor of Troops to Teachers (T3) educators, do you agree with a
   major finding on a 2005 national research study that reported approximately
   90% of supervisors believed T3s have higher impact on K-12 student
   achievement than do those teachers who are traditionally prepared to teach
   and have the same years of teaching experience?

2. As a supervisor of T3 educators, how do you describe how prior military
   experience prepares T3s for their new career in teaching?

These new research questions combined with the data from the 2005 national survey

allowed the researcher to closely follow the goals of the 2005 national survey and provide

additional insights into the *Supervisor Perceptions of the Quality of Troops to Teachers*

Program Completers and Program Completer Perceptions of their Preparation to Teach:

A National Survey (Owings et al, 2005).

Statement of the Problem

Alternative certification programs, such as T3, raise concerns, especially in the

areas of teacher qualification and student achievement (Goldhaber & Anthony, 2003). To

varying degrees, the 2005 national survey addressed those concerns; however, there were

several areas that needed additional insights: (a) not all of the data gathered from the T3

teachers were used; the unused data needed to be quantified, mapped, and shared; (b)

almost 90% of the T3 supervisors reported that T3 teachers are more effective in the

classroom than traditionally trained teachers with similar teaching experience; and (c) about 90% of the T3 supervisors reported that students of T3 teachers had higher student achievement than students of teachers who were traditionally prepared to teach; however, would other T3 supervisors agree with those supervisors?

First, the unused data from the 2005 national survey were identified, quantified, and mapped. The data were gathered from an open-ended question asked of the T3 teachers about how their experiences in the military may have prepared them for their new careers in teaching.

To test the findings presented in letters "b" and "c" above, the researcher conducted a 2008 study. T3 supervisors from the Virginia Beach City Public School District were asked to take a four-question, Likert-type survey. Eleven T3 supervisors responded to the following questions:

1. A recent national study of Troops to Teachers (T3) reported that 90% of supervisors believed T3 personnel are more effective in the classroom than traditionally trained teachers with approximately the same years of experience. My experience with T3 teachers would indicate that finding to be accurate.

2. In my experience, there are distinct advantages to having T3 teachers in our public schools.

3. I have seen higher levels of student achievement in T3 classrooms than in classrooms with traditionally trained teachers with approximately the same years of experience.

4. In your experience, please list up to three of the most important skills T3s bring to the classroom compared with traditionally prepared teachers.

Virginia Beach City School District of Virginia was selected for two reasons. First, the largest U.S. Naval base is located in the vicinity, and the area is popular with retiring military personnel, many of whom establish second careers, such as teaching. Second, T3 program personnel are available on the campus of Old Dominion University, a university in the Virginia Beach vicinity.

After receiving approval from the Virginia Beach City Public Schools Department of Research, Evaluation, and Assessment for permission to contact administrators within their school district to see if the administrators would participate, the researcher emailed each Virginia Beach City Public School supervisor and asked if he or she would please visit the Web site and respond to the 2008 survey. Each response was identified, quantified, and mapped. Those data were juxtaposed with the data from the 2005 national survey; there was a consistency in the responses of both sets of administrators; the majority agreed that "T3 teachers performed better in all instructional areas than traditionally prepared teachers with comparable teaching experience" (Owings et al., 2005, p. 10).

The 2008 study was the precursor to the 2009 study. The 2009 study tested a difficult survey finding. T3 supervisors from public schools in two Florida counties, Escambia and Santa Rosa, were asked to take a two-question, Web-based survey. Twenty-nine responded to the following questions:

1. As a supervisor of Troops to Teachers (T3) educators, do you agree with a major finding on a 2005 national research study that reported approximately

90% of supervisors believed T3s have higher impact on K-12 student

achievement than do those teachers who are traditionally prepared to teach

and have the same years of teaching experience?

2. As a supervisor of T3 educators, how do you describe how prior military

experience prepares T3s for their new career in teaching?

The purpose of this research was not to expand the 2005 national survey but

rather to add additional insights by gathering, quantifying, and mapping data that might

be useful to individuals with specific interest in the effects of T3 teachers in the public

schools, especially in the area of student achievement (2009 study) and teacher

effectiveness (2008 study).

To achieve this goal, the researcher used a three-pronged research project. First,

data from an open-ended question asked on the 2005 national survey (concerning the

T3s' perceptions of whether their military experiences prepared them to be public-school

teachers) were quantified and analyzed. On the 2005 national survey, T3 supervisors

were not asked to respond to an open-ended question and explain in their own words why

they overwhelmingly indicated that the T3 teachers whom they supervised performed

better in all instructional areas than traditionally prepared teachers with comparable

teaching experience. Therefore, this option was provided to supervisors in the 2008 and

2009 studies the researcher administered.

Since there is no database of the names and contact information of the T3

supervisors who participated in the 2005 national survey, the researcher had to work with

two sample groups: supervisors in the Virginia Beach City Public School System and

supervisors in the Escambia and Santa Rosa School Districts in Florida. The goal was to

see how other T3 supervisors would react to two items scored extremely high by T3 supervisors who took the 2005 national survey. The data from the 2008 study were collected, quantified, and analyzed, but the number of supervisors responding to the survey was small. As a result, an additional survey was conducted focusing on supervisor perceptions about the difference between student achievement in T3's classrooms and in traditionally prepared teachers' classrooms. Subsequently, the 2009 survey involved T3 supervisors from Escambia County and Santa Rosa County, Florida. Twenty-nine T3 supervisors participated; each response was collected, quantified, and analyzed.

With regards to the 2009 survey, the researcher thinks it is important to point out that current national economic constraints are fueling keen competition of funding decisions for educational programs; the more viable a program is, the better chance it has of being funded. The researcher hopes the findings from this dissertation will be a source of useful information for those individuals who would benefit by knowing more about the T3 program, such as those making T3 funding decisions, those looking to use the T3 program to assist in gaining their teaching certification, and those considering hiring a T3 teacher.

<div align="center">Purpose of the Study</div>

The purpose of this study was to design, to conduct, and to analyze research data that would add additional insights into the *Supervisors Perceptions of the Quality of Troops to Teachers Program Completers and Program Completer Perceptions of their Preparation to Teach: A National Survey* (Owings et al., 2005). The T3 program is funded by the United States Congress; currently, there is a teacher shortage in the United States, and the U.S. economy is in a severe crisis, thereby making government funding

scarce. The T3 program is competing with all other such programs for the money to remain viable; therefore, the researcher sees the purpose of this study as an opportunity to provide a more comprehensive and illuminating data source for agencies and individuals interested in the T3 program.

The report on the 2005 national survey was released on August 29, 2005, and it did provide some important insights into the T3 program and the perceptions of some of the T3 teachers and administrators; however, in the dismal U.S. economy of 2009, there is an added urgency to make well-informed decisions when it comes to the government's funding for educational programs. With that single goal in mind, the researcher viewed the purpose of this study as a means of developing a tool that could be used to glean useful data upon which informed decisions could be made.

On some level, the research for this dissertation attempted to quantify variables that are almost impossible to capture. For example, not everybody can meet and maintain the strict standards required of military personnel. In fact, the Government Accountability Office (2005) reports that the "Department of Defense reports that over half of today's [American] youth are not qualified to serve [in the military] because they cannot meet the military's entry standards for health, education, aptitude, or other requirements" (¶ 1). Successfully serving in the military necessarily involves a daily dedication to mental and physical regimentation and discipline that is uncommon in nonmilitary lives. The 2005 national survey confirms that T3 teachers bring to the classroom the training they received and honed in the military. However, this dissertation analyzes the words of T3s' responses to whether the T3 teachers think their military experiences prepared them for their new careers in teaching.

This dissertation fills an important gap because after juxtaposing data from three T3-related surveys, the researcher noted possible discrepancies. The initial research involved analyzing the T3s' responses to the open-ended question on the 2005 survey question; this data allowed the researcher to understand that most of the participants did perceive that their military experiences played a significant role in their classroom successes, if only as a confidence builder. Then the second part of this dissertation focused on testing T3 supervisors' perceptions about T3 teacher effectiveness and their impact on student achievement. The majority of T3 supervisors who took the 2005 national survey provided extremely positive feedback; however, would other groups of T3 supervisors agree, thereby adding strength to the perception that the training and experiences veterans receive while in the military better prepares them for success in the classroom and that students of T3 teachers might have an advantage of higher student achievement over those students of traditionally trained teachers?

It was the 2005 national survey that opened an important portal into understanding the value of the T3 program as it assists veterans to gain teacher certification through nontraditional routes. This study broadens the same portal by offering additional insights.

Limitations of the Study

There were two limitations of this study. The first was that the researcher was serving on active duty while conducting much of the research and had limited time and resources; the weak response in regards to the 2008 study might have been due, in part, to the researcher being out of communication range for extended periods of time. The data from the 2008 study were reported using a small sample size; therefore, a second research

study was administrated to supervisors. The second limitation of the study was that the names and contact information for the participants of the 2005 national survey were not collected; there was no way to contact any of the participants of the original study for further data collection about their perceptions on the Likert-type survey.

Definition of Terms

2005 national survey: This term refers to the T3 national survey that took place in 2005 and involved T3 teachers and T3 supervisors from across the nation. The results were reported in the *Perceptions of the Quality of Troops to Teachers Program Completers and Program Completer Perceptions of their Preparation to Teach: A National Survey* (Owings et al., 2005).

2008 survey: This term refers to the 2008 four-question, online survey T3 supervisors from the Virginia Beach City School District were asked to take.

2009 survey: This term refers to the 2009 two-question, online survey T3 supervisors from Escambia County and Santa Rosa County, Florida were asked to take.

Center for Analysis of Longitudinal Data in Educational Research (*CALDER)*: CALDER is a federally funded National Research and Development Center where researchers use administrative data from various states to gain insights into teacher quality, academic achievement, and graduation rates. Of particular interest is teacher certification and hiring.

Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support (*DANTES)*: DANTES is a program that assists qualified Department of Defense personnel in gaining certification and/or licensures. DANTES ensures proper testing and educational opportunities are available.

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Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA): ESEA, also known as the *No Child Left Behind Act*, is one of the Federal education programs established in 1965. In 2002, ESEA became part of the *No Child Left Behind Act.*

National Center for Educational Information (*NCEI)*: NCEI is a private research organization that specializes in survey research for the purpose of data analysis of education and teacher preparation.

National Education Association (*NEA)*: NEA is a professional education organization that works to promote a strong public education for all students.

Short straw: The person who draws the shortest straw is the loser.

Troops to Teachers (*T3)*: T3 is a program authorized by Congress and managed by the DANTES. The program's primary purpose is to recruit retiring military personnel for careers as teachers in public schools that serve students from low-income families.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

This chapter includes a considerable amount of data from the *Supervisor Perceptions of the Quality of Troops to Teachers Program Completers and Program Completer Perceptions of their Preparation to Teach: A National Survey* (Owings et al., 2005). The researcher included the data in an effort to form a tightly aligned coalition of relevant literature that would assist in achieving the mission of this dissertation: add additional insights to the *Supervisor Perceptions of the Quality of Troops to Teachers Program Completers and Program Completer Perceptions of their Preparation to Teach: A National Survey*.

Within the first 5 years, nearly half of all new teachers quit the profession (Graziano, 2005; Lambert 2006). The current American school system continues its alarming embroilment in a series of dynamic social and scholastic dilemmas. There are painful fiscal cuts, severe teacher shortages, failed "No Child Left Behind" mandates (Jehlen & Flannery, 2009), crumbling buildings, over-crowded classrooms, elimination of art and music programs, eradication of school nurse positions, staggering student transportation concerns, rigid assessment exams, reduced maintenance funds, and "failing-school" vouchers (Hallman, 2007, p. 2). Furthermore, there are noncompetitive teacher salaries (NEA, 2006, 2009), a dramatic rise in family strife, frustrated parents,

aggravated administrators, disempowered teachers (Davis, Jr., 2004) and the ever-present fear of more deadly classroom violence. As a result, attracting and keeping qualified teachers has, in many cases, changed the profile of new teachers entering the classroom from the fresh-faced 22-year-old novice to that of an older person with more life experience and the desire to find a program specifically designed to assist him or her to earn an alternate teaching certification (Walzer, 2005).

This dissertation focuses on one such program: T3, a program started in1994 as a Department of Defense program to help transition to the teaching profession active-duty military personnel whose careers were cut short by the drawdown of the 1990s. By the end of fiscal year 1999, T3 had helped more than 3,000 veterans begin new careers as teachers. Congress recognized the powerful, positive attributes military veterans bring to public education and officially established the T3 program with the primary purpose of recruiting retiring military personnel to become teachers in schools serving students from low-income families. The legislation transferred funding and oversight of T3 to the Department of Education, while leaving responsibility for operating the program in the hands of the Department of Defense. In 2002, T3 became a Department of Education teacher recruitment program as part of the *No Child Left Behind Act*. T3 is managed by DANTES (Troops to Teachers, 2004).

Mr. Joe Wango, the Director of the Virginia T3 program, spoke of the T3 motto: "'Proud to serve again' exemplifies the veterans' commitment" (Nguyen, 2007, ¶ 20). T3s are individuals with a wide variety of life experiences and years of military training that include discipline, problem solving, leadership, and professionalism (Nguyen). However, do those qualities make T3 teachers better classroom teachers? Equally

important, do those skills compensate for essential training T3 teachers might not receive

from alternative certification programs? And most importantly, do those skills

comprehensively promote student achievement?

<center>Military Training and Quality Teaching</center>

Since the military is about "waging war and keeping peace" (Andrade, 2004, ¶ 2),

there might be a perception by some that military personnel are too rigid to be in a

classroom working with children. However, as Dr. John Gantz, former chief

administrator for the T3 program explains,

> They [T3 teachers] bring [to the classroom] a mature understanding of what it
>
> takes to be successful in life, how to function in difficult situations, how to be
>
> flexible, how to deal with crises, and how to be an effective leader. Those are
>
> priceless attributes. (Troops to Teachers, 2004, p. 1)

Additionally, nationwide, only 25% of teachers are men, and 11% are minorities

(Feistritzer, 2005). However, the average T3 teacher is 42 years old; 81% are men, and

42% are minorities. Also, at a much higher rate than the national average, 75% of T3

teachers remain in the profession (Joch, 2005).

Despite these qualities, there is a lack of consensus when it comes to the question

of whether prior military service prepares people to become teachers. That lack of

consensus, in addition to the question of whether an alternative certification path fully

prepares the T3 completers to be successful in the classroom, lend well to Humphrey and

Wechsler's (2007) point that "little is known about the types of programs that prepare

highly qualified teachers" (¶ 1). Humphrey and Wechsler continue by saying, "We find

that both sides of the debate [over alternative certification] fail to capture the variation in

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participants' characteristics and their experience in the programs" (¶ 1). Like all teachers, T3s bring individual backgrounds and personalities to the classroom, but what their military training does provide is a set of military-based skills that might enable them to succeed in adverse or otherwise challenging situations to a stronger degree than people who have no military training because often they bring "discipline, organization, and priorities" (Brown, 2007, p. 2) with them when they walk into the classrooms. The foundational research study of this dissertation, the 2005 national survey, attempted to address some of these issues. In the next sections, the researcher will summarize the purpose, methods, and results of the national survey study to set the context of this dissertation research. The researcher's study is an extension and enhancement of this study. Therefore, the results are relevant to understanding the results of this dissertation.

2005 National Survey Purpose

When the team headed by Dr. William Owings and Dr. John Nunnery began the research, there was no research into the areas of student achievement when comparing traditionally trained teachers with those produced by alternate certification methods (Owings et al., 2005). The T3 program had been functioning for over 10 years and had produced more than 7,500 teachers nationally for the public school system, but were these teachers as effective as traditionally prepared teachers (Owings et al.)? The researchers focused on gathering solid evidence concerning the effectiveness of T3 teachers.

The study addressed the following questions:

1. Are T3s as effective in instructional and classroom management practices as traditionally prepared teachers with the same years of teaching experience in public schools?

2. To what extent do T3 participants believe their certification program prepared them to use research-based instructional practices associated with increased student achievement?

3. To what extent do school administrators believe their T3s exhibit instructional behaviors associated with increased student achievement to a greater degree than traditionally prepared teachers with similar years of experience (Owings et al., 2005, p. 10)?

Research conducted by the team uncovered mixed findings for alternatively certified teachers and as ESEA was considering recertification of the program, it was necessary to see if the program was producing quality teachers (Owings et al., 2005).

2005 National Survey Methodology

The 2005 national study was specifically designed to compare T3s' effectiveness with that of traditionally prepared teachers. The research team surveyed both T3 teachers and their principals using a survey specifically designed for each (Owings et al., 2005). In the 2005 study, the dependent variables that affect student achievement are as follows:

1. Troops to Teachers' classroom practices that impact student achievement as compared with traditionally prepared teachers with the same years of teaching experience.

2. School administrators' view of the cost effectiveness of preparing Troops to
    Teachers in comparison with traditionally trained teachers with the same years
    of teaching experience (Owings et al., p. 25).

The survey instrument was constructed to determine whether T3 teachers were
using "research-based best instructional practices" (Owings et al., 2005, p. 26). The
surveys were set up with Likert-type scales, with the exception of one open-response
question asked of the T3 educators: "In the space provided below, please describe how
your experience in the military may have prepared you for your new career in teaching"
(Owings et al., p. 26). T3 supervisors were also asked to provide data about their schools'
demographics.

The T3 educator survey was constructed with 25 questions; the supervisor survey
included 30 questions. Early in 2005, the survey was mailed on three separate occasions
to all completers of the T3 program (Owings et al., 2005). T3 educators were asked to
rate the following questions:

1. The Troops to Teachers program I completed prepared me well to begin my
    instructional units by presenting students with clear learning goals.

2. The Troops to Teachers program I completed prepared me well to provide
    students with specific feedback on the extent to which they are accomplishing
    learning goals.

3. The Troops to Teachers program I completed prepared me well to ask students
    to keep track of their own performance on learning goals.

4. The Troops to Teachers program I completed prepared me well to recognize
    students who are making observable progress toward learning goals.

5. The Troops to Teachers program I completed prepared me well to emphasize the importance of effort with students.

6. The Troops to Teachers program I completed prepared me well to organize students into groups based on their understanding of the content when appropriate.

7. The Troops to Teachers program I completed prepared me well to organize students into cooperative groups when appropriate.

8. The Troops to Teachers program I completed prepared me well to provide specific feedback on the homework assigned to students.

9. The Troops to Teachers program I completed prepared me well to end my units by providing students with clear feedback on the learning goals.

10. The Troops to Teachers program I completed prepared me well to end my units by asking students to assess themselves relative to the learning goals.

11. The Troops to Teachers program I completed prepared me well to end my units by recognizing and celebrating progress on the learning goals.

12. The Troops to Teachers program I completed prepared me well to, prior to presenting new content, ask students questions that help them recall what they might already know about the content.

13. The Troops to Teachers program I completed prepared me well to, prior to presenting new content, provide students with direct links with previous knowledge or studies.

14. The Troops to Teachers program I completed prepared me well to, prior to presenting new content, provide ways for students to organize or think about the content (e.g., use advance organizers).

15. The Troops to Teachers program I completed prepared me well to ask students to construct verbal or written summaries of new content.

16. The Troops to Teachers program I completed prepared me well to ask students to take notes on new content.

17. The Troops to Teachers program I completed prepared me well to ask students to represent new content in nonlinguistic ways (e.g., mental image, picture, pictograph, graphic organizer, physical model, enactment).

18. The Troops to Teachers program I completed prepared me well to assign in-class and homework tasks that require students to practice important skills and procedures.

19. The Troops to Teachers program I completed prepared me well to prescribe i in-class and homework assignments that require students to compare and classify content.

20. The Troops to Teachers program I completed prepared me well to prescribe in-class and homework assignments that require students to construct metaphors and analogies.

21. The Troops to Teachers program I completed prepared me well to prescribe in-class activities and homework assignments that require students to generate and test hypothesis regarding content.

22. The Troops to Teachers program I completed prepared me well to have comprehensive and well-articulated rules and procedures for general classroom behavior, beginning and ending the period or day, transitions and interruptions, use of materials and equipment, group work, and seatwork.

23. The Troops to Teachers program I completed prepared me well to use specific disciplinary strategies that reinforce appropriate behavior and provide consequences for inappropriate behavior.

24. The Troops to Teachers program I completed prepared me well to use specific techniques to keep aware of problems or potential problems in the classrooms.

25. The Troops to Teachers program I completed prepared me well to respond to inappropriate behaviors quickly and assertively.

26. In the space provided below, please describe how your experience in the military may have prepared you for your new career in teaching (Owings et al., 2005, pp. 83-85).

In addition to questions of demographics of the schools at which they worked, T3 supervisors were asked to rate 30 questions by the research team. The first 19 questions were a continuation of the following statement: "As a school administrator, I find this teacher exhibits these behaviors to a greater degree than other teachers with similar years of experience" (Owings et al., 2005, p. 88).

1. The teacher begins their instructional units by presenting students with clear learning goals.

2. The teacher provides students with specific feedback on the extent to which they are accomplishing the learning goals.

3. The teacher asks students to keep track of their own performance on the learning goals.

4. The teacher recognizes students who are making observable progress toward the learning goals.

5. The teacher emphasizes the importance of effort with students.

6. The teacher organizes students into groups based on their understanding of the content when appropriate.

7. The teacher organizes students into cooperative groups when appropriate.

8. The teacher provides specific feedback on the homework assigned to students.

9. The teacher ends units by providing students with clear feedback on the learning goals.

10. The teacher ends their units by recognizing and celebrating progress on the learning goals.

11. The teacher, prior to presenting new content, asks students questions that help them recall what they might already know about the content by providing direct links with previous knowledge or studies.

12. The teacher asks students to construct verbal or written summaries of new content and to take notes.

13. The teacher asks students to represent new content in nonlinguistic ways (e.g., mental image, picture, pictograph, graphic organizer, physical model, enactment).

14. The teacher assigns in-class and homework tasks that require students to practice important skills and procedures.

15. The teacher has comprehensive and well-articulated rules and procedures for general classroom behavior, beginning and ending the period or day, transitions and interruptions, use of materials and equipment, group work, and seatwork.

16. The teacher uses specific disciplinary strategies that reinforce appropriate behavior and provide consequences for inappropriate behavior.

17. The teacher uses specific techniques to keep aware of problems or potential problems in their classrooms.

18. The teacher responds to inappropriate behaviors quickly and assertively.

19. The teacher uses specific techniques to maintain a healthy and emotional objectivity when dealing with student misbehavior.

The remaining questions did not include the opening statement. TTT is the abbreviation used in the 2005 study.

1. In comparison with non-TTT teachers with similar years of experience this teacher is better prepared to teach than other colleagues with similar years of teaching experience.

2. In comparison with non-TTT teachers with similar years of experience this teacher provides a greater benefit to the school system relative to the salary paid.

3. In comparison with non-TTT teachers with similar years of experience this teacher appears to deal with parents and community members more effectively.

4. In comparison with non-TTT teachers with similar years of experience this teacher needs fewer professional developmental activities for me to consider him/her a competent professional.

5. In comparison with non-TTT teachers with similar years of experience this teacher properly processes requisitions for purchases.

6. In comparison with non-TTT teachers with similar years of experience this teacher serves capably as an extracurricular or activity sponsor.

7. In comparison with non-TTT teachers with similar years of experience this teacher follows school regulations, policies, and procedures.

8. In comparison with non-TTT teachers with similar years of experience this teacher has a positive impact on student achievement.

9. In comparison with non-TTT teachers with similar years of experience this teacher independently handles student discipline problems.

10. In comparison with non-TTT teachers with similar years of experience this teacher keeps parents informed about students' academic and behavioral progress.

11. In comparison with non-TTT teachers with similar years of experience this teacher works well with other teachers and staff.

12. After working with the Troops to Teachers teacher, I would seek out other TTT applicants to teach in my school (Owings et al., 2005, pp. 88-90).

The research team gathered the results from the responding 1,282 T3 teachers and 875 supervisors and analyzed responses to all questions except the open-ended question that was used as raw data for this dissertation.

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There were several conclusions that were readily apparent when the research team created distribution frequencies and calculated mean and standard deviations for the questions on the survey (Table 1).

The mean value for all questions is within the range of 3.64 to 4.19, which indicates that the responding T3 teachers agreed that the T3 program was a valuable tool to help them use research-based instructional practices to contribute to higher student achievement and effective classroom behavior management (Owings et al., 2005). T3 teachers also felt that they were well prepared to manage classroom discipline with the vast majority of T3s showing an *Agree* or *Strongly Agree* response to classroom management and student discipline questions (Owings et al.). The data addressing the program 2005 completers' responses to classroom management and student discipline items are presented (Table 2).

The data addressing the 2005 Administrators responses to research-based instructional practices are presented (Table 3). Supervisors of T3 personnel were even more positive about the program. Means to the questions posed to supervisors ranged from 3.96 to 4.52, indicating that the vast majority, up to 93.3% on some questions, of supervisors fell into the *Agree* and *Strongly Agree* categories (Owings et al., 2005).

Table 1

2005 National Survey: Program Completer Response Frequency Percentages: Research-based Instructional Practice Items

Question: The Troops to Teachers program I completed prepared me well to . . .	SD	D	N	A	SA	M	SD	n
begin my instructional units by presenting students with clear learning goals.	3.7	3.1	12.7	47.4	33.1	4.03	.96	1211
provide students with specific feedback on the extent to which they are accomplishing learning goals.	3.2	3.5	12.6	49.7	31.1	4.02	.93	1216
ask students to keep track of their own performance.	3.8	9.0	30.9	38.4	18.0	3.58	1.0	1215

(table continues)

Question: The Troops to Teachers program I completed prepared me well to . . .	SD	D	N	A	SA	M	SD	n
recognize students who are making observable progress toward learning goals.	3.5	3.0	11.0	47.3	35.2	4.08	.95	1222
emphasize the importance of effort with students.	3.7	2.1	10.0	39.9	44.3	4.19	.96	1221
organize students into groups based on their understanding of the content when appropriate.	3.6	5.9	19.8	44.7	26.0	3.84	1.0	1223
provide specific feedback on the homework assigned to students.	3.3	3.7	20.2	42.2	30.6	3.93	.98	1224

Question: The Troops to Teachers program I completed prepared me well to . . .	SD	D	N	A	SA	M	SD	n
end my units by providing students with clear feedback on the learning goals.	3.4	3.3	16.0	46.6	30.7	3.98	.95	1222
end my units by asking students to assess themselves relative to the learning goals.	3.3	8.1	28.4	41.8	18.4	3.64	.98	1227
end my units by recognizing and celebrating progress on the learning goals.	3.6	4.8	21.3	44.8	25.4	3.84	.95	1222

Question: The Troops to Teachers program I completed prepared me well to . . .	SD	D	N	A	SA	M	SD	n
prior to presenting new content, ask students questions that help them recall what they might already know about the content.	3.3	2.4	10.6	48.4	35.3	4.10	.92	1224
prior to presenting new content, provide students with direct links with previous knowledge or studies.	3.2	2.7	11.7	46.7	35.7	4.09	.93	1228
prior to presenting new content, provide ways for students to organize or think about the content (e.g., use advance organizers).	3.1	4.0	18.2	46.3	28.3	3.93	.95	1224

Question: The Troops to Teachers program I completed prepared me well to . . .	SD	D	N	A	SA	M	SD	n
ask students to construct verbal or written summaries of new content.	3.5	5.8	27.3	41.5	21.8	3.72	.98	1223
ask students to take notes on new content.	3.1	5.4	19.6	41.3	30.6	3.91	1.0	1220
ask students to represent new content in nonlinguistic ways (e.g., graphic organizers).	3.4	5.4	20.1	42.0	29.2	3.88	1.0	1220
assign tasks that require students to practice important skills and procedures.	3.3	3.4	12.7	42.2	36.4	4.07	.96	1225

(table continued)

Question: The Troops to Teachers program I completed prepared me well to . . .	SD	D	N	A	SA	M	SD	n
prescribe assignments that require students to compare and classify content.	3.4	4.2	17.2	44.6	30.6	3.95	.98	1218
prescribe assignments that require students to construct metaphors and analogies.	3.6	8.2	31.3	38.8	18.2	3.60	1.0	1223
prescribe assignments that require students to generate and test hypotheses regarding content.	3.9	8.0	27.6	40.9	19.6	3.64	1.0	1220

Note. From *Supervisor Perceptions of the Quality of Troops to Teachers Program Completers and Program Completer Perceptions of Their Preparation to Teach: A National Survey* (p. 36), by Owings et al., 2005, Norfolk, VA: Old Dominion University, College of Education. Reprinted with permission.

Table 2

2005 National Survey: Program Completer Response Frequency Percentages: Classroom Management and Student Discipline Items

Question: The Troops to Teachers program I completed prepared me well to . . .	SD	D	N	A	SA	M	SD	n
have comprehensive and well-articulated rules and procedures for general classroom behavior, beginning and ending the period or day, transition and interruptions, use of materials	3.5	2.9	8.8	35.0	49.8	4.25	.98	1230
use specific disciplinary strategies that reinforce appropriate behavior and provide consequences for inappropriate behavior.	3.4	3.5	11.8	34.4	46.9	4.18	1.0	1230

(table continues)

(table continued)

Question: The Troops to Teachers program I completed prepared me well to . . .	SD	D	N	A	SA	M	SD	n
use specific techniques to keep aware of problems.	3.8	3.8	13.1	37.1	42.2	4.10	1.0	1225
respond to inappropriate behaviors quickly and assertively.	3.8	3.8	11.0	32.2	49.3	4.20	1.0	1222

Note. From *Supervisor Perceptions of the Quality of Troops to Teachers Program Completers and Program Completer Perceptions of Their Preparation to Teach: A National Survey* (p. 37), by Owings et al., 2005, Norfolk, VA: Old Dominion University, College of Education. Reprinted with permission.

Table 3

2005 National Survey: School Administrator Response Frequency Percentages: Research-based Instructional Practice Items

Question: This T3 teacher exhibits the following behavior to a greater degree than other teachers with similar years of experience:	*SD*	*D*	*N*	*A*	*SA*	*M*	*SD*	*n*
begin their instructional units by presenting students with clear learning goals	2.0	5.4	7.0	43.3	42.3	4.19	.92	876
begins their instructional units with specific feedback on the extent to which they are accomplishing the learning goals.	1.7	3.3	5.9	45.0	44.1	4.26	.85	876

(table continues)

Question: This T3 teacher exhibits the following behavior to a greater degree than other teachers with similar years of experience:	*SD*	*D*	*N*	*A*	*SA*	*M*	*SD*	*n*
asks students to keep track of their own performance.	2.1	4.6	18.8	45.0	29.6	3.96	.92	876
recognizes students who are making observable progress toward the learning goals.	1.6	2.0	6.0	40.7	49.7	4.35	.81	876
emphasizes the importance of effort with students.	1.2	1.4	4.1	31.2	62.1	4.52	.74	876
organizes students into groups based on their understanding of the content when appropriate.	1.5	4.1	13.6	44.4	36.4	4.10	.89	876

Question: This T3 teacher exhibits the following behavior to a greater degree than other teachers with similar years of experience:	*SD*	*D*	*N*	*A*	*SA*	*M*	*SD*	*n*
organizes students into cooperative groups when appropriate.	1.5	2.4	10.9	44.6	40.5	4.20	.84	876
provides specific feedback on homework assigned to students.	1.6	2.2	11.9	44.9	39.5	4.18	.85	876
ends units by providing students with clear feedback.	1.7	2.4	10.1	45.2	40.5	4.20	.85	876

Question: This T3 teacher exhibits the following behavior to a greater degree than other teachers with similar years of experience:	SD	D	N	A	SA	M	SD	n
ends their units by recognizing and celebrating progress toward learning goals.	2.1	2.9	15.1	41.5	38.4	4.11	.91	876
prior to presenting new content, asks students questions that help them recall what they might already know about the content by providing direct links with previous knowledge.	1.7	1.7	8.2	44.5	43.8	4.27	.82	876

(table continued)

Question: This T3 teacher exhibits the following behavior to a greater degree than other teachers with similar years of experience:	SD	D	N	A	SA	M	SD	n
asks students to construct verbal or written summaries of new content and to take notes.	2.1	2.5	17.3	47.1	31.1	4.03	.88	876
asks students to represent new content in nonlinguistic ways (e.g., mental image, picture, pictograph, graphic organizer, physical model, enactment).	2.1	4.0	16.2	44.1	33.6	4.03	.92	876
assigns in-class and homework tasks that require students to practice important skills.	1.7	1.6	7.0	41.9	47.8	4.32	.81	876

Note. From *Supervisor Perceptions of the Quality of Troops to Teachers Program Completers and Program Completer Perceptions of Their Preparation to Teach: A National Survey* (p. 40), by Owings et al., 2005, Norfolk, VA: Old Dominion University, College of Education. Reprinted with permission.

Results were even more positive to questions asked of the supervisors referring to classroom management, student discipline, and general assessment of T3 teacher quality (Tables 4 and 5). In classroom management and student discipline questions, T3 supervisors rated T3s better than their traditionally trained counterparts an overwhelming majority of the time (Owings et al., 2005). The mean values of these questions ranged from 4.29 to 4.43. For questions referring to teacher quality, mean values ranged from 3.89 to 4.50.

The research team concluded their 2005 national study by finding that the T3 program is producing effective teachers. They conclude that almost 90% of supervisors state that T3 teachers have a positive impact on student achievement and that T3s work well within the school environment, even to a higher rate than traditionally prepared teachers (Owings et al., 2005).

The Relationship Between Student Achievement and Military Training of Teachers

Despite the fact that the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* mandated that by the 2005-2006 school year, schools would hire only highly qualified teachers, and despite the fact that many educational researchers have addressed what it means for a teacher to be highly qualified, no definitive definition exists. Goldhaber and Anthony (2003) offer indicators of teacher quality that include teacher degree levels, teacher preparation, pedagogical versus content knowledge, teacher licensure, teacher years of experience, and teachers' academic proficiency. Stroot et al. (1998) report the following:

It appears the most effective teachers are those that have a thorough

understanding of the complexity of the task and the willingness to adjust their

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Table 4

2005 National Survey: School Administrator Response Frequency Percentages: Classroom Management and Student Discipline

Question: This T3 teacher exhibits the following behavior to a greater degree than other teachers with similar years of experience:	*SD*	*D*	*N*	*A*	*SA*	*M*	*SD*	*n*
has comprehensive and well-articulated rules and procedures for general classroom behavior, beginning and ending the period or day, transitions and interruptions, use of materials and equipment, group work and seatwork	2.0	2.4	5.4	30.5	59.7	4.43	.86	875

(table continues)

Question: This T3 teacher exhibits the following behavior to a greater degree than other teachers with similar years of experience:	SD	D	N	A	SA	M	SD	n
uses specific disciplinary strategies that reinforce appropriate behavior and provide consequences for inappropriate behavior	1.7	3.6	6.4	33.3	55.0	4.36	.89	875
uses specific techniques to keep aware of problems	1.8	3.5	8.5	36.4	49.8	4.29	.90	875
responds to inappropriate behaviors quickly and assertively.	2.0	2.6	5.3	31.4	58.7	4.42	.87	875

(table continued)

Question: This T3 teacher exhibits the following behavior to a greater degree than other teachers with similar years of experience:	SD	D	N	A	SA	M	SD	n
uses specific techniques to maintain a healthy and emotional objectivity when dealing with student misbehavior.	2.4	2.8	7.0	35.4	52.4	4.33	.91	875

Note. From *Supervisor Perceptions of the Quality of Troops to Teachers Program Completers and Program Completer Perceptions of Their Preparation to Teach: A National Survey* (p. 42), by Owings et al., 2005, Norfolk, VA: Old Dominion University, College of Education. Reprinted with permission.

Table 5

2005 National Survey: School Administrator Response Frequency Percentages: General Assessment of Teaching Effectiveness

Question: In comparison with non-TTT teachers with similar years of experience, this teacher:	*SD*	*D*	*N*	*A*	*SA*	*M*	*SD*	*n*
is better prepared to teach than other colleagues with similar years of teaching experience.	1.4	6.8	24.9	35.8	31.2	3.89	.97	875
provides a greater benefit to the school system relative to the salary paid.	1.5	4.7	20.5	35.2	38.1	4.04	.95	875
appears to deal with parents and community members more effectively.	1.4	4.9	20.9	33.5	38.6	4.04	.96	875

(table continues)

Question: In comparison with non-TTT teachers with similar years of experience, this teacher:	*SD*	*D*	*N*	*A*	*SA*	*M*	*SD*	*n*
needs fewer professional development activities.	2.1	11.2	24.9	31.5	30.4	3.77	1.1	875
properly processes requisitions for purchases.	2.6	1.6	23.7	38.8	33.2	3.98	.93	875
serves capably as an extracurricular or activity sponsor.	2.1	4.0	23.4	31.2	39.3	4.02	.99	875
In comparison with non-TTT teachers with similar years of experience, this teacher:	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	SD	N

Question: In comparison with non-TTT teachers with similar years of experience, this teacher:	SD	D	N	A	SA	M	SD	n
follows school regulations, policies, and procedures.	1.4	0.9	5.5	30.4	60.7	4.50	.76	875
has a positive impact on student achievement.	1.2	1.0	8.3	31.6	57.9	4.44	.78	875
independently handles student discipline.	1.3	3.9	7.7	32.9	54.1	4.35	.88	875
keeps parents informed about students academic and behavioral progress.	1.2	2.9	8.6	37.8	49.6	4.31	.84	875
works well with other teachers and staff.	2.3	2.2	6.7	26.6	62.2	4.44	.89	875

(table continued)

Question: In comparison with non-TTT teachers with similar years of experience, this teacher:	*SD*	*D*	*N*	*A*	*SA*	*M*	*SD*	*n*
After working with this specific Troops to Teachers teacher, I would seek out other TTT applicants.	1.9	0.8	7.4	30.2	59.7	4.45	.82	875

Note. From *Supervisor Perceptions of the Quality of Troops to Teachers Program Completers and Program Completer Perceptions of Their Preparation to Teach: A National Survey* (p. 43), by Owings et al., 2005, Norfolk, VA: Old Dominion University, College of Education. Reprinted with permission.

particular teaching style to accommodate the uniqueness of the students they teach in a

particular environment. (p. 3)

Harris and Sass (2007) reported that student achievement is not increased by the

scholastic aptitude or mode of training a teacher receives:

We study the effects of various types of education and training on the ability of

teachers to promote student achievements. Previous studies on the subject have

been hampered by inadequate measures of teacher training and difficulties

addressing the nonrandom selection of teachers to students and of teachers to

training. We address all of these limitations by estimating models with student,

teacher, and school fixed effects using an extensive database from the state of

Florida. Our results suggest that teacher training generally has little influence on

productivity. Our exception is that content-focused teacher professional

development is positively associated with productivity in middle and high school

math. In addition, more experienced teachers appear more effective in teaching

elementary and middle school reading. There is no evidence that either pre-

service (undergraduate) training or the scholastic aptitude of teachers influences

their ability to increase student achievement. These results call into question

previous findings based on models that do not adequately control for the various

forms of selection bias. (p. 1)

Conversely, Darling-Hammond (2000) looked at ways student achievement

relates to teacher qualification and suggests that ". . . policies adopted by states regarding

teacher education, licensing, hiring, and professional development may make an

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important difference in the qualifications and capabilities that teachers bring to their work" (p. 4). She noted that over the past 5 decades trends in teacher effectiveness have become apparent as a result of public education research projects. She further noted that some of those teacher effectiveness factors are ones that can be controlled by policy, such as the level of the teacher's education, level of certification, and the years of experience. Therefore, Darling-Hammond suggests that by working together to create and enforce unified professional teaching standards, policymakers for the federal government, the states, and the local school districts may have within their means educational reform that could significantly enhance public education.

Moreover, Darling-Hammond (2000) suggested that such educational policies should be made from a national perspective and enforced at each echelon, including state and local. Only a comprehensive approach of that magnitude could ensure that policy, not demographics, is the key to consistency in teacher preparation and certification, two factors thought to directly affect student achievement.

Currently, there exist no conclusive data that precisely pinpoint the variables responsible for increasing student achievement. Therefore, data from the 2005 national survey concerning student achievement levels of students instructed by T3 teachers is perception data. The researcher of this dissertation tried to test the 2005 survey findings that directly link T3s and student achievement but ended up with more questions, such as these: Are T3 teachers highly qualified? Are students of T3 teachers strong achievers? The answers to those questions do not exist; however, when 900 school supervisors were surveyed about T3 teachers, the supervisors reported that T3 personnel "make superb

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teachers—better than their nonmilitary peers" (Troops to Teachers, 2005, ¶ 2). According to students such as Suzanne Denbow, a student of a T3 teacher, "He had a way of enforcing the rules without making people hate him. There was something about him; you just wanted to please him. He had a presence about him" (Walzer, 2005, ¶ 21).

In the November 9, 2005, issue of *Education Week*, the following headline appeared: "Troops-to-Teachers Recruits Pass Muster With Principals, Study Finds" (Viadero, 2005). The article reported that T3 teachers might give the educational system more for its money because military veterans bring maturity and life experience to some of America's most challenging classrooms where 22-year-old teachers are lacking.

Likewise, the January 30, 2005, front-page headline of the *Herald Palladium* professes, "Troops make good teachers" (Ast, 2005). The article is about T3 teacher Bob LaManna who is a retired Marine major. He went from traveling around the world training others in such matters as narcotics work along the border of the southwest United States and state law enforcement issues to teaching high school students in an alternative program. When asked the challenges of teaching, LaManna replied, "You definitely learn in the military and the officer corps and the Marine Corps that there's no job you can't do. It's just how much sweat equity you're willing to put into a situation to become proficient at it" (Ast, ¶ 18).

Summary

Although this chapter does offer some useful information about the effect T3s have on student achievement, there is not enough credible data available to draw any definitive conclusions. The literature shows that limited perception data exist about T3's

effect as a teacher on student achievement. With that thought in mind, the researcher

approached chapter 3 with the assumption that the research design would glean data that

are part of a continuum and that afforded the researcher the opportunity to achieve the

primary goal of this dissertation: Additional insights into the *Supervisor Perceptions of*

the Quality of Troops to Teachers Program Completers and Program Completer

Perceptions of their Preparation to Teach: A National Study (Owings et al., 2005).

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter presents the research methods used in this study and includes
Research Procedures, Sample, Instrumentation, and Data Analysis. The three instruments
used in this research study are discussed, and the procedure for the content analysis on
the open-ended responses is described. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the
Likert-type items.

The researcher met with Dr. Bill Owings and Dr. John Nunnery in their offices at
Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Virginia, and explained to them that the researcher
was researching the T3 program and hoped they might listen to research ideas with
critical ears. Subsequently, they generously offered the researcher unused data from their
2005 national survey.

The researcher initially inspected the data and discovered a very interesting
finding from their 2005 study. Ninety percent of the supervisors believed that T3s had a
more significant impact on K-12 student achievement than did traditionally prepared
teachers. This result shaped the study in this dissertation project. The purpose of this
study was to provide additional insights into the 2005 *Supervisor Perceptions of the
Quality of Troops to Teachers Program Completers and Program Completer Perceptions
of their Preparation to Teach: A National Survey* (Owings et al., 2005) in an effort to

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provide useful information to those who would benefit by understanding more about the T3 program, such as those who fund the program, those who may use the program as a means of gaining certification in the field of education, and those who hire completers of the T3 program.

The open-ended responses from the T3 teachers in the 2005 national survey needed to be analyzed and recorded. Once the researcher had constructed a frequency table of the important coded qualities listed by T3 teachers, the researcher was ready to design additional research questions to determine whether these qualities would be confirmed by a separate group of T3 supervisors. Comparisons were made between T3 teachers and T3 supervisors' perceptions about the characteristics T3 teachers bring to classrooms.

Research Procedures

The researcher learned that in the *Supervisor Perceptions of the Quality of Troops to Teachers Program Completers and Program Completer Perceptions of their Preparation to Teach: A National Survey* (Owings et al., 2005), all of the open-ended responses were from the T3 teachers; the T3 supervisors were not asked to respond to an open-ended question. Although the initial research was to focus on the responses from the T3 teachers, the researcher wanted to contribute an equal voice to both the T3 teachers and the T3 supervisors. The overarching goal of providing additional insights to the *Supervisor Perceptions of the Quality of Troops to Teachers Program Completers and Program Completers Perception of their Preparation to Teach: A National Survey* (Owings et al.) would provide more useful data for interpretation.

The 2008 survey and the 2009 survey included Likert-type items and open-ended questions. Both surveys were presented in an online format. Andrews, Nonnecke, and Preece (2003) state, "Five methodological components of online survey design and implementation are critical to successful Web-based surveys; these components include (1) survey design, (2) subject privacy and confidentiality, (3) sampling and subject selection, (4) distribution and response management, and (5) surveying" (p. 186). The basic approach included the conclusion of the 2005 national survey and survey questions used to either confirm or deny conclusions drawn by the 2005 study. Statistics used in this design included assigning a nominal system for the qualities obtained from both the T3 teachers in the 2005 national survey and the qualities obtained from the T3 supervisors in the 2008 survey and the 2009 survey. The researcher used a nominal system of descriptive statistics, frequency distributions, percentages, means, and standard deviations to illustrate and interpret the results.

The first research question in this dissertation was taken from the 2005 national survey. T3 teachers completing the survey had been asked the following open-ended question: Please describe how your experience in the military may have prepared you for your new career in teaching.

While this data would undoubtedly lead to additional insights into the 2005 national survey, it would not address the question of whether T3 teachers have a more positive impact on student achievement than do traditionally prepared teachers. The remaining research questions were designed with this goal in mind.

The 2005 national survey reported that close to 90% of T3 supervisors believed that T3 personnel are more effective in the classroom than traditionally prepared teachers.

The survey questions for the 2008 study mainly focused on this claim. In the third and fourth survey questions, the researcher addressed the question of student achievement and perceived skills that T3 teachers bring to the classroom. It would be interesting to see if the T3 supervisors at the Virginia Beach City Public School District who took the survey would find the same qualities in their T3 teachers as the T3 teachers themselves had listed in the 2005 national survey and if the responses of the T3 Virginia Beach City Supervisors matched those who responded to the 2005 study. The supervisors responded by using a Likert-type scale to rate four online survey statements:

1. A recent national study of Troops to Teachers (T3) reported that 90% of supervisors believed T3 personnel are more effective in the classroom than traditionally trained teachers. My experience with T3 teachers would indicate that finding to be accurate.

2. In my experience, there are distinct advantages to having T3 personnel in our public schools.

3. I have seen higher levels of student achievement in T3 classrooms than in classrooms with traditionally trained teachers.

4. In your experience, please list up to three of the most important skills T3s bring to the classroom compared with traditionally trained teachers.

Results from the 2008 study strongly supported findings from the 2005 national survey. That fact, along with the low number of respondents to the 2008 study, made it necessary for the researcher to do a broader study in 2009. Because of the increased focus on student achievement, the researcher revised the questions asked in the 2009 study to one rated question and one open-ended statement:

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1. As a supervisor of Troops to Teachers (T3) educators, do you agree with a major finding on a 2005 national research study that reported approximately 90% of supervisors believe T3s have higher impact on K-12 student achievement than do those teachers who are traditionally prepared to teach and have the same years of teaching experience?

2. As a supervisor of T3 educators, how do you describe how prior military experience prepares T3s for their new career in teaching?

Results from all three studies were quantified and compared and are outlined in chapter 4.

Sample

The data used in this dissertation originated from three distinct survey sources: one existing survey (the 2005 national survey) and two researcher-designed surveys (the 2008 and the 2009 surveys). A brief overview of each survey follows.

Survey 1: 2005 Study

While feedback from the 2005 national survey involved responses from 875 T3 supervisors and 1,292 T3 teachers, only the responses from the open-ended question were used in this dissertation. The researchers of the 2005 study did not analyze the open-ended responses. The researchers of the 2005 national survey feedback questionnaire enjoyed a 61% response rate; 82% were male, and 18% were female (Owings et al., 2005). Of those total responses used in *Supervisor Perceptions of the Quality of Troops to Teachers Program Completers and Program Completer Perceptions of their Preparation to Teach: A National Survey* (Owings et al.), 506 participants had returned

the open reactions that had been supplied to the researcher by Dr. Nunnery. In summation, the sample for the first portion of this dissertation includes 506 responding T3 teachers out of the population of all national T3 program participants.

Survey 2: 2008 Study

The researcher received permission to survey the Virginia Beach City Public School supervisors for the 2008 survey and emailed all 84 supervisors the letter attached in Appendix B. The supervisors were asked to visit the Web link provided and then to participate in the survey; 13% responded ($n = 11$). A total of 71,564 students attend 84 schools in the Virginia Beach City Public School District. Of these students, 0.3% of students are Native American, 2.0% are multiracial or of unspecified race, 5.6% of Asian descent, 27.6% African American, 6.0% Hispanic, 0.8% Pacific Islander, and 55.4% Caucasian (Virginia Beach City Public Schools, 2009).

Survey 3: 2009 Study

For the 2009 survey, the researcher sent the survey to all supervisors in the Escambia County and Santa Rosa County, Florida, public school districts. Twenty-five percent responded ($n = 29$). In Escambia County, 41,851 students attend 79 public schools; of these students, 3.7% are multiracial, 0.7% Native American, 2.6% of Asian descent, 3.7% Hispanic, 36.6% African American, and 53.1% Caucasian, and 59.5% of students are on the free or reduced lunch program (Florida Department of Education, 2009). Santa Rosa County has a total of 25,711 students attending 36 public schools, 30.5% of which are receiving free or reduced lunch. In Santa Rosa County, 3.5% of students are multiracial, 0.5% Native American, 1.8% are of Asian descent, 3.0%

Hispanic, 5.3% African American, and 85.9% Caucasian (Florida Department of Education).

<center>Instrumentation</center>

The following section is a brief overview of each of the instruments. Three instruments were used to collect data for this study.

Survey 1: 2005 Study

The first survey was the 2005 national survey. Dr. Bill Owings and his team designed and administered and validated the instrument. Specifics of the validation process that was used can be found in the report. Most of the data obtained in that survey had already been quantified and described in *Supervisor Perceptions of the Quality of Troops to Teachers Program Completers and Program Completer Perceptions of their Preparation to Teach: A National Survey* (Owings et al., 2005); however, this researcher was given previously unused open-ended responses from the 2005 national survey to describe and to quantify in support of this dissertation.

Survey 2: 2008 Study

Since the researcher was designing the survey for the 2008 study, the survey questions needed to be validated before being administered to the selected sample. The researcher met with Dr. Owings and discussed the survey. He made some suggestions that were applied to the survey. Afterward, the survey was emailed to Dr. Janet Pilcher, the researcher's doctoral chair and professor at The University of West Florida, and received her approval. The final version of the survey can be viewed in Appendix C.

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Approval was obtained from Virginia Beach City Public Schools (Appendix D) and from

The University of West Florida Institutional Review Board for human subjects

(Appendixes E). Prior to participation in the study, all participants were supplied with the

Notification of Consent for Instructors and Students (Appendix F).

The second survey consisted of a four-question study administered via

SurveyMonkey.com, an Internet survey hosting site. There are many advantages to using

an Internet-based survey system, including expense, speed, and the tendency of people to

be more open and honest when answering questions to a computer, rather than a human

interviewer.

The survey was designed with two distinctly different types of questions. The first

three questions of the survey used a Likert-type response scale: 1 = *Strongly Disagree*,

2 = *Disagree*, 3 = *Neutral*, 4 = *Agree*, 5 = *Strongly Agree*. The Likert-type scale allowed

the researcher to calculate mean responses and standard deviations for all three questions

and helped to draw conclusions from the data. The fourth question in the survey was an

open-response question that allowed participants to supply some qualities that could be

quantified and cross referenced with the 2005 national survey responses.

Survey 3: 2009 Study

The 2009 survey was also designed by the researcher and approved by Dr. Janet

Pilcher, the researcher's doctoral chair and professor at The University of West Florida.

Furthermore, Dr. Pilcher requested permission from Dr. Alan Scott, School Administrator

of Escambia County, and Mr. Lewis Lynn, School Administrator of Santa Rosa County,

to administer the survey to a groupmail account of principals Dr. Pilcher had access to in

her database. Both gave permission for Dr. Pilcher to send the survey link from her

account so that the email database would remain protected. As a result of that confirmation, the researcher proceeded to post the 2009 survey on the Internet survey site of SurveyMonkey.com (Appendix G). Dr. Pilcher sent the email notice with the link. The results were recorded on the researcher's SurveyMonkey account with no names attached to the survey responses.

There were only two questions asked in the 2009 study. The first question used a Likert-type response scale: 1 = *Strongly Disagree*, 2 = *Disagree*, 3 = *Neutral*, 4 = *Agree*, 5 = *Strongly Agree*. The second question was an open-response question that would be used to see if the new sample of supervisors would list the same qualities as the previous two surveys.

Data Analysis

A content analysis was used to analyze the T3 narrative responses to an open-ended question on the 2005 original survey. The researcher focused on "the generation, flow, and impact of messages" (Neuendorf, 2002, p. xvi) and analyzed the data through a presumed-cause and presumed-effect filter, looking for events that shaped coverage and developed new links that might lead to pertinent conclusions. Furthermore, the researcher strictly adhered to the goals and standards of survey research. Descriptive statistics, such as frequencies, means and standard deviations, were used to analyze the Likert-type items on the 2008 and 2009 surveys. Bar graphs with frequencies were created to explain the findings and to create like and unlike categories from the participants' responses.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Introduction

The research method used for this dissertation was a quantitative content analysis. Since the goal assigned to the research was to provide additional insights into the *Supervisor Perceptions of the Quality of Troops to Teachers Program Completers and Program Completer Perceptions of their Preparation to Teach: A National Survey* (Owings et al., 2005), it was important to determine the best way to turn unused qualitative data from the 2005 national survey into usable data.

By coding and quantifying the unused data from the 2005 national survey, the researcher automatically met the primary goal of offering additional insights to that same survey. However, more research was needed, so the researcher designed a research project that would add more insights to the 2005 national survey. Two findings from the 2005 national survey provided two striking claims. First, approximately 90% of those T3 supervisors who participated in the survey reported that they think T3 personnel are more effective in the classroom than traditionally trained teachers with the same years of experience. Second, about 90% of the responding supervisors reported that they think T3 personnel have a greater impact on student achievement than traditionally trained teachers with the same years of experience.

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The researcher needed to find another group of T3 supervisors and ask them to take a survey that addressed the extremely positive T3 feedback from the 2005 survey. The question was whether the 2008 T3 supervisors would agree with the 2005 T3 supervisors on these two areas. At the time the survey was started, the researcher was on active duty and stationed in Norfolk, Virginia, so the researcher approached the Virginia Beach City Public School District to request permission to ask their T3 supervisors to take an online survey. After permission was granted, the researcher contacted each supervisor and asked him or her to take a simple four-question survey; approximately 13% of the supervisors complied. Their responses added further insights into the 2005 national survey; however, further research was needed for two reasons. First, supervisors who responded to the 2008 survey agreed closely with the supervisors from the 2005 national survey and the researcher wanted to see how a third group of supervisors would respond. Second, the 2008 survey had low participation (11 of 84); therefore, a 2009 survey was administered to potential T3 supervisors in Escambia and Santa Rosa Counties in Florida.

<div align="center">Descriptive Data</div>

There were three descriptive data sections used in gathering data for this research project. The first section was student and instructor survey data from the 2005 *Supervisor Perceptions of the Quality of Troops to Teachers Program Completers and Program Completer Perceptions of their Preparation to Teach: A National Survey* (Owings et al., 2005). That survey asked questions of teachers who had used the T3 program to assist them in completing the teaching certification process, and the survey asked questions of their supervisors, as well. All of that data had been previously quantified, analyzed, and

reported, except for the open-ended responses from the T3 teachers concerning their views on how, if at all, their military experiences prepared them for their teaching careers. The first part of the research involved meticulously analyzing that data and quantifying it.

The source of the second descriptive data section was feedback from a 2008 Internet-based T3 survey taken by T3 supervisors from the Virginia Beach City Public School District. The purpose of that survey was to see if the 2008 T3 supervisors agreed with almost 90% of the 2005 T3 supervisors who reported that "T3 teachers perform better in all instructional areas than traditionally prepared teachers with comparable teaching experience" (Owings et al., 2005, p. 3). Respondents of the 2008 survey were also asked if they felt the students of T3 teachers had higher student achievement rates than those students of traditionally trained teachers with similar years of teaching experience. Also, the 2008 study gave the T3 supervisors an open-response area to list perceived characteristics of their T3 teachers.

The final descriptive data section consisted of feedback to a 2009 Internet-based survey of T3 supervisors in Escambia County and Santa Rosa County, Florida. The research questions had been refined to focus on the claim made in the 2005 national survey that reported approximately 90% of supervisors believed T3s have higher impact on K-12 student achievement than do those teachers who are traditionally prepared to teach and have the same years of teaching experience (Owings et al., 2005). Respondents to the 2009 survey were also asked to complete one open-ended question regarding T3 characteristics.

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2005 Study of T3 Teachers

The first research question was used in the 2005 *Supervisor Perceptions of the Quality of Troops to Teachers Program Completers and Program Completer Perceptions of their Preparation to Teach: A National Survey* (Owings et al., 2005). The original researchers did not use the responses from that question. Instead, they gave that data to the researcher for the purpose of this dissertation. Since the source of the information involved T3 teachers, it was labeled TRQ1.

TRQ1: Please describe how your experience in the military may have prepared you for your new career in teaching.

2008 Study of T3 Supervisors

Four survey questions were given in the 2008 study to T3 supervisors from the Virginia Beach City Public School District, so the researcher labeled the questions SQ1 through SQ4.

SQ1: A recent national study of Troops to Teachers (T3) reported that approximately 90% of supervisors believed T3 personnel are more effective in the classroom than traditionally trained teachers. My experience with T3 teachers would indicate that finding to be accurate.

SQ2: In my experience, there are distinct advantages to having T3 personnel in our public schools.

SQ3: I have seen higher levels of student achievement in T3 classrooms than in classrooms with traditionally trained teachers.

SQ4: In your experience, please list up to three of the most important skills T3s bring to the classroom compared with traditionally prepared teachers.

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2009 Study of T3 Supervisors

Two survey questions were given in the 2009 study to T3 supervisors from Escambia County and Santa Rosa County, Florida, school districts, so the researcher labeled the questions SRQ1 through SRQ2.

SRQ1: As a supervisor of Troops to Teachers (T3) educators, do you agree with a major finding on a 2005 national research study that reported approximately 90% of supervisors believe T3s have higher impact on K-12 student achievement than do those teachers who are traditionally prepared to teach and have the same years of teaching experience?

SRQ2: As a supervisor of T3 educators, how do you describe how prior military experience prepares T3s for their new career in teaching?

T3 Teacher Data From 2005 National Survey

All of the data from the 2005 national survey were analyzed and released in a report, except the data from an open-ended question asked of the T3 teachers. After receiving that raw data from Dr. Bill Owings and Dr. John Nunnery of Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Virginia, the researcher quantified the data, in addition to quantifying the data gathered from the 2008 survey and the 2009 survey. What follows are the results from the gathered data.

First, for a quick, broad-stroke glance at the results of how the T3 survey respondents to the 2005 national survey think their military experiences helped prepare them for a career in teaching (Figure 1). Please note that an impressive 83% had a positive response, while 1% had both a positive and negative response; and 16% offered no response at all. These results indicate that the majority of the survey respondents

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agreed that their prior military experiences did help them as they transitioned from their

military careers to their teaching careers.

Positive &
Negative 1%

No Response
16%

Positive
83%
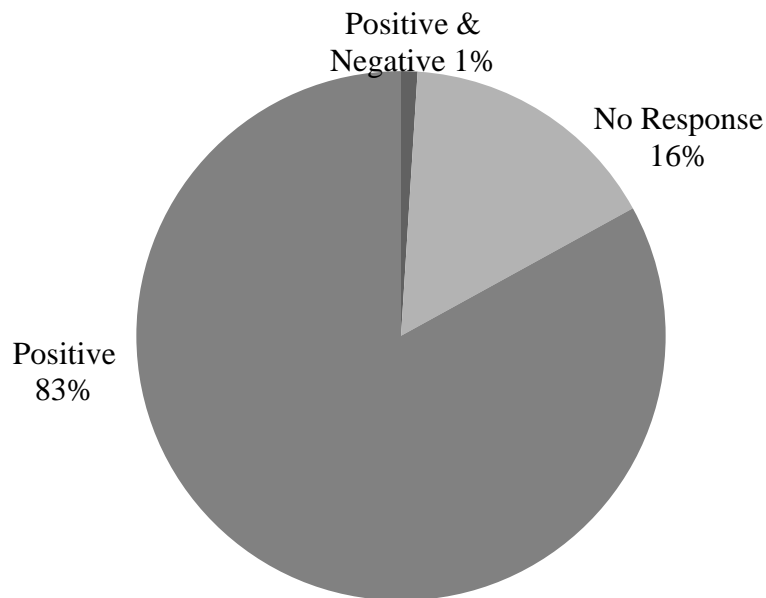
Categorized Responses of T3 Teachers

Figure 1. 2005 study's T3 educators' attitude responses. All of the negative responses
reflected dissatisfaction with the T3 program's funding and assistance challenges, not
with the certification process or with the teaching experience.

Second, for a closer look at the specific input the T3 teachers gave in response to

the 2005 survey's opened-ended question (Figure 2). Each open-ended response fit inside

a 5" x 7" box, and each response was filled with key words and terms; each word and

term was assigned a number by the researcher. The researcher grouped responses that

were similar and then counted the number of times each word or term was used. Finally,

the data were arranged into an ascending graph that offers a quick reference of words and

terms used by the T3 teachers to explain why the majority think their military experiences
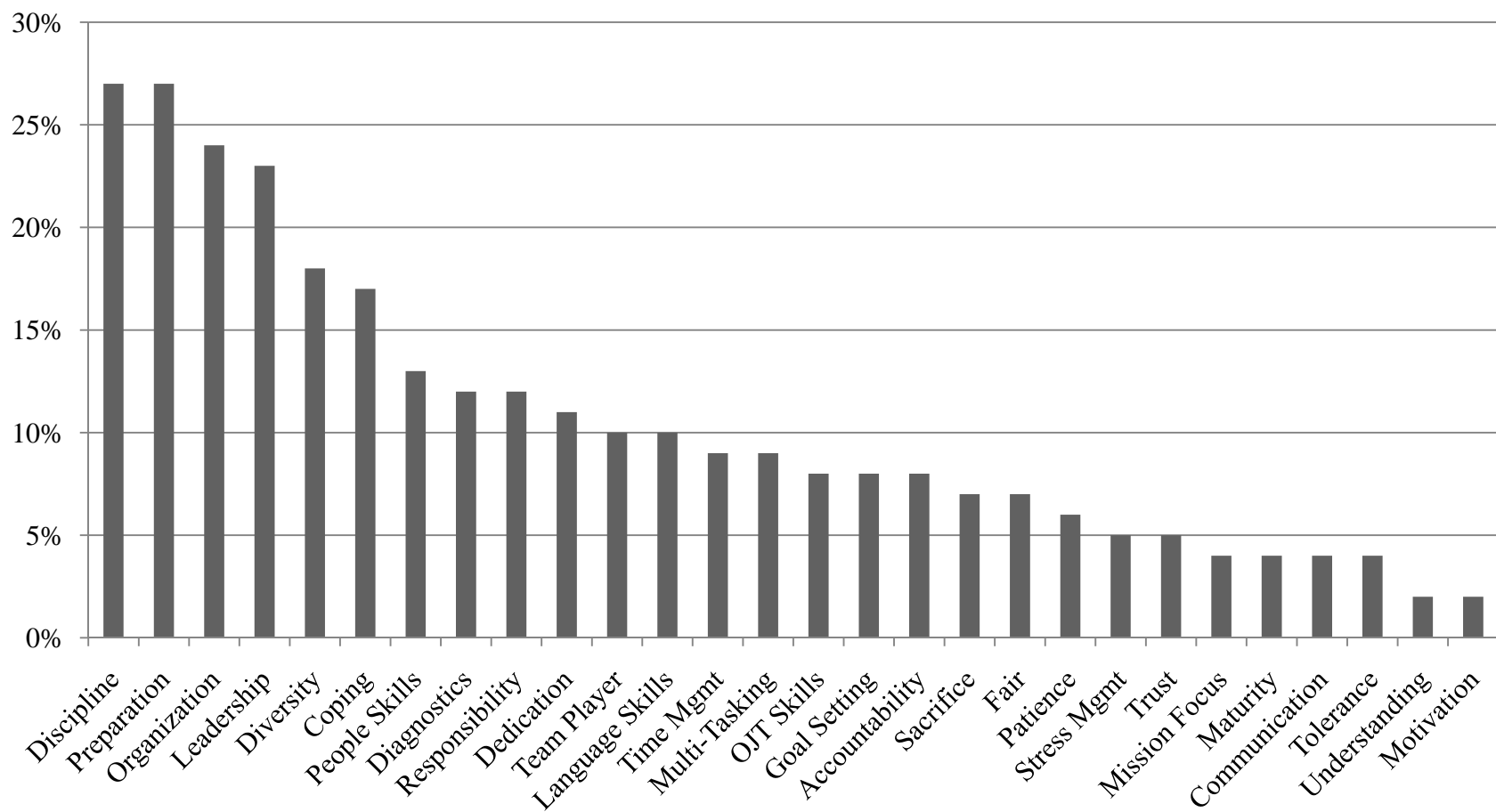
Figure 2. 2005 study's T3 educators' categorized responses listing perceived teaching skills obtained during military service.

did help prepare them for their transitions to careers in education. The T3s labeled

discipline, planning, organizational skills, and leadership as the top four characteristics

they believed their military experiences equipped them with for their transition.

T3 Supervisor Data from 2008 Study

The 2005 national survey queried two groups: T3 teachers and T3 supervisors.

The results of the T3 supervisor data reported that almost 90% of those supervisors stated

that T3 teachers "have a positive impact on student achievement to a greater degree than

do traditionally prepared teachers with similar years of teaching experience" (Owings et

al., 2005, p. 4). That opinion is a strong endorsement from one specific group of T3

supervisors, but would another group of T3 supervisors agree? The researcher

approached the Virginia Beach City Public School District and received permission to

ask its T3 supervisors to please take part in a brief four-question online survey. The first

three questions were designed to be answered by agreeing to 1 of 5 possible responses:

Strongly Agree, *Agree*, *Neutral*, *Disagree*, or *Strongly Disagree*. Each of these questions

also contained an area where supervisors could choose to add comments after entering

their Likert-type rating. Not all supervisors chose to elaborate on their responses, but the

comments left in reaction to each question have been included. The open-ended

responses to the four survey questions are provided first and followed by a content

analysis summary. Questions 1, 2, and 3 were additions to the Likert scale responses.

Question 4 was an open-ended question that asked the T3 supervisors which skills T3

teachers bring to the classroom.

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SQ1, SQ2, and SQ3 Open-ended Questions

First, it was necessary to discover if the Virginia Beach City Public Schools' T3 supervisors agreed with the T3 supervisors from the 2005 national survey, so the researcher had participants respond to SQ 1: A recent national study of Troops to Teachers (T3) reported that approximately 90% of supervisors believed T3 personnel are more effective in the classroom than traditionally trained teachers. My experience with T3 teachers would indicate that finding to be accurate. Five supervisors added open comments to the question (Table 6). Of the comments received, the majority were positive about their military experiences. All of the responses indicate military training is helpful in producing effective teachers; however, 2 pointed out that they had trouble accepting the 90% statistic from the 2005 national survey.

Second, the researcher wanted to know if the T3 supervisors from the Virginia Beach City Public Schools think there are distinct advantages of having T3 personnel working in their schools, so SQ2 was: In my experience, there are distinct advantages to having T3 personnel in our public schools. Out of the 5 supervisors' responses in this open comment section, 4 stated that there are advantages to having T3 personnel in the public schools (Table 7). The final response noted that any good teachers were necessary. Many qualities of these teachers were listed by the supervisors.

Table 6

2008 Survey: Virginia Beach City Public School Supervisors' Open Comments Written in Response to Survey Question 1

Survey question 1	Response
A recent national study of Troops to Teachers (T3) reported that 90% of supervisors believed T3 personnel are more effective in the classroom than traditionally trained teachers. My experience with T3 teachers would indicate that finding to be accurate.	I agree with the assessment that T3 teachers are more effective in the classroom than traditionally trained teachers. There's a confidence and organization that T3 teachers bring to the classroom that it takes others years to develop, if ever!
	Yes, I would say that is accurate. It isn't that the traditionally trained teachers aren't good; they are – but the prior military folks walk into the position ready to handle most situations with a maturity and insight that others lack.

(table continues)

Survey question 1	Response
A recent national study of Troops to Teachers (T3) reported that 90% of supervisors believed T3 personnel are more effective in the classroom than traditionally trained teachers. My experience with T3 teachers would indicate that finding to be accurate.	Those administrators might be stretching it a bit. Clearly, the T3 teachers have terrific team-building skills and are alert and open to any possibility (I will give them that), but they are older and have more life experience than the younger teachers straight out of college. I guess I have made "their" point, didn't I? Okay, I agree.
	Look, there's no way that a person who has served in the military can leave all of that training at the door. I did not understand that until I supervised a T3 teacher. He was so focused and goal orientated that I found myself learning from him, in some areas (such as assessment and redirection).

Survey question 1	Response
A recent national study of Troops to Teachers (T3) reported that 90% of supervisors believed T3 personnel are more effective in the classroom than traditionally trained teachers. My experience with T3 teachers would indicate that finding to be accurate.	T3 teachers are good, and I mean that sincerely, but let's not use their successes to undermine others who take a traditional path to certification. Personally, I think the 90% is exaggerated.

Table 7

2008 Survey: Virginia Beach City Public School Supervisors' Open Comments Written in Response to Survey Question 2

Survey question 2	Response
In my experience, there are distinct advantages to having T3 personnel in our public schools.	Without a doubt there are advantages. With T3 teachers we get a level of commitment that is uncommon. In my position of supervisor, I have the opportunity to see all of our teachers in action, and I can honestly say I have never been disappointed with the level of professionalism our T3 teachers have brought to our schools and community.
	I am always glad when we get a T3 teacher. They listen well and communicate well. And they are patient! In math class, T3 teachers tend to teach each lesson thoroughly and the patiently go through each step until the students connect. There are no dramatics with T3 teachers. At least that's my experience.

(table continues)

Survey question 2	Response
In my experience, there are distinct advantages to having T3 personnel in our public schools.	I think the advantage of T3 teachers is that they bring massive life experiences with them, and even if those experiences where honed from harsh situations, the T3 teachers have the emotional balance and maturity to use the best in the classroom. They are dependable and hard working and have tremendous character.
	Not really. What I'm looking for are good teachers, period! Lots on non-military educators are responsible and professional, too.
	T3 teachers are great. They arrive early, work late, work well with everybody, and connect with students AND parents. They are respectful to everybody and they are organized. I love to see an application on my desk for T3 prepared teachers.

Third, the researcher wanted to know if the Virginia Beach City Public School T3 supervisors have seen higher levels of student achievement in T3 classrooms than in classrooms with traditionally trained teachers, so the researcher asked SQ 3: I have seen higher levels of student achievement in T3 classrooms than in classrooms with traditionally trained teachers. Only 4 supervisors responded with comments to this question (Table 8). Unfortunately, none of the respondents had any concrete data on which to base their opinions. In fact, several made comments about wishing that data was available.

SQ4 Open-ended Question Responses

The researcher wanted to know if each Virginia Beach City Public School T3 supervisor would share the three most important skills he or she thinks T3 teachers bring to the classroom, especially when compared with traditionally prepared teachers, so the researcher asked SQ4: In your experience, please list up to three of the most important skills T3s bring to the classroom compared with traditionally prepared teachers (Table 9).

When the researcher began to quantify the data obtained in response to SQ4, it became apparent that there were common threads within the responses. For example, in response to an open-ended question addressing descriptors of T3 teachers, 36% of supervisors listed responsibility, dependability, and reliability as qualities T3 teachers bring to the classroom (Figure 3). It was especially interesting to note that a high percentage of respondents chose similar descriptors for T3 teachers under their supervision.

Table 8

2008 Survey: Virginia Beach City Public School Supervisors' Open Comments Written in Response to Survey Question 3

Survey question 3	Response
I have seen higher levels of student achievement in T3 classrooms than in classrooms with traditionally trained teachers.	This is difficult to measure, still I am confident in saying that my T3 teachers' students do have higher achievement–but I think it is because the students are better prepared on test taking skills and on the basics – the fundamentals, which are both produces of the training instilled in the T3 teacher by the military, and I say that from my own military experience. I can tell a difference in the students prepared by the T3 teachers. Those students stand in neat lines and speak softly . . . oh and they are more respectful to each other. As far as student achievement on exams, I think they are about the same (maybe a little higher but I do not know for sure).

(table continues)

Survey question 3	Response
I have seen higher levels of student achievement in T3 classrooms than in classrooms with traditionally trained teachers.	Do the students of T3 teachers score better on test and have higher student achievement? Oh jeez, I never checked and don't know if I even have the resources available to measure that, but I can say that based on the strongly focused goal-oriented (test-driven curriculum) that I have witnessed by T3 teachers (and not so much from other teachers) that the T3 students are higher achievers. That's just an educated guess.
	Not sure. Do not have those statistics. Wish I did.

Table 9

2008 Survey: Virginia Beach City Public School Supervisors' Open Comments Written in Response to Survey Question 4

Survey question 4	Response
In your experience, please list up to three of the most important skills T3s bring to the classroom compared with traditionally prepared teachers.	Organization, time efficiency, focus
	Good time skills, dependability and calm under stressful situations
	Excellent communicators (teach with strong alignment and focus). Good listeners. Team builders (and team players).
	Reliable, hard working, strong leaders in and out of the classroom.
	Mature, solid work ethics, motivated

(table continues)

Survey question 4	Response
In your experience, please list up to three of the most important skills T3s bring to the classroom compared with traditionally prepared teachers.	Discipline, motivated, personable
	Good planners, organized, dependable
	Always prepared, always on time, always dedicated 100%
	In your experience, please list up to three of the most important skills T3s bring to the classroom compared with traditionally prepared teachers.
	They are extremely capable people – and good leaders , & always responsible
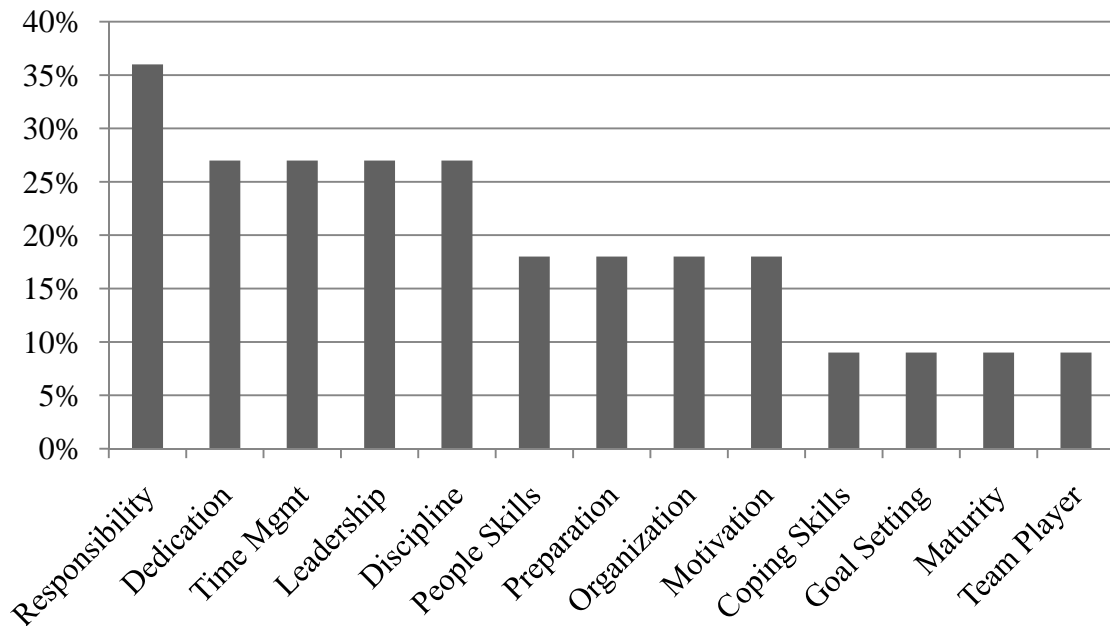
Figure 3. 2008 survey: Virginia Beach City Public Schools supervisors' responses to open-ended question 4.

Interestingly, 82% of the supervisors listed positive traits when talking about their T3 teachers. Eighteen percent did not respond to SQ4 (Figure 4). These results were remarkably similar to the responses obtained for the T3 teachers in the 2005 national survey, where 83% of the responses were positive and 16% had not responded (Figure 1).
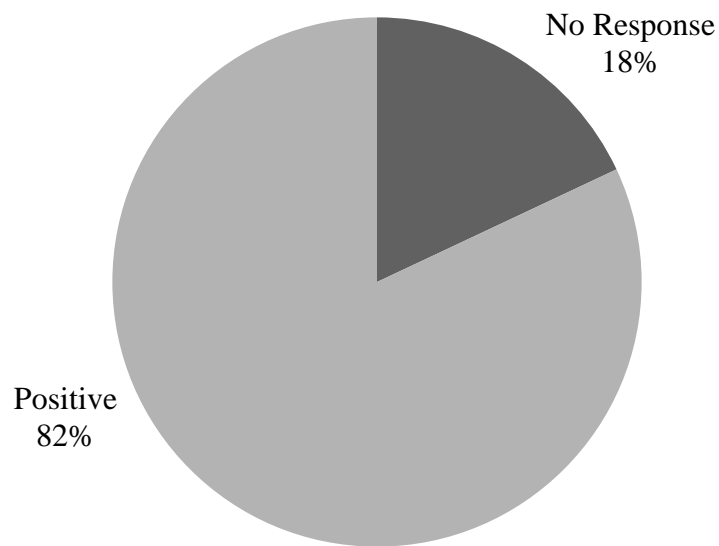
Figure 4. 2008 survey: Virginia Beach City Public Schools supervisors' attitude responses.

T3 Supervisor Results for 2009 Survey

Similarities between the two groups of respondents encouraged the researcher to expand the study to a number of supervisors who would contribute significant statistics to the study. The questions were refined, and the researcher conducted a 2009 survey of Escambia County and Santa Rosa County, Florida, supervisors. Each supervisor was asked to respond to one Likert-type question, SRQ1, and one open-response question, SRQ2 (Table 10).

Table 10

2009 Survey: Escambia County and Santa Rosa County Public School Supervisors' Open Comments Written in Response to Survey Question 2: As a Supervisor of T3 Educators, How Do You Describe How Prior Military Experience Prepares T3s for Their New Career in Teaching?

Response	Open-ended comment
1	Most, not all, are better organized and have better discipline in their classrooms. It is rare, but it does happen, that some do not fit that description.
2	I have had only one and he did not complete the current program that is available @ UWF. Teacher Ready personnel has exceeded expectations!
3	I'm not sure they do have more impact. I cannot classify the teachers that have a great impact as T3 or traditionally prepared teachers. There are great individuals and not so great individuals in both classifications.
4	It doesn't at the elementary level. In fact, those that are instructors in the military usually do not have the background for child development and age appropriate learning activities.

(table continues)

Response	Open-ended comment
5	Most of them have had at least a little exposure to teaching. Often, the travel experiences they have had can be used in the classroom.
6	The T3 educator's decision making and problem solving skills are already highly developed before they enter the field of education. They have also had experience combining many different personalities into one smoothly operating unit. All of these abilities must develop over time. The traditionally trained teacher may have had classes dealing with these skills but has not had the time and practice to fully develop and assimilate them. These "people skills" can often contribute more to success than does subject area knowledge.
7	I do think that the discipline, organizational skills, and character traits that are shaped by military service prepare a person to serve in just about any capacity in civilian life. However, it is not my opinion through observation that their training is superior or better impact wise that the traditional training a teacher receives.

Response	Open-ended comment
8	It varies with the individual. In general, however, I would say that they are very well disciplined: pay attention to details; and are very dependable.
9	Military experience does not prepare people to be elementary level teachers. In fact they most often cannot relate to small children, child development, or child behavior.
10	I am a T3 person myself and have worked up to school-based administrator. I love the T3 program and am impressed by the maturity of most of the participants. Between the 3 participants I have worked with, 2 were outstanding and one should be removed from education completely.
11	I think in terms of being a role model and having knowledge and experience outside of a traditional teacher is helpful in some cases. However, there is no substitute for pedagogical knowledge and skill.

Response	Open-ended comment
12	They have the ability to relate to more real life situations because of their experience. Students learn better when they can relate what they are learning to a real life experience.
13	It gives them broad experiences, but many times they are also narrow minded about ideas.
14	My experience has been that the T3 educators are not as prepared to deal with elementary students. The ones I have worked with have had a need for additional appropriate behavior management skills and communication skills as related to young students.
15	I have no T3 educators on my staff.

Response	Open-ended comment
16	I am not sure that prior military training is a major factor in the success of the T3s. I believe with T3s and traditionally prepared teachers it comes down to – are they "born" to be teachers? – do they work hard at the profession? The "good ones" are the good ones no matter where they came from.
17	The Troops to Teachers (T3) educators appear to be more structured in their approach to classroom instruction which can lead to only one approach to teaching. In addition, T3 educators' approach to handling discipline problems seems to be a bit harsh.
18	They are very organized and structured. They provide excellent evaluation of students and their potential. They bring real world learning into the classroom. Very dependable.

Response	Open-ended comment
19	T3's are adept at the rigors of documentation structure. Most have a well rounded knowledge of subject matter. It has been my experience T3's are more successful in the higher grades. Frequently, their expectations and practical knowledge of human development are not at a realistic level to achieve a higher level of student success.
20	I regret to report that I have not had the opportunity to observe a Troops to Teachers employee … I have hired a retired Naval officer and it was not a successful experience for him or the ESE students.
21	As a k-5 school leader, I find T3s to have a harder time (as a general group) adjusting to teaching at the elementary level. The balance between classroom management, student relationships, and overall multi-subject planning and delivery can be quite challenging and a major adjustment for these educators.
22	I have not had any T3 educators.

Response	Open-ended comment
23	I think that it prepares them to deal with emergencies in a swift and unemotional manner.
24	I have never had a teacher here through this program.
25	I have not supervised a T3 educator.
26	Both Troops to Teachers and college grade with no other experience have both high achievers and dead weight. I have found that a number of military experienced people make good teachers. I also have seen some of the best teachers ever that have never served. It is a good argument but not valid in my opinion.

Response	Open-ended comment
27	I have not seen as much success with T3s compared to traditionally trained teachers. Often, I find that the T3s have a great deal of adjustment to make because my middle school is far different from the military. Perhaps it is more closely related to the type of school at which a T3 teacher begins. My school does not have many parents that have been in the military or that have much higher education and often seem to perceive the military as a negative thing. I would love to see a study about that.
28	Good work ethic, organization, but difficulties with behavior and classroom management. (students do not have automatic respect for authority which is developed in the services)
29	I have not supervised teachers in this program.

It became apparent to the researcher that while some of the same positive qualities were listed, it was the first time in the research study that negative comments were also being listed. Respondents in the 2009 study had listed some of the same qualities as those listed in the 2005 study. However, in the 2005 study, fewer negatives were listed. This trend was not the case with the 2009 study. One trend that was noticed in the responses to the 2009 study was that several respondents who volunteered their position in a K-5 setting complained of problems with discipline or child development skills. This information was new and had not yet been explored.

After reviewing the responses, the researcher categorized each response and grouped similar characteristics. Unlike the previous two studies, both positive and negative characteristics were listed and needed to be reviewed (Figure 5). Note that some traits, such as discipline, are listed as both a positive and a negative trait. When quantifying the data, the researcher was careful to take into account the context of the term listed.

Please note that in the 2005 national survey and the 2008 study, an overwhelming majority of attitude responses were of a positive attitude. Conversely, this fact was not the case in the 2009 study. Attitude responses were much more evenly split with positive and negative equal at 31%. Thirty-eight percent of respondents were neutral to the question, or they had not personally supervised a T3 teacher (Figure 6).
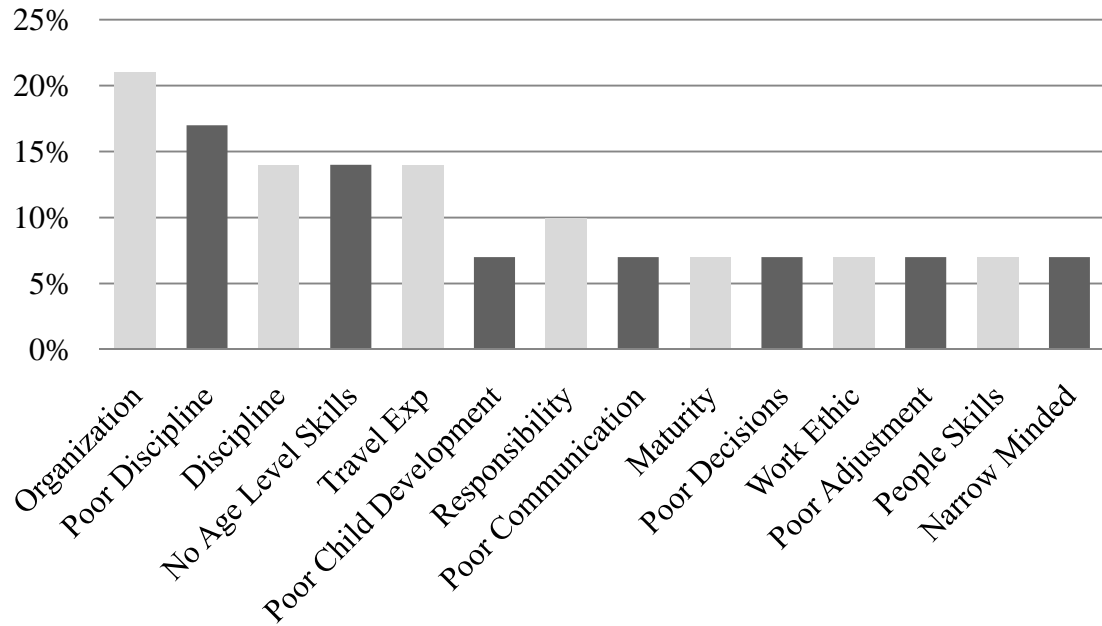
Figure 5: 2009 survey: Escambia and Santa Rosa County supervisors' categorized responses.
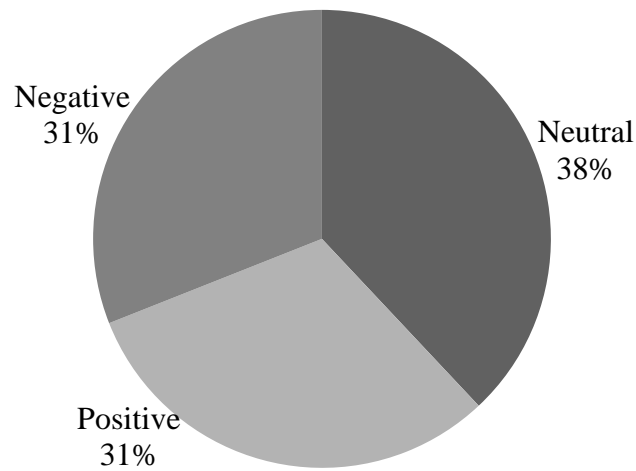
Figure 6. 2009 survey: Escambia and Santa Rosa County supervisors' attitude responses.

Summary Open-Ended Results of the Three Studies

The next section of the research took an even more interesting turn when it occurred to the researcher that maybe something could be learned if the material from the 2005 national survey, the 2008 survey, and the 2009 surveys were juxtaposed. Many qualities had been listed by all three samples in the open-response section of the surveys (Table 11).

Table 11

Factors Contributing to the Success of T3 Teachers as Stated by Each Sample Group

	% participant response		
Attribute	2005 survey	2008 survey	2009 survey
Discipline/structure/focus	27	27	14
Planning/preparation/coordination skills	27	18	0
Organizational skills	24	18	21
Leadership	23	27	0
Coping with different/extreme situations	17	9	7
People skills	13	18	3
Responsibility/dependability/reliability	12	36	10
Work ethic/dedication	11	27	7
Team player	10	9	3
Management techniques/time mgmt	9	27	0
Goal setting	8	9	0
Maturity	4	9	3
Motivation/motivational skills	2	18	0

Many more of the same attributes were listed by both the T3 teachers in 2005 and the T3 supervisors in 2008 than were listed by the 2009 respondents. In some cases, all groups of respondents listed the same trait to a similar degree, as they did in the case of organizational skills; in other areas, their responses differed greatly. Only 12% of T3 teachers felt that they brought responsibility/dependability/reliability to their jobs, but the 2008 supervisors who were surveyed listed that quality 36% of the time. Ten percent of the 2009 supervisors listed responsibility/dependability/reliability as a quality brought by T3 teachers. This percentage is much closer to the number received by the teachers themselves. Thirteen qualities were listed by more than one sample group. Not all of the responses were listed by all sample groups (Figure 7). Organizational skills represent the most commonly agreed upon characteristic, with the three sample groups varying by only six percentage points. The next closest characteristic is discipline/structure/focus with a 13% variance. The characteristic that varied the most when listed by all three sample groups was leadership. The respondents of the 2008 survey listed this characteristic the most frequently at 36%, while only 10% of 2009 survey participants listed the quality.

Likert-Type Items Survey Results

The researcher designed several Likert-type questions so the 2008 and 2009 surveys could address specific claims made by the 2005 national survey. The first claim was that 89.5% of the T3 supervisors think T3 teachers are more effective in the classroom than traditionally prepared teachers with approximately the same level of experience, and the second claim was that 90% of the T3 supervisors think T3 teachers
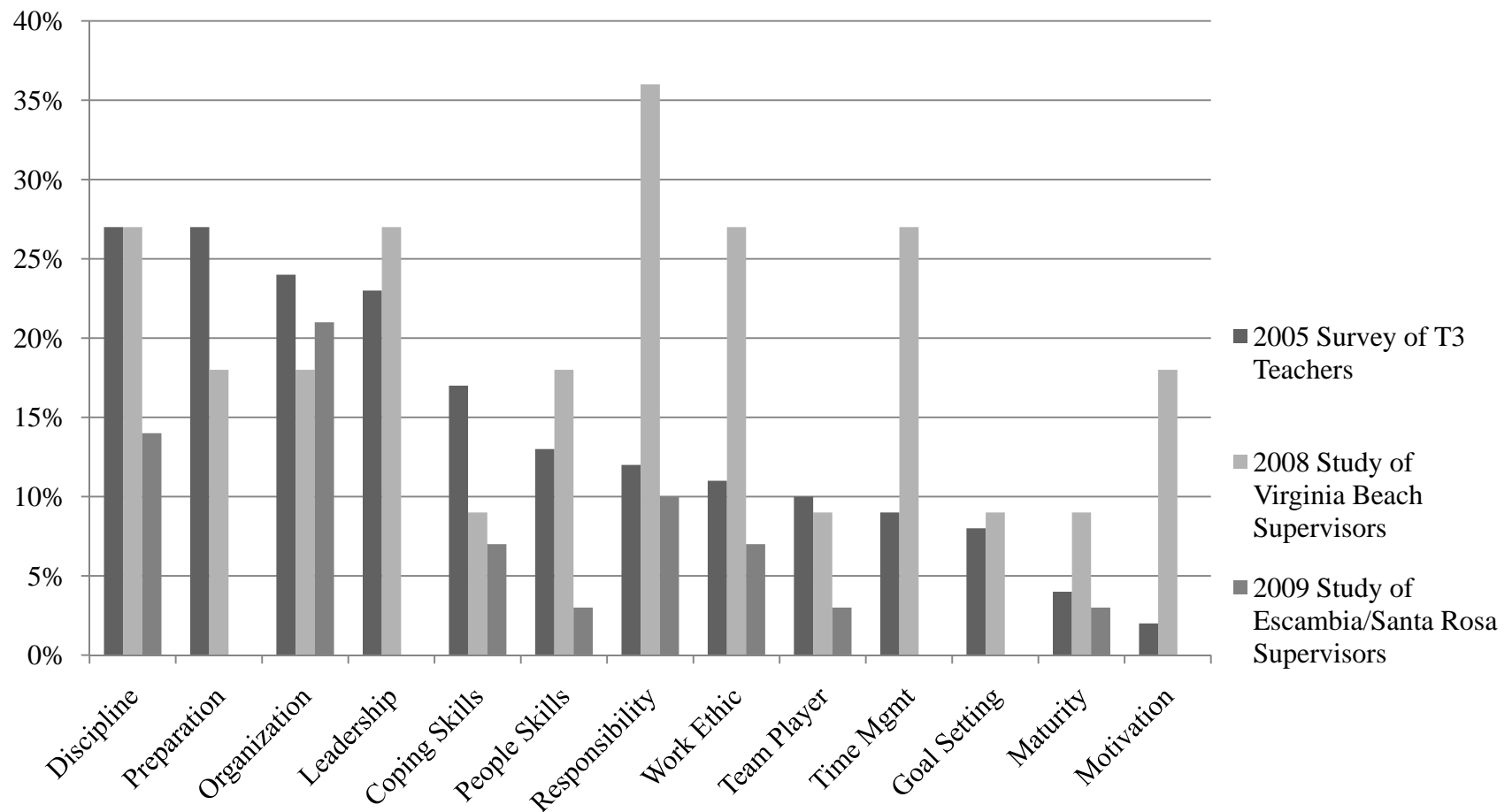
Figure 7. Factors contributing to the success of T3 teachers.

have a higher impact on student achievement than traditionally prepared teachers with

approximately the same level of experience.

The first three questions asked in the 2008 study were answered using a Likert-type scale, and the researcher categorized the responses by positive, neutral, or negative (Figure 8). For classification purposes, the researcher considered responses 1 = *Strongly Disagree* and 2 = *Disagree* as negative responses; response 3 = *Neutral*, was considered neutral, and responses 4 = *Agree*, and 5 = *Strongly Agree* were considered positive responses. The first question asked (SQ1) was the following: A recent national study of T3 reported that 90% of supervisors believed T3 personnel are more effective in the
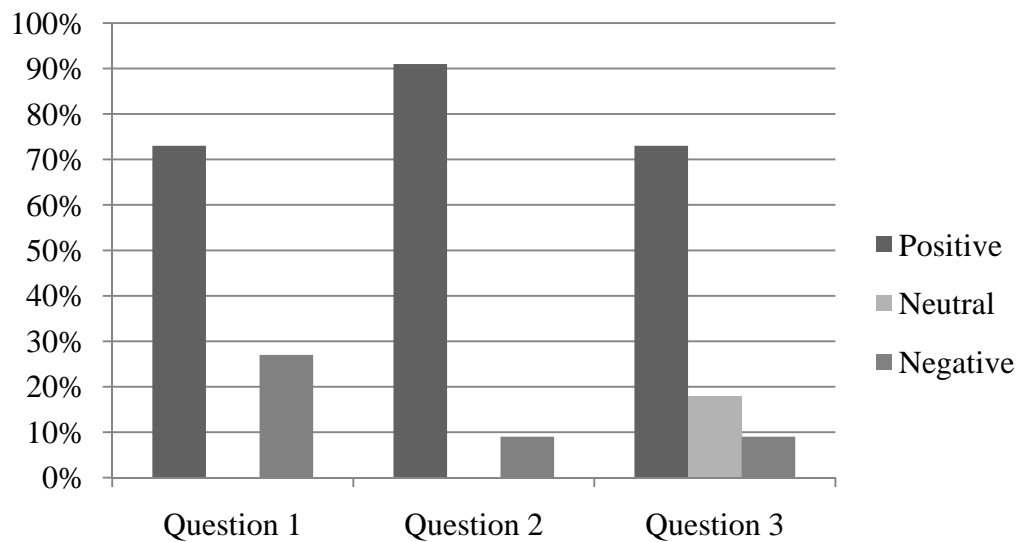
Figure 8. 2008 study responses of Virginia Beach City School supervisors' responses categorized positive through negative for the following research questions: Question 1 = A recent national study of Troops to Teachers (T3) reported that 90% of supervisors believed T3 personnel are more effective in the classroom than traditionally trained teachers. My experience with T3 teachers would indicate that finding to be accurate. Question 2 = In my experience, there are distinct advantages to having T3 personnel in public schools. Question 3 = I have seen higher levels of student achievement in T3 classrooms than in classrooms with traditionally trained teachers.

classroom than traditionally prepared teachers. Seventy-three percent of the responses

gathered were categorized as positive responses; 27% of responses were negative; none

of the responses were neutral. The second question asked in the 2008 survey (SQ2) was

as follows: In my experience, there are distinct advantages to having T3 personnel in our

public schools. The responses showed 91% positive responses, with only 9% of

respondents issuing a negative response. Seventy-three percent of responses fell into the

positive category on the final Likert-type question (SQ3). I have seen higher levels of

student achievement in T3 classrooms than in classrooms with traditionally prepared

teachers; 18% chose a neutral response, and 9% responded negatively.

Question SRQ1 from the 2009 study was as follows: As a supervisor of Troops to

Teachers (T3) educators, do you agree with a major finding on a 2005 national research

study that reported approximately 90% of supervisors believe T3s have higher impact on

K-12 student achievement than do those teachers who are traditionally prepared to teach

and have the same years teaching experience? The item was a Likert-scale response

question and was characterized using the same classifications as the above 2008 study.

Seventeen percent of supervisors responded positively, 34% were neutral to the question,

and 48% had a negative response to SRQ1 (Figure 9).
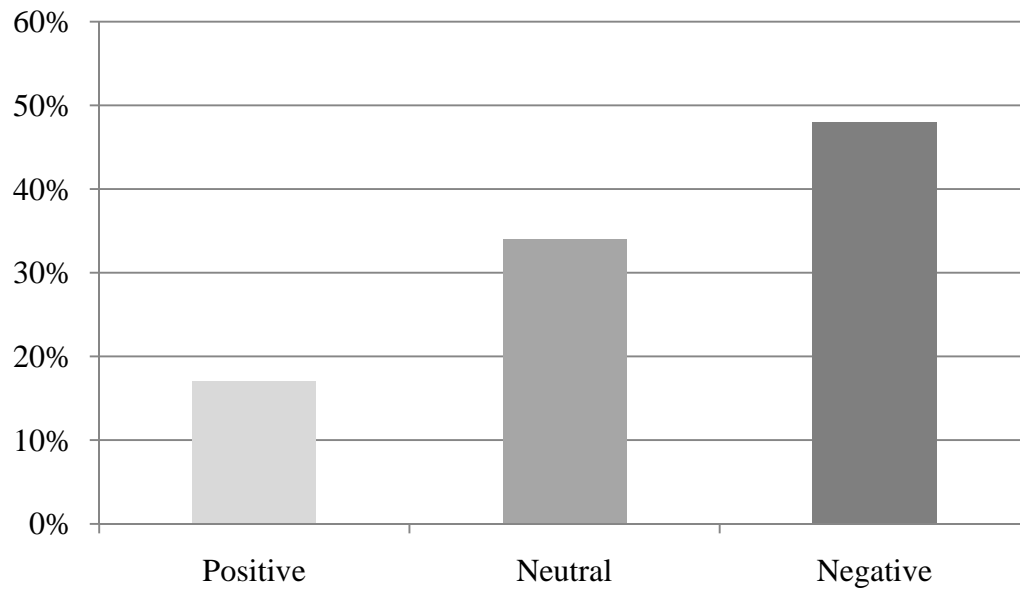
Figure 9. 2009 study responses of Escambia and Santa Rosa County public school supervisors to research question categorized positive through negative for Question 1: As a supervisor of Troops to Teachers (T3) educators, do you agree with a major finding on a 2005 national research study that reported approximately 90% of supervisors believe T3s have higher impact on K-12 student achievement than do those teachers who are traditionally prepared to teach and have the same years of teaching experience?

In Likert-type response surveys, it is always as important to analyze the responses people choose, as well as the responses not chosen. Interestingly, on the 2008 survey, none of the respondents chose 1 = *Strongly Disagree* for any of the research questions. In fact, for the first two questions from the 2008 study, 64% of the participants chose 5 = *Strongly Agree*. The responses were mixed for the question dealing with student achievement, and based on the open-comments written in response to that question, several of the participants did not have data with which to satisfactorily answer the question (Figure 10).
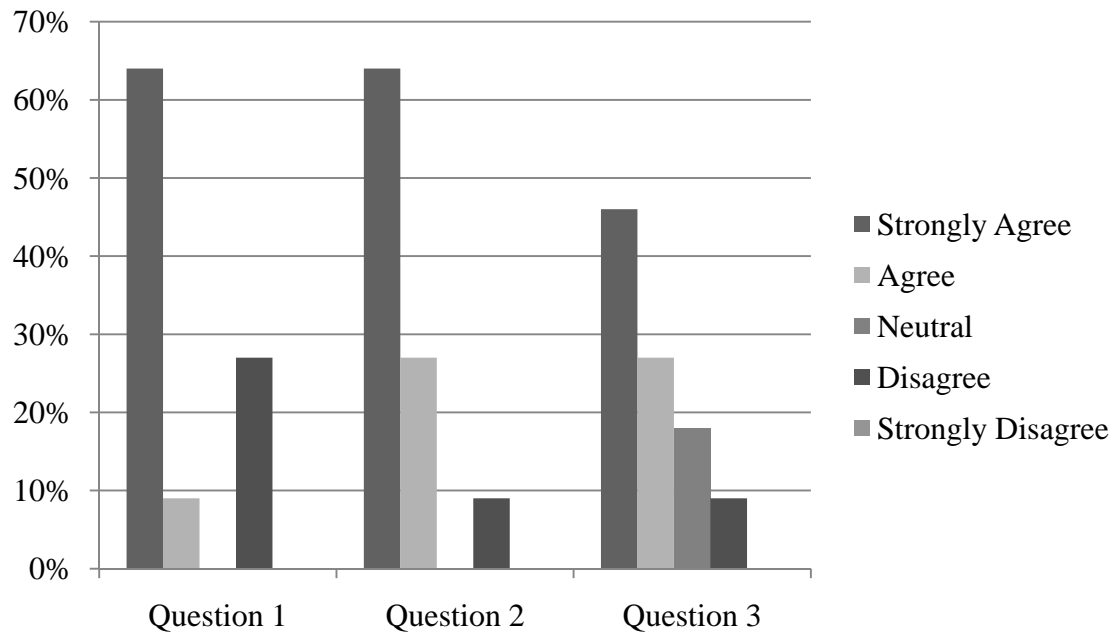
Figure 10. 2008 study Likert-type responses received from Virginia Beach City Public School supervisors. Question 1: A recent national study of Troops to Teachers (T3) reported that 90% of supervisors believed T3 personnel are more effective in the classroom than traditionally trained teachers. My experience would indicate that finding to be accurate. Question 2: In my experience, there are distinct advantages to having T3 personnel in our public schools. Question 3: I have seen higher levels of student achievement in T3 classrooms than in classrooms with traditionally trained teachers.

In the 2009 study, there was also an option that was not chosen by any of the sample respondents. For this study, no respondents chose 5 = *Strongly Agree*. Unlike the 2008 study, in 2009, 10% of those that responded chose 1 = *Strongly Disagree*. The largest number of responders (38%) chose 2 = *Disagree* (Figure 11).
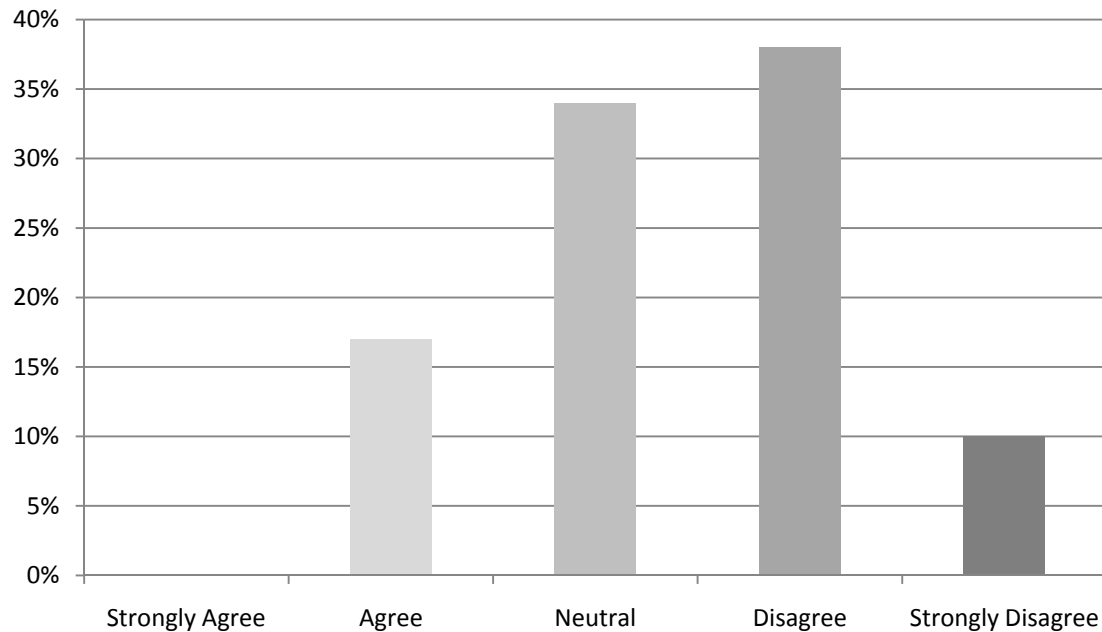
Figure 11. 2009 study Likert-type responses received from Escambia and Santa Rosa County supervisors for Question 1: As a supervisor of Troops to Teachers (T3) educators, do you agree with a major finding on a 2005 national research study that reported approximately 90% of supervisors believe T3s have higher impact on K-12 student achievement than do those teachers who are traditionally prepared to teach and have the same years of teaching experience?

The researcher also calculated mean responses and standard deviations for questions SQ1-SQ3 on the 2008 study (Table 12). The mean values for each are relatively high.

The 2009 survey was designed to again test the 2005 national study findings in very specific areas where very positive responses by supervisors were recorded. Supervisors from two counties in Florida were surveyed in an attempt to increase the number of responses. While only 13% of supervisors from the Virginia Beach City Public School District chose to respond to the 2008 study, 25% of supervisors in the Escambia

Table 12

2008 Study of T3 Supervisors in Virginia Beach City Public Schools

Question	M	SD	n
SQ1: A recent national study of Troops to Teachers (T3) reported that 90% of supervisors believed T3 personnel are more effective in the classroom than traditionally trained teachers. My experience with T3 teachers would indicate that finding to be accurate.	4.09	1.891	11
SQ2: In my experience, there are distinct advantages to having T3 personnel in our public schools.	4.45	0.873	11
SQ3: I have seen higher levels of student achievement in T3 classrooms than in classrooms with traditionally trained teachers.	4.09	1.091	11

County and Santa Rosa County, Florida, school districts responded to the online survey ($n = 29$).

The mean response for SRQ1 on the 2009 survey was calculated at 2.59 (Table 13). While this data mean is substantially lower than the ones calculated in the 2008 study, so too is the standard deviation at 0.794. What these data reflect is that the

opinions of the 2009 survey respondents were not as widespread as the opinions of the

2008 survey respondents.

Table 13

2009 Study of Supervisors of Escambia and Santa Rosa Public Schools

Question	*M*	*SD*	*n*
SRQ1: As a supervisor of Troops to Teachers (T3) educators, do you agree with a major finding on a 2005 national research study that reported approximately 90% of supervisors believe T3s have a higher impact on K-12 student achievement than do those teachers who are traditionally prepared to teach and have the same years of teaching experience?	2.59	.794	29

Finally, the researcher constructed the frequencies of the responses to questions

SQ1, SQ2, SQ3, and SRQ1 (Tables 14-17). These data allowed the researcher to quickly

see trends in the answers received.

The researcher designed one question in both the 2008 study and the 2009 study

to address the claim of increased student achievement made by the 2005 study. In the

2008 study, this claim was SQ3 and showed the most varying results of all three 2008

questions. Still, a majority of the responses to this question in the 2008 study were

positive (73%). This positive trend was not the case when the responses were analyzed in

2009. Seventeen percent of the responses collected in 2009 were positive, and 48% were

categorized as negative. This inconsistency in the data shows that more research in this

area is needed.

Table 14

Frequency Distribution of Responses Received from Virginia Beach City Public School Supervisors in 2008 Study to SQ1

Numerical response	Likert response	*f*
5	*Strongly agree*	7
4	*Agree*	1
3	*Neutral*	0
2	*Disagree*	3
1	*Strongly disagree*	0

Note: SQ1 = A recent national study of Troops to Teachers (T3) reported that 90% of supervisors believed T3 personnel are more effective in the classroom than traditionally trained teachers. My experience with T3 teachers would indicate that finding to be accurate.

Table 15

Frequency Distribution of Responses Received from Virginia Beach City Public School Supervisors in 2008 Study to SQ2

Numerical response	Likert response	*f*
5	Strongly agree	7
4	Agree	3
3	Neutral	0
2	Disagree	1
1	Strongly disagree	0

Note. SQ2 = In my experience, there are distinct advantages to have T3 personnel in our public schools.

Table 16

Frequency Distribution of Responses Received from Virginia Beach City Public School Supervisors in 2008 Study to SQ3

Numerical response	Likert response	*f*
5	Strongly agree	5
4	Agree	3
3	Neutral	2
2	Disagree	1
1	Strongly disagree	0

Note. SQ3 = I have seen higher levels of student achievement in T3 classrooms than in classrooms with traditionally trained teachers.

Table 17

Frequency Distribution of Responses Received in 2009 Study from Escambia and Santa Rosa County School System T3 Supervisors to SRQ1

Numerical response	Likert response	*f*
5	Strongly agree	0
4	Agree	5
3	Neutral	10
2	Disagree	11
1	Strongly disagree	3

Note. SRQ1= As a supervisor of Troops to Teachers (T3) educators, do you agree with a major finding on a 2005 national research study that reported approximately 90% of supervisors believe T3s have higher impact on K-12 student achievement than do those teachers who are traditionally prepared to teach and have the same years of teaching experience?

Researcher Bias

This study investigates two factors that are important to the researcher: education

and the United States military. For 35 years, the researcher has taught; for 30 years, the

researcher served in the military (25 years in the reserve force, 5 years on active duty). Nonetheless, the researcher understands that for this effort to serve any meaningful purpose, academic integrity must be the number one priority. Therefore, the researcher included very specific questions from the national survey that produced what may have seemed to be overrated results by the supervisors surveyed in the initial survey. The findings from these small groups in Virginia and Florida reinforce that the strong recommendations in the national survey need to be further studied. The researcher entered this research study with the same strong beliefs as the 2005 national study results. The researcher's findings have shifted thinking to seeing a need to explore these extremely positive findings more carefully.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

Introduction

As the title of this chapter indicates, this section of the dissertation provides a

summary, a discussion, and recommendations. The summary section includes three

reviews: the issue investigated, the methods used to conduct the study, and the findings.

The discussion section offers a look at the research findings and their relationship with

the literature cited in chapter 2. Finally, the recommendation section offers suggestions

for future T3 research.

Summary of the Findings

The main purpose of this study was to offer additional insights into the *Supervisor*

Perceptions of the Quality of Troops to Teachers Program Completers and Program

Completer Perceptions of their Preparation to Teach: A National Survey (Owings et al.,

2005). To accomplish that goal, the researcher used data from three sources: a 2005

national survey, a 2008 survey, and a 2009 survey. The data focused on the responses to

research questions asked of T3 teachers and their supervisors. The researcher organized

the summary of the findings in a simple three-pronged format by presenting each

research question, by presenting the method used to collect the data, and by presenting

the results of that question.

T3 teachers who participated in the 2005 national survey were asked the following question: "Please describe how your experience in the military may have prepared you for your new career in teaching." The results are as follows: 83% were positive; 1% was positive and negative, and 16% were no responses. The key words and terms, and the percent of T3 teachers who used the key words and terms are as follows: discipline/structure/focus (27%), planning/preparation/coordination skills (27%), organizational skills (24%), leadership (23%), cultural/ethnic diversity (18%), coping with difference/extreme situations (17%), interacting with others/people skills (13%), assessing/observing/diagnosing skill set (12%), responsibility/dependability/ reliability (12%), work ethic/dedication (11%), team player (10%), foreign travel/language skills (10%), management/techniques/time management (9%), multitasking (9%), on the job training/skills (8%), goal setting (8%), accountability (8%), personal sacrifice (7%), fair treatment (7%), patience (6%), stress management (5%), trust (5%), mission accomplishment (4%), maturity (4%), communication skills (4%), tolerance (4%), understanding (2%), and motivational skills/personal motivation (2%).

2008 Survey Question 1

T3 supervisors from Virginia Beach City Public School District were asked the following question: "A recent national study of Troops to Teachers (T3) reported that 90% of supervisors believed T3 personnel are more effective in the classroom than traditionally trained teachers. My experience with T3 teachers would indicate that finding to be accurate." The participants responded using a Likert-type scale with the results of 64% *Strongly Agreed*, 9% *Agreed*, and 27% *Disagreed*.

2008 Survey Question 2

The second question the T3 supervisors from the Virginia Beach City Public School District were asked is as follows: "In my experience, there are distinct advantages to having T3 personnel in public schools." The results were 64% *Strongly Agreed*, 27% *Agreed*, and 9% *Disagreed.*

2008 Survey Question 3

The third question the T3 supervisors from the Virginia Beach City Public School District were asked is as follows: "I have seen higher levels of student achievement in T3 classrooms than in classrooms with traditionally trained teachers." The results were 46% *Strongly Agreed*, 27% *Agreed*, 18% *Neutral*, and 9% *Disagreed*.

2008 Survey Question 4

The fourth question asked of the T3 supervisors from the Virginia Beach City Public School District is as follows: "In your experience, please list up to three of the most important skills T3s bring to the classroom compared with traditionally prepared teachers." The results are as follows: responsibility/dependability/reliability (36%), work ethic/dedication (27%), management techniques/time management (27%), leadership (27%), discipline/structure/focus (27%), interacting with others/people skills (18%), planning/preparation/coordination skills (18%), organizational skills (18%), motivational skills/motivation (18%), coping with different/extreme situations (9%), goal setting (9%), maturity (9%), and team player (9%).

2009 Survey Question 1

The first question asked of the T3 supervisors from Escambia County and Santa Rosa County, Florida, was as follows: "As a supervisor of Troops to Teachers (T3) educators, do you agree with a major finding on a 2005 nation research study that reported approximately 90% of supervisors believed T3s have higher impact on K-12 student achievement than do those teachers who are traditionally prepared to teach and have the same years of teaching experience?" The results were 17% *Agreed*, 34% *Neutral*, 38% *Disagreed*, and 10% *Strongly Disagreed*.

2009 Survey Question 2

The second question asked of the T3 supervisors from Escambia County and Santa Rosa County, Florida, is as follows: "As a supervisor of T3 educators, how do you describe how prior military experience prepares T3s for their new career in teaching?" The results were organizational skills (21%), poor discipline/behavior management (17%), discipline management (14%), no age appropriate learning skills (14%), real life/travel experience (14%), poor child development skills (7%), responsibility/ dependability/reliability (10%), poor communication skills (7%), problem solving/ decision-making skills (7%), poor classroom adjustment (7%), team building/people skills (7%), unrealistic expectations/narrow minded (7%), character/maturity (7%), and good work ethic/role model (7%).

Discussion of Findings

As a brief introduction to the findings of this research study, the researcher refers to Gage's (1991) *The Obviousness of Social and Educational Research Results*. Gage

says, "Highly estimable writers have averred that well nigh all of the results of social and educational research are obvious, that is, could have been predicted without doing the research" (p. 10). To this argument, he added *Keppel's Position* that offers this comment: "The efforts to use scientific methods to study human behavior seems . . . ridiculous if not impious. The result is a ponderous, pseudo-scientific language which takes ten pages to explain the obvious . . ." (Gage, p. 13). Concerning the testing of human reactions, Gage concludes that although research findings might appear obvious, nonetheless, research "is of great importance to know which reactions actually occur most frequently and under what conditions . . ." (p. 16).

The gist of this section is that current findings answer some questions but raise more questions, especially in the area of student achievement. Moreover, additional research is needed to ensure that U.S. school systems apply every dollar to programs proven to give students the best global advantage. As such, the findings of this dissertation strongly suggest the need for more T3 research and for more robust links between existing research and future research.

Finding 1

Student achievement is a conundrum. As stated in the literature review section of this dissertation, there is no definitive approach to increasing and maintaining student achievement. What works well for one student might fail miserably with another student. For example, a teacher's background, with or without military training, with or without taking a traditional certification route, might or might not be variables that increases student achievement. As such, the researcher designed the literary review section of this dissertation as an academic game of ping-pong. The researcher wanted that approach, in

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addition to the material, to show that (a) there is no solid evidence that T3 teachers are better or worse teachers, (b) the T3 program does not help provide better or worse teachers for the classroom, (c) T3 teachers do or do not bring dynamic military skills to the classroom that make them more of an asset to their students, and (d) T3 teachers are or are not highly skilled teachers whose skills reflect positively in improved student achievement. Each resource material brought what often seemed to be highly biased representation, mainly for and against alternative accreditation programs, and mixed in that mire was the T3 program's credibility as a helpmate to an ailing U.S. school system. In each section of the literature review, the researcher attempted to present the contrasting sides and then material from the middle ground.

Although the variables that cause a rise in student achievement are still a mystery, this researcher continued the discovery process by analyzing the first research question asked of the T3 teachers who participated in a 2005 national survey: "Please describe how your experience in the military may have prepared you for your new career in teaching" (Owings et al., 2005).

The majority of the material from that survey was reported in the *Supervisor Perceptions of the Quality of Troops to Teachers Program Completers and Program Completer Perceptions of their Preparation to Teach: A National Survey* (Owings et al., 2005). However, the responses to the question were not used in that report but were, instead, given to the researcher to use in this dissertation. The data were quantified and turned into useful material that could help meet the primary goal of this dissertation: provide additional insights into the *Supervisor Perceptions of the Quality of Troops to Teachers Program Completers and Program Completer Perceptions of their Preparation*

to Teach: A National Survey (Owings et al.). The researcher did not design the survey question; however, the researcher did quantify the responses and did find that the responses to the questions were solidly confirmed by much of the literature from the literature review section of this dissertation. In essence, most of the T3 completers think their military experiences prepared them for careers as teachers, and the literature confirmed that finding. In particular, T3s believe they bring certain skills to the classroom, including good organization and discipline.

Finding 2

Research must go beyond perceptions. Calling something student achievement does not make it student achievement. Much more data must be collected that show actual student achievement results in the classroom. The literature review section of this dissertation included several strongly stated views of what student achievement is; however, more research is needed before a single definition will ever achieve consensus.

In that light, the researcher was curious to know if other T3 supervisors would agree with the almost 90% of the T3 supervisors from the 2005 national survey who think T3 personnel are more effective in the classroom than traditionally trained teachers with comparable years of experience, especially in regards to the most important aspect of teaching: student achievement. The researcher constructed a 2008 four-question study with this goal in mind. The feedback was extremely supportive of the T3 teachers, almost as impressively high as the responses of the T3 supervisors who responded to the 2005 national survey. Unfortunately, there were too few responses to comfortably draw conclusions.

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After seeing the data from the 2008 study, the researcher redesigned the questions to focus more specifically on the question of student achievement. This question on the Virginia survey showed weaker findings than the stronger findings on the 2005 national survey. A 2009 survey with a larger sample group was sent out, and the data were gathered and quantified. The 2009 survey offered mixed messages. There were as many good qualities of T3 teachers listed as negative qualities. As in the literature review, there was a clear division between those who are impressed by T3 teachers and those who are not. In this section of the literature review, few authors seemed to soften their stance, but of the hundreds of articles researched, most authors maintained a firm stance on either side of the argument over whether T3s, the T3 program, and other programs like the T3 program do, actually, provide a genuine pool of talented professionals for our public schools.

The researcher found that although different in size and scope, three different surveys provided very different results when focusing on one area. Supervisors have a range of opinions when asked if students of T3 teachers have higher student achievement than students who are in classes with traditionally prepared teachers. The findings in this dissertation do little to solve the back and forth argument in the literature. Rather, it adds to the argument and begs for additional research that moves beyond preceptor data.

<div align="center">Recommendations for Further Research</div>

The researcher states unequivocally that there appears to be significant opportunity for further research into other factors that could contribute additional insight into the *Supervisor Perceptions of the Quality of Troops to Teachers Program Completers and Program Completer Perceptions of their Preparation to Teach: A*

National Survey (Owings et al., 2005). As such, four specific recommendations are made to future researchers:

1. Instead of explaining that almost 90% of T3 supervisors who responded to the 2005 national survey reported that their T3 teachers are superior to their traditionally trained teachers with the same years of teaching experience, future T3 researchers should simply ask T3 supervisors if their T3 teachers are superior to traditionally accredited teachers with the same years of experience. Offering information about the 2005 national survey T3 supervisor respondents might introduce bias, and the same responses can be gathered without taking that risk.

2. If future T3 researchers ask T3 supervisors to share three positive points about hiring T3 teachers, then those same T3 supervisors should be given the opportunity to provide three negative points, as well.

3. Future researchers must ensure that data from T3 supervisors' and T3 teachers' research projects are collected independently of each other. Allowing the teachers and administrators to see each other's responses might build in bias.

4. Future T3 researchers need to build research designs that include more useful categories. Data from all previous T3 research and this dissertation study would have offered far more useful information if the T3 teachers and supervisors had been asked questions about the specific grade levels involved, the economic status of the school district, and the military influence within the community, for example. The researcher makes that recommendation to future

researchers based on comments from T3 supervisors who participated in the

2009 survey. Several T3 supervisors suggested that T3 teachers, especially

those T3 teachers new to the public school classroom environment, seem more

easily irritated by the general lack of discipline within classrooms than those

teachers with the same amount of experience who were traditionally trained

and certified. That point begs the question of whether students from families

and communities with strong military influences relate better with the often

perceived stricter disciplinary style of some T3 teachers. Also, did

socioeconomic differences between the communities of the T3 supervisors

from the 2008 survey and the T3 supervisors from the 2009 survey influence

their responses? Frustratingly, no current data exist that would allow the

researcher to answer that question. In brief, yes, there is a need for more T3

research, but future T3 researchers must drill deeper by asking more possibly

illuminating questions.

This dissertation study attempted to test some of the extraordinarily strong results

discovered in the 2005 national study. There is still much more research to be done. As

suggested, future T3 researchers can gather more in-depth information about the type of

effects T3 teachers have on student achievement; in fact, a more comprehensive survey

that specifically focuses on such student achievement effects could be applied to a

national sample. In addition, a trend analysis of student achievement scores across time

for T3s and compared to traditionally trained teachers would provide actual impact data

rather than perception results. This research could also be expanded to include whether or

not T3 personal or T3 leadership qualities change over the course of their teaching

careers and across generational lines. Finally, a researcher could use the information in this study to develop a more in-depth study of individual T3 experiences within classrooms. Without question, the results of the 2005 national study, this dissertation research, and any additional studies would provide insight to help educators understand the characteristics of teachers that affect student achievement, including those they bring into the profession from past experiences, those that are learned, and those that T3s experience each day, especially during their first several years of teaching.

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APPENDIXES

Appendix A

Permission to Use 2005 National Survey

----- Forwarded Message ----
From: "Owings, William A." <WOwings@odu.edu>
To: Jean Roberts <navygal27@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wed, August 19, 2009 12:07:37 PM
Subject: RE: 2005 Troops to Teacher National Survey: URGENT!

Hi Jean,

As per our discussions, you have permission to use our TTT survey and any related materials as long as you cite us as the authors.

Bill

William A. Owings, Ed.D.
Professor of Educational Leadership
Old Dominion University
Norfolk, Virginia 23529
757.683.4954 - Office
757.683.5756 - Fax
http://www.odu.edu/~wowings

While the early bird may get the worm, the second mouse gets the cheese.

Appendix B

Letter Emailed to T3 Supervisors

(Reproduced as used)

3 June 2008

Hello, Supervisors.

You are busy, right? And I'm another annoying doctoral student with a survey, **but unlike so many others**, my survey has only four simple questions and will take about two minutes of your time to complete. Honest!

I need all Virginia Beach City Public Schools administrators who have ever supervised Troops to Teachers educators to **<u>please</u>** go to the following link and respond to **4 questions**. If you have difficulty opening the link, copy the link and paste it into your Internet address box.

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=IzCMH0YDuc_2fMGvYL63u
bjw_3d_3d

I got called up and an serving on active duty; as a result, my dissertation from the University of West Florida is *way* overdue. If you would take two minutes and help me by taking the survey, I would greatly appreciate it. Dare I say "thank you" in advance?

Kindest regards,

Jean Roberts
Captain, U.S. Navy
Director Strategic Communication
Carrier Strike Group – 8
757-445-3058

Background

A national survey of Troops to Teachers (T3) educators and their supervisors showed that "90% of the supervising administrators indicated that T3s performed better in all instructional areas than traditionally prepared teachers with comparable teaching experience."

T3s have vast life experience, professionalism, discipline, a willingness to work in inner-city schools, and expertise in high-demand areas such as mathematics, science, and special education. The majority of T3s are older males (perception of strength), and over a third are persons of color (thereby introducing a more diverse teaching population in the classroom).

Appendix C

2008 Survey

T3 Supervisor Feedback

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. A recent national study of Troops to Teachers (T3) reported that 90% of supervisors believed T3 personnel are more effective in the classroom than traditionally trained teachers. My experience with T3 teachers would indicate that finding to be accurate.					
Comments welcome.					

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
2. In my experience there are distinct advantages to having T3 personnel in our public schools.					
Comments welcome.					

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
3. I have seen higher levels of student achievement in T3 classrooms than in classrooms with traditionally trained teachers.					
Comments welcome.					
4. In your experience, please list up to three of the most important skills T3s bring to the classroom compared with traditionally prepared teachers.					
Thank you for your participation.					

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Appendix D

Virginia Beach City Public Schools' Consent Letter

VIRGINIA BEACH CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
AHEAD OF THE CURVE

June 26, 2008

Captain Jean Roberts, USN
Director Strategic Communication
Commander, Carrier Strike Group Eight
Unit 60104
FPO AE 09501-4308

Dear Captain Roberts:

This letter serves as the Department of Research, Evaluation, and Assessment's approval for your research study entitled "Additional Insights Into the Supervisor Perceptions of the Quality of Troops to Teacher Program National Survey." Your proposal was approved with the understanding that you will use publicly available e-mail addresses to contact principals within our school division to invite them to participate in a brief survey concerning the Troops to Teacher (T3) program. It is also our understanding that the survey is completely anonymous. Permission was granted with the understanding that you will not identify the individual(s), school(s), or division in your final report. As always, the final decision to participate rests with the principals of the schools that you plan to contact.

Approval for your study will expire one year from the date of this letter. If there are any changes to the methods or materials that you plan to use as part of your study, you must submit the changes to our office for review prior to proceeding. It is our expectation that you will submit an electronic copy of the final report upon its completion to the Department of Research, Evaluation, and Assessment. Please send the report to LisaA.Banicky@vbschools.com. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 263-1112.

Sincerely,

Lisa A. Banicky, Ph.D.
Research Specialist

pc: Jared A. Cotton, Ed.D., Assistant Superintendent
     Department of Research, Evaluation, and Assessment

     Elizabeth E. Taylor, Assistant Superintendent for Elementary School Education
     Maynard E. Massey, Ed.D., Assistant Superintendent for Middle School Education
     Hazel H. Jessee, Ed.D., Assistant Superintendent for High School Education
     Department of School Administration

     All Principals

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Appendix E

The University of West Florida Institutional Review Board Approval Letter

University of

West Florida

December 4, 2006

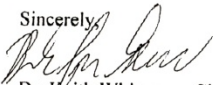Ms. Jean Roberts
4611 Geri St.
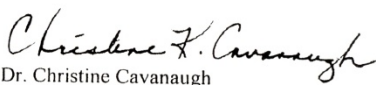Milton, FL 32583

Dear Ms. Roberts:

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) for Human Research Participant Protection has completed its review of your proposal titled "Additional Insights into the Supervisor Perceptions of the Quality of Troops to Teachers Program National Survey" as it relates to the protection of human participants used in research, and has granted approval for you to proceed with your study. As a research investigator, please be aware of the following:

- You acknowledge and accept your responsibility for protecting the rights and welfare of human research participants and for complying with all parts of 45 CFR Part 46, the UWF IRB Policy and Procedures, and the decisions of the IRB. You may view these documents on the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs web page at http://www.research.uwf.edu. You acknowledge completion of the IRB ethical training requirements for researchers as attested in the IRB application.

- You will ensure that legally effective informed consent is obtained and documented. If written consent is required, the consent form must be signed by the participant or the participant's legally authorized representative. A copy is to be given to the person signing the form and a copy kept for your file.

- You will promptly report any proposed changes in previously approved human participant research activities to the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs. The proposed changes will not be initiated without IRB review and approval, except where necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to the participants.

- **You are responsible for reporting progress of approved research to the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs at the end of the project period. Approval for this project is valid for one year. If the data phase of your project continues beyond one year, you must request a renewal by the IRB before approval of the first year lapses. Project Directors of research requiring full committee review should notify the IRB when data collection is completed.**

- You will immediately report to the IRB any injuries or other unanticipated problems involving risks to human participants.

Good luck in your research endeavors. If you have any questions or need assistance, please contact the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs at 857-6378.

Sincerely,

Dr. Keith Whinnery, Chair
IRB for Human Research
Participant Protection

Dr. Christine Cavanaugh
Interim Director, Research and Sponsored
Programs

cc: Dr. Janet Pilcher

Appendix F

Notification of Consent

(Reproduced as used)

Notification of Consent for Instructors and Students
(Please make sure you read to the end of the notification!)

You are being asked to participate in an educational research project on the Troops to Teacher's program in conjunction with The University of West Florida's College of Professional Studies. Participation in this project is voluntary. You will not be forced to participate, nor will you suffer any recrimination if you choose not to participate. There is no right or wrong answer. Your open and honest responses are critical to the success of this project. Your responses and the responses of others will lead to a better understanding of the significance of the Troops to Teacher's program in facilitating the successful migration of former military personnel into the public school system. There is no cost to you, nor are there any risks to you. **Results of this study will only be presented in an aggregated format; you will not be identified by name at any time,** and the results will be made available upon request. You may withdraw from the study at any time without fear of recrimination.

Your consent is necessary for participation in this project. By going online and taking the survey, you are giving your consent to me to use the information you provide for my research project.

If you have any questions, you may contact me at 757-445-3058 or email at jean.roberts@navy.mil. You may also contact my advisor, Dr. Janet Pilcher, at 850-595-0002, jpilcher@uwf.edu and the members of the members UWF's Internal Review Board.

Thank you!

Jean E. Roberts

Appendix G

2009 Survey

T3 Supervisor Feedback

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. As a supervisor of Troops to Teachers (T3) educators, do you agree with a major finding on a 2005 national research study that reported approximately 90% of supervisors believe T3s have higher impact on K-12 student achievement than do those teachers who are traditionally prepared to teach and have the same years of teaching experience?					
Comments welcome.					
2. As a supervisor of T3 educators, how do you describe how prior military experience prepares T3s for their new career in teaching?					
Thank you for your participation.					

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