The Professional Socialization of Novice Teachers:
The Struggles They Face

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A research paper submitted in conformity with the requirements
For the degree of Master of Teaching
Department of Curriculum, Teaching and Learning
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto
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Abstract

Research studies show that many factors are in play when it comes to the professional socialization of novice teachers. Socializing factors such as collegial support or lack thereof, appropriate mentor-mentee relationships, validation and feedback from students, colleagues, parents, administrators, and superiors all impact a beginner teacher’s professional development and assimilation into a school’s community. For this study, I interviewed three female primary-junior/junior-intermediate novice teachers in order to unveil which socializing factors best helped them successfully integrate into the workplace and transition from beginner to experienced teacher. I analyzed participant experiences of mentoring, induction programs for novice teachers and presented the implications of this analysis for their improvement.

Key words: novice teachers, professional socialization, socializing factors, mentoring, induction programs.
Acknowledgements

I wish to acknowledge the many people who have contributed to the making of this study. First, I would like to thank my participants for taking the time to partake in the interviews. Their insights were extremely helpful and have enabled me to shed much light on my research topic: *The Professional Socialization of Novice Teachers*. Secondly, I wish to thank my research supervisor, Dr. Rodney Handelsman, for guiding us as a cohort through the completion of our MTRP. Additionally, I would like to thank Dr. Angela McDonald who provided us with extensive and vital support and feedback in the first year of the MT program - she gave us the impetus to delve into and the foundation on which to build on the MTRP process. Thirdly, I would like to thank my cohort and classmates whose solidarity and support throughout the process enabled me to see the light at the end of the tunnel. Lastly and most certainly not least, I would like to thank my wonderful and loving parents, family, and close friends who have always supported me in everything I do, and who give me the strength to persevere, and take pride in whatever I decide to do in life.
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1.0: Introduction to the Research Study

The professional socialization of preservice, and novice teachers is complex. It involves various factors for example: successfully transitioning, adapting, and integrating into the school community, acquiring knowledge of the students, as well as the availability of collegial, and superior support (Kagan, 1992; Caspersen & Raaen, 2013; Uusiautti, Harjula, Pennanen, & Määttä, 2014). Broadly, socialization can be defined as “the process by which persons acquire the knowledge, skills, and disposition that makes them more or less effective members of society” (Weidman, Twale, & Stein, 2001, p. 4). Upon entering the teaching profession, novice teachers have their own philosophy and conception of what kind of teacher they plan to be. Novice teachers' preconceived ideas of teaching are often shaped by their own educational, personal, and biographical experiences, such as when they themselves were pupils (Kagan, 1992). These aspects contribute to the individual assumptions novice teachers make about school life, and how they view of themselves as educators. When confronted with the reality of the classroom, however, these role perceptions and ideas can be reappraised and even undermined (Kagan, 1992). Once immersed in the reality of school life, beginner teachers are often confronted with many struggles, challenges, and tensions when coming to terms with their new role as professionals. According to a study conducted by Caspersen and Raaen (2013), some of these challenges include lower than expected levels of collegial and superior support given to novice teachers, together with lack of experience, low sense of self-efficacy and ability to cope. In educational research, several different labels have been applied to this phenomenon, including “reality shock” (McCormak & Thomas, 2003), “cultural shock” (Wideen, Mayer-Smith, & Moon,
1998) and “practice shock” (Jordell, 1986, 1989; Monsen, 1970, as cited in Caspersen & Raaen, 2013). Some of these limitations and frustrations of novice teachers include not receiving proper recognition and acclaim from their peers, superiors, and the school establishment. Furthermore, frustration is compounded by lack of respect, understanding, and cooperation from parents, appreciation from students, challenging student behavior and classroom management issues (Caspersen & Raaen, 2013; Uusiautti et al., 2014). In their study on the wellbeing of novice teachers, Uusiautti et al., (2014) found that novice teachers began experiencing fatigue as early as the first year of teaching. Specifically, they identified the following elements: workload, work leisure spill over, pupils' behavioral problems, extra tasks, lack of appreciation from colleagues and conflicts in the work community as some of the main causes of fatigue experienced by novice teachers.

Once confronted with the reality of classroom teaching and school life, many novice teachers struggle with the demands and difficulties surrounding it. These tensions can even alter a beginner teacher's teaching philosophy. In their research, Mcneely and Mertz (1990) found that student teachers' perceivable disillusionment, in part, resulted from idealized views of pupils and classroom life conveyed during teacher training courses. Once immersed in a school setting though, novice teachers are often expected to immediately adapt and are treated as advanced beginners or experienced teachers. They are expected to be familiar with the ins and outs of the school's internal functioning system and policies. Thus they are left to their own devices (Kagan, 1992). This can leave novice teachers feeling unsupported, and hence devalued by their school community (Uusiautti et al., 2014). Sabar, (2004) makes an analogy that the transition and adaption that novice teachers need to make into their new school communities is similar to that of immigrants adjusting to a new culture and country. Sabar (2004) additionally states the
importance of novice teachers being socialized into their respective roles and responsibilities; rather than, being expected to be immediately experienced and prepared. The onus is left on the novice teacher to carry out all of their work responsibilities starting in September, just after having recently graduated. Lack of professional support can have a detrimental outcome on a novice teacher's ability to professionally and successfully adapt (Caspersen & Raaen, 2014).

Classroom management tends to be one of the most significant struggles a novice teacher faces (Kagan, 1992; Uusiautti et al., 2014). Such struggles can create a sense of disillusionment and impact on novice teachers’ teaching philosophy. According to research conducted by Kagan (1992), the reality of the classroom scarcely fulfills novices' expectations or their preconceived ideas of it. Many novice teachers find themselves confronted with pupils exhibiting low academic outcomes and motivation, together with, a propensity to act out and misbehave. This can, in turn, be discouraging to teachers and given their lack of procedural knowledge, they may become progressively more authoritarian (Kagan, 1992). Additionally, this can lead to novices becoming obsessed with class control, spending more time on classroom and behavioral management plans, rather than, enhancing student learning (Kagan, 1992). The disparity between preconceived ideas of teaching to the realities of the classroom and the challenges therein has been shown to affect novices’ overall perceptions of the teaching profession (Kagan, 1992). All of these tensions and struggles surrounding novice teachers' successful professional socialization and development heighten the need to research solid approaches and plausible solutions in order to better prepare and more fully support novice teachers in adapting to school life in the early stages of their careers.
1.1: **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to learn how a sample of novice teachers are being professionally socialized and to uncover how this socialization impacts their teaching, expectations, perceptions toward the profession and transition into their professional roles. I will inquire into the different types of support systems and help available to novice teachers, and how these aid in assisting them make a smooth and successful transition into their school community with all its demands, tensions and challenges. It is important that novice teachers be supported and feel confident about their self-efficacy as educators. In a study conducted by Munthe (2003), this concept of teacher self-efficacy is reflected. According to the study, teacher certainty consists of three attributes that all correlate to working in the classroom with the students: didactic certainty, practical certainty and relational certainty (Munthe, 2003). Without the proper support, feedback or recognition from their peers and superiors, beginner teachers can end up feeling diminished. The ability of novice teachers to cope with their workload should be considered a collective responsibility in schools rather than the fate of the individual teacher (Kagan, 1992; Uusiautti et al., 2014). For this reason, the purpose of my research is to learn how this can be done, to address the implications of teachers’ perceptions, expectations, and the encountered reality of the profession and to share these findings with the broader educational research community.

1.2: **Research Questions**

The main question guiding this research study is:

- How is a sample of novice teachers being professionally socialized, and what outcomes do they perceive this having on their teaching and their expectations toward the teaching profession?
Subsidiary questions include:

- How do these teachers conceptualize “professional socialization” and what do these teachers identify as key components of their professional socialization?
- How do teachers’ experiences of professional socialization prepare them to confront and navigate the challenges commonly experienced by novice teachers?
- What do these teachers think are the implications of their professional socialization for their teaching practice and experience of teaching?
- How is their experience of professional socialization impacting their expectations toward the profession of teaching?

1.3: Background of the Researcher (Reflexive positioning statement)

I taught for three years as a middle and high school English teacher in an international school. Although I absolutely loved working there and am very grateful for having acquired such a great deal of experience - there were some challenges in adjusting to school life; especially, in my first year. I went into the school with my fixed ideas and aspirations of the type of teacher I planned to be. I wanted to inspire, intellectually stimulate my students, and render them passionate about learning English and instill my love of literature in them. I aspired and endeavored to follow the example of my past teachers who had made significant impressions on me. Soon, I was confronted with the reality of school life. Straight away, I was dealing with parent teacher meetings, assessments and grades, report cards, occasionally disruptive behavior and unmotivated students. There was no induction period; I was entirely left to my own devices. Although, I enjoyed having autonomy: to a certain degree, I would have appreciated more guidance and mentoring from my colleagues and superiors. Over time, I learnt to independently
adapt and adjust to the school community; but it was challenging considering, I was not yet familiar with the inner workings and policies of my school.

My motivations for this research topic *The Professional Socialization of Novice Teachers* is to examine strategies, measures, and initiatives that can be acted upon to ensure novice teachers are better equipped for the realities of school life (such issues as relational: parents, colleagues, superiors, students and work responsibilities like: classroom management, assessments etc.) and therefore become fully integrated into the school community. I also want to examine and delve into what formal supports are currently in place in Ontario for novice teachers (such as the NTIP: New Teacher’s Induction Program), as well as, investigate, through my interviews with the participants of my study, what they consider to be working or what could be improved upon. I also wish to learn and understand why novice teachers are not always effectively and fully informally supported by their school communities when entering the profession. Furthermore, I wish to know if the mentoring programs or induction periods truly enable novices to better handle the diverse challenges of school life, successfully adapt and transition into their school environment.

1.4: Overview/Preview of the Whole

Chapter 1 includes the introduction and purpose of the study, the research questions, as well as how I came to be involved in this topic and study. To respond to the research questions, I will be conducting interviews with three female middle class novice teachers ranging between the ages of twenty-five and forty who are still within the first five years of their teaching careers and professional socialization. Chapter 2 contains a review of the literature on the various aspects of this topic (such as: teacher socialization, struggles novice teachers face, teachers’ sense of self-
efficacy and existing mentoring/support methods and programs for beginner teachers). Chapter 3 provides the methodology and procedure used in this study including information about the participants, data collection instruments, and limitations of the study. Chapter 4 identifies the research participants and describes the data as it addresses the research questions. Chapter 5 includes what was learned: insights, recommendations for practice, further study and also reviews the potential limitations of the study. References and a list of appendices follow at the end.
2.0: Introduction

In this chapter I review the literature surrounding the topic of novice teachers and their emerging professional identities. My literature review is comprised of qualitative studies, articles, surveys, reviews, and essays that confront topics that shape the professional socialization of new teachers. I explore how novices adapt in the first few years of teaching, and how they negotiate the challenges and realities of teaching that may differ from their initial impressions or aspirations of the discipline. More specifically, I review central themes related to the professional socialization of beginner teachers, how they cope with and negotiate their personal and professional growth, in their school setting and environment, with all the potential challenges that may entail. For example: classroom management, relational aspects of the career, such as, collaboration with peers, parents, principals, and the support or lack thereof in the socialization process are examined. I start by reviewing literature in the area of socialization and what that essentially involves. I consider the different stages and processes that occur in the socialization of new teachers. Next, I review research on the main struggles novice teachers face and lay certain emphasis on school communities such as for example: lack of collegial support towards newcomers, classroom management, students’ non compliance or unsuccessful achievement outcomes. From there, I examine the concept of teacher self-efficacy, as well as, newcomer teachers’ coping strategies and survival skills when immersed in a new and unfamiliar school setting. Finally, I explore the concept, benefits and the potential drawbacks that different types of mentoring can have on novice teachers’ assimilation.
2.1: Socialization of Novice Teachers

Before pursuing the topic of the socialization of novice teachers in more detail and in a broader context, I think it is necessary to initially underline what it essentially signifies. The socialization of teachers is described and defined as follows:

Teacher socialization, the complex process by which "people selectively acquire the values and attitudes, the interests, skills and knowledge—in short the culture—current in groups to which they are, or seek to become, a member" (Merton, Reader, & Kendall, 1957, p. 287), begins formally with the onset of teacher education and continues throughout the career as teachers adjust, adapt, and change in their perspectives, roles, and environments (Staton & Hunt, 2009, p.109).

Teacher socialization is essentially an ongoing process and starts as early as the pre-service stage and throughout a teacher’s career (Staton & Hunt, 2009). Staton and Hunt (2009) found that teacher socialization occurs through two core stages: pre-service and in-service. Changes occur during these stages and various agents influence teachers’ shifts in their teaching ideology, such as, previous personal and biographical experience, pre-service experience and in-service experience. These diverse agents ultimately lead to affective, behavioral and cognitive changes in teachers’ perceptions and development. In their research, Deal and Chatman (2012) also raise the significance and influence that pre-service, and prior biographical and personal experience can have on a teacher’s style of teaching. Findings from the same study revealed that the following aspects influenced novice teachers’ teaching practices: “1) school experience as a student, 2) teaching experience, 3) practice teaching and 4) listening to and observing family members who were teachers” (Deal & Chatman p.25, 2012). Blase’s study (1985), however, puts forth two alternative core processes to that of Staton and Hunt (2009) and Deal and Chatman
that shift teachers’ work perspective. Blase (1985) names these processes *humanization* and *rationalization*. The humanization process involves attitudinal and behavioral changes that comprise of, and result, from personal interaction with students through the growth over time of pupil empathy and tolerance. Humanization involves three major sets of outcomes: relational, moral, and counseling. Rationalization primarily leads to changes in teacher attitude. According to Blase, he claims that these changes are related to and are a result of classroom management (low achieving students, tests, and lesson plans), and instruction.

What can be drawn from Blase’s (1985) points is that pre-service experience sets the tone for a teacher’s socialization but once in service many factors such as rationalization and humanization shape a teacher’s professional growth. Teachers establish rapport with their students and learn from previous experiences in the classroom; over time, they discover what functions and makes for efficient and effective instruction and what does not. This notion is equally reflected in Kagan’s review (1992). Acquiring procedural knowledge and building upon experience ultimately leads to professional growth, the development of problem solving skills and mastery in novice teachers. He outlines five components to define the typical stages of novice teachers’ professional growth as follows: an increase in meta cognition, the acquisition of knowledge about pupils, a shift in attention from self to pupil learning, the development of standard routines and growth in problem solving skills. Acquiring such skills contribute to the professional development of novice teachers and ties into the socialization process.

Pre service teachers often have an idealized view of teaching that may become skewed when confronted with the realities of the teaching profession (Staton & Hunt, 2009). This point is not only reflected in Staton and Hunt’s (2009) essay but is a recurring point raised in a number of studies: “For new teachers the first encounter tends to remove much of the positive glow …”
Blase (1985) echoes this point in his study: (...) teachers brought to the job naïve and unrealistic assumptions, values and goals, many of which were drawn from pre service preparation and experience. Notions such as “all students can be reached”, coupled with an inordinate sense of power and potential for influence, contributed to what, many teachers perceived as a “traumatic” and for some “devastating” beginning experience. (Blase, 1985, p.242).

Not only do novice teachers enter the teacher profession with models of what type of teacher they will be - based on past personal experiences (Staton & Hunt, 2009; Deal & Chatman, 2012; Blase, 1985); beginner teachers tend to think that their future students will share similar capabilities or interests: “Candidates often extrapolate from their own experiences as learners, assuming that the pupils they will teach will possess aptitudes, problems, and learning styles similar to their own”(Kagan 1992, p.154). The ideology behind teaching does not always reflect its reality; the beginning stages in a teacher’s socialization are pivotal. These early stages have a profound impact on a teacher’s ongoing professional development and novice teachers’ perceptions evolve from what they derive from these experiences (Kagan, 1992).

Beginning teachers learn the ‘craft’ through acquiring teaching experience and by getting to know their students. “As novices acquire knowledge of pupils, they use it to modify, adapt, and reconstruct their images of self as teacher”. (Kagan, 1992, p.155). Research has indicated that pupils and classroom experience is central to novice teachers’ shifting perspectives and socialization: “Their primary socialization is in the hands of the same people they are expected to socialize” (Deal & Chatman 2012, p. 22). It is often, and interestingly enough, the students who are the novice teachers’ primary socialization agents rather than their peers, colleagues, or
superiors. Fledgling teachers receive more validation for their efforts from their students, and are, therefore, predominantly guided by their pupils (Deal & Chatman, 2012). Research has found that more often than not, novice teachers are left to their own devices and must learn the ropes through processes of trial and error (Deal & Chatman, 2012; Caspersen & Raaen, 2013; Uusiautti et al., 2014). However, the socialization of teachers differs from the concept of socialization in other professional fields where one is generally shown the ‘ropes’:

Unlike employees of other organizations, teachers learn to cope as islands without the support of colleagues or a community that lets them know what is valued or expected. New teachers are not drawn into a shared system of meaning. Whatever meaning they construct is done alone and with students in an individual classroom (Deal & Chatman 2012, p.22).

Although research reveals that students have been found to be novices’ primary and most influential socializing agents (Deal & Chatman, 2012; Kagan 1992); the culture of the school also plays a salient role in contributing to teachers’ socialization (Staton & Hunt, 2009). The school culture can either nurture or hinder a novice teacher’s development depending on the available support. Principals, colleagues, mentors, pupils, and parents of pupils all have some form of a role that can impact on a novice teacher’s socialization process. Principals, for example, although they do not exert complete control over novices, they shape the context in which novice teachers perform, by setting expectations, handling disorderly students and their parents, providing opportunities for professional development and determining the level of the teacher’s autonomy (Staton & Hunt, 2009). Deal and Chatman (2012) broached a similar point: principals set expectations, bestow responsibility on, as well as, determine the new teacher’s level of autonomy. “From the very first day, they are held responsible for the full range of teaching tasks.
No distinction is made between the work requirements of a beginning teacher and a veteran.” (Deal & Chatman 2012, p. 26). This is equally reflected by Caspersen and Raaen’s (2013) paper - who wrote that new teachers are expected to be fully responsible for their job performance; yet, in comparison to their more experienced colleagues, they cannot draw on their own experiences as teachers. This greatly impacts a novice teacher’s socialization and mirrors the notion of learning by doing; the teaching profession is ultimately heuristic in nature: “…beginning teachers are usually thrown into the classroom to either “sink-or-swim” (Deal & Chatman 2012, p. 26). These findings heighten the need for implementing more concrete formal, as well as, informal support systems within the school arena, with the aim, to aid novice teachers in their professional growth, socialization and therefore make for a smooth transition and integration. Equally, research has shown that “principals and colleagues are rarely available to help individual teachers learn the ropes or perfect their skills” (Deal & Chatman 2012, p.22). Klassen and Chiu (2010) state the importance of supporting novice teachers despite the autonomous nature of the teaching profession; if the school community provides more support in the beginning stages of a novice’s career- their immersion would be less daunting. Novices need to feel integrated and accepted as part of the school community; this has a bearing on the fledging teachers’ professional success. In their study, they additionally found that verbal encouragement was a successful and constructive form of support; it positively and significantly contributed to a novice’s socialization.

Uusiasutti et al., (2014) unveiled the importance of novice teachers being accepted as a full member of the school community and the positive affect it can have on their professional development and outcome. Help, guidance, and support provided to novices by colleagues when needed, was shown to greatly enhance novices’ well being in the school community. In the same study, they additionally found that when members feel this sense of acceptance, safety, and trust
in each other in the workplace, an open, and more importantly, an accepting environment is created. This is a contributing factor to novice teachers’ expectations. Gavish and Friedman (2011) found that novices have expectations for high levels of autonomy in their work, such as, participation in school decisions, being provided with opportunities for professional development, receiving support from school administrators and positive interactions with students, parents and school administrators.

Summarizing the above findings, the socialization process of novice teachers involves diverse factors and although teachers have more autonomy than in other fields of work, a correlation can be made to the phases Feldman (1981) describes in organizational socialization. He characterized organizational socialization as a process by which employees are transformed from outsiders to participating effective insiders. He proposed a model which consists of three stages: anticipatory socialization which includes all the knowledge acquired by the individual before joining the community (e.g.: teacher education for novice teachers); the encounter stage whereby the individual discovers what the environment is truly like which in turn colors their preconceived ideas; and lastly, the change and acquisition phase whereby the individual masters the required skills of the profession. Teacher socialization does somewhat draw on these three stages - teachers go into the profession with anticipated prior personal experiences as remarked in the majority of the literature (Deal & Chatman, 2012; Kagan, 1992; Staton & Hunt, 2009). Teachers also experience the encounter stage - the main difference here appears to be that, the encounter stage is not done with as much formal training upon employment as one would receive in a business organization (Deal & Chatman, 2012; Kagan, 1992; Staton & Hunt, 2009; Feldman, 1981). There appears to be significantly more autonomy in the teaching profession; moreover, there is rather an emphasis on learning while working (Deal & Chatman, 2012).
The fundamental focus of my study is as follows: what is being done, or can be done to improve teachers’ induction and transition into school culture and life? There is a definite necessity, not only for effective mentoring and induction periods, but also for novice teachers to receive collegial and superior support, in order, for them to better adapt and adjust to the challenges and realities of school life. This is reinforced by Caspersen & Raaens' (2013) findings which reveal that in various Western countries, beginner teachers’ desire help in solving such practical issues like: classroom behavioral management approaches for recalcitrant pupils, assessments and marking methods, differentiated instruction techniques and effective pedagogical insights. The same study also conveys that teachers’ joint efforts in overcoming obstacles and challenges, such as these, can positively improve their professional socialization. Additionally, their findings show, however, that in comparison to other organizations and professional groups, novice teachers receive less feedback from their peers and superiors, and that support from peers and superiors is lacking. There is still a need to confront and further research and explore this issue. What different formal support and induction programs currently exist for novice teachers in Ontario, Canada and are they effective enough? What aspects of these support programs such as the NTIP (New Teachers Induction Program) are effective in equipping novice teachers for the multidimensional nature of the teaching profession? Do novice teachers feel fully validated and formally as well as informally supported by their colleagues and superiors in their school community? What could be, and more importantly needs to be, implemented, improved upon, or considered in order for teachers to better acclimatize and assimilate into the teaching profession?
2.2: Struggles Novice Teachers Face

Novice teachers’ preconceived ideals of the teaching profession are sometimes challenged when confronted with the realities of the field and the challenges it entails. Coming to terms with the realities of their new role and school culture can be a shock (Staton & Hunt, 2009; Blase, 1985; Caspersen & Raaen, 2013). Without the proper support or backing, struggles adapting to their socialization process and their new role can lead to disenchantment and even career dissatisfaction (Staton & Hunt, 2009; Blase, 1985). Many challenges exist when adjusting to school life, namely lack of consistent support or validation and feedback from superiors, classroom management issues, recalcitrant pupils, lack of recognition or respect from colleagues or parents and low status to name but a few (Deal & Chatman, 2012; Caspersen & Raaen, 2013). These beginning stages of practice shock can be construed as the survival stage in a novice’s socialization. (Uusiautti et al., 2014). Huberman (1989) describes the notions of survival and discovery stages in a novice’s socialization as successive phases. The survival stage refers to the encounter phase where initial impressions of teaching do not necessarily synchronize with the realities of the profession. The discovery stage, on the other hand, entails a passion for teaching and a willingness to learn and grow as an educator. In addition, he states that teachers experience a sense of autonomy when presented with their own class of students to teach, together with, a sense of reward and the pleasure of discovery. These factors ultimately enable novice teachers to persevere and survive in their new careers.

There is no denying that teaching is a very rewarding profession. When things go well, teachers feel a sense of satisfaction and achievement; but, when things do not go smoothly that can take a toll on a teacher’s physical and mental well being, and ability to cope. (Kyriacou & Kunc, 2007). In their study, Kyriacou & Kunc (2007) found that novice teachers’ work
satisfaction is based on finding a balance of sorts: managing their time aptly, having a feeling of relatedness with their pupils and receiving the support and recognition from peers and school administrators. The same study also found the four major influencing factors that bore a sustained commitment to teaching were effective school management and support, time pressures, pupil behavior and a happy private life. What emerges in a considerable number of studies and appears to be one of the most prevalent struggles novice teachers face is, indeed, this ostensible lack of collegial support (Kyriacou & Kunc, 2007; Deal & Chatman, 2012; Caspersen & Raanen, 2013; Staton & Hunt, 2009; Blase, 1985). There appears to be a staggering lacuna in this area. Teachers expect more support in various domains when starting off in their career; research shows that collegial support is repeatedly found to be lacking (Caspersen & Raanen, 2013). In other professional fields, there tends to be more of a support system when new colleagues are integrating into the work force (Deal & Chatman, 2012; Feldman, 1981). It is seemingly less common in the teaching profession. This is a prevalent issue; there appears to be an emerging pattern in the educational realm, teachers have been found to essentially fend for themselves:

What many new teachers discover is that new teachers work alone, in isolation from others. In most organizations, superiors and colleagues help newcomers learn the ropes and understand important values, norms, and practices. Such shared understandings and meanings are often unavailable to teachers even though they are essentially building blocks to maintaining high levels of teacher effectiveness, student achievement, and overall school wide success (…) These important lessons remain unlearned for several reasons (…) Principals and colleagues are rarely available to help individual teachers learn the ropes or perfect skills (Deal & Chatman, 2012, p.22).

When colleagues do not provide novice teachers with support, the consequences can be
extremely discouraging, as well as, detrimental to the novice’s socialization process (Caspersen & Raaen, 2013). According to a study conducted by Brouwers, Evers, and Tomic (2001), the lack of support from colleagues and superiors can even lead to teacher burnout. Additionally, the lack of collegial support can affect a novice’s sense of self-efficacy. Collaboration and support from peers, together with, support from superiors greatly reduces the risks of burnout for all teachers (Brouwers, Evers, & Tomic, 2001). When such support does exist, research states that novice teachers consider collegial support to be the most important and valuable form of support in their socialization (Staton & Hunt, 2009). According to Staton and Hunt’s (2009) findings, support from colleagues; and even more particularly, from experienced colleagues, teaching the same grade level, have been rated the most precious source of support for novices. Moreover, collaboration with peers was found to heighten a novice’s sense of self-efficacy and skill appropriation.

Other challenges and struggles that arise are often related to classroom management and student behavioral issues (Deal & Chatman, 2012; Caspersen & Raaen, 2013; Klassen, 2010; Onafowora, 2004). As aforementioned and discussed under the theme of socialization in this literature review, pupils have a paramount impact on a novice teacher’s socialization and can sometimes even be the only form of feedback and validation of a teacher’s professional performance (Deal & Chatman, 2012). Teachers expect to get through to their students: “They also want to forge positive reciprocal relations with students, thus earning their students’ attention, respect and appreciation” (Gavish & Friedman, 2011, p.451). When this is not the case, feelings of inadequacy may arise (Deal & Chatman, 2012). This notion is reflected in an interview conducted by Deal and Chatman (2012) with a novice teacher:

I am not happy about the behavior of my senior class. They’re taking advantage of me
and making my job harder. I do not want them eating in class (…) or talking when I’m trying to teach. I tried to treat them more like they were grown, and I guess they’re not.

Things certainly have changed for the worst (Deal & Chatman, 2012, p.25).

Thus these struggles novice teachers, may be faced with, in the primary stages of their professional socialization are linked to novices’ sense of self-efficacy as teachers (Staton & Hunt, 2009; Brouwers, Evers, & Tomic, 2001).

2.3: Novice Teachers’ Sense of Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy is an innate aspect of professional socialization. When a teacher holds a strong sense of confidence in their teaching skills and capabilities, and also, in their ability to reach their students, he/she is ultimately more successful (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy’s, 2001; Staton & Hunt, 2009; Brouwers, Evers, & Tomic, 2001; Deal & Chatman, 2012.)

Moreover, Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy’s (2001), study revealed that teachers who exhibit high levels of self-efficacy have a more positive impact on successful student outcomes. Novice’s perceived sense of self-efficacy was found to positively impact on how they taught and determined their level of persistence in their work. In other findings, it has also been revealed that teachers who do not display this high sense of self-efficacy are confronted with more undesirable, and negative student achievement outcomes and experience more stress related issues in their work (Caspersen & Raaen, 2013). In Caspersen and Raaen’s (2013) findings, a teacher’s sense of control in the classroom was revealed to greatly impact student achievement outcomes. Klassen (2010) also found that positive self-efficacy beliefs in teachers play a significant role in impacting successful student achievement outcomes as well as desirable behavior, and motivation. Teachers with a low sense of self-efficacy, however, exhibit high levels of job related
stress and experience more challenges in teaching (Klassen, 2010; Caspersen & Raaen, 2013). This low sense of self-efficacy and lack of confidence in one's abilities and skills, as a beginner teacher could, according to Caspersen and Raaen’s (2013) findings, simply be a result of inexperience and reality shock in adapting to their new role with all the challenges entailed:

(...) practice shock experienced by novice teachers is characterized by their inability to act and their lack of opportunity to control the situation that they face. This type of experience implies that novice teachers lack the coping skills necessary to fulfill their teaching roles (Caspersen & Raaen, 2013, p.189).

Onafowora’s (2004) study pinpointed contributing factors to this lack of a sense of self-efficacy that some novice teachers experience. Confidence in one's abilities has been shown to play a key role in a novice’s sense of self-efficacy: “While it is possible to profile an efficacious “novice” teacher, it should be noted that, the efficacy attribute is linked to “self” confidence or an innate ability to reinforce self initiated actions” (Onafowora, 2004, p.36). Much of the literature states that certain challenges in adapting to their roles as teachers are for example: discipline issues with students that can ultimately overshadow instruction, or trying to balance theory and practice (Onafowora, 2004; Deal & Chatman, 2012; Caspersen & Raaen, 2013; Klassen, 2010; Barrett et al., 2009). Additionally, Onafowora’s (2004) research found that affective and cognitive capabilities may not develop at the same pace: “Feelings of not being a good teacher and not being able to understand the cause is common among novices and might stem from affective abilities that are developing slower than cognitive abilities” (Onafowora, 2004, p. 40). Novice teachers who had a higher sense of self efficacy were also found to devote more time to academic activities and focus much less on student discipline (Onafowora, 2004; Barrett et al., 2009). Onafowora’s (2004) study further states that self-efficacy ultimately comes down to a
novice’s beliefs and judgments over the skills they possess: “Teachers self-efficacy is the realization of one’s self-judgments and capabilities to create and organize instruction that motivate student learning” (Onafowora, 2004, p. 41). The common lack of confidence in novice teachers’ self efficacy skills heightens the need for more support to ameliorate teachers’ organizational skills, benefitting not only the novice teachers but student achievement outcomes as well (Klassen & Chiu, 2010; Brouwers, Evers, & Tomic, 2001; Staton & Hunt, 2009; Barrett et al., 2009).

Agents of professional socialization (such as colleagues, superiors, students, and parents) also have a bearing on a teacher’s sense of self-efficacy (Klassen & Chiu, 2010). Klassen and Chiu (2010), observed that workplace environment, as well as verbal encouragement, validation, and feedback from school administrators had a positive bearing on a novice’s developing sense of self-efficacy. This paired with the combination of successful past teaching experiences, validation and recognition from superiors, peers, students, and parents, as well as, observing the teaching of successful veterans was shown to help consolidate a novice’s sense of self-efficacy (Klassen & Chiu, 2010). Colleagues are also agents who strongly contribute to a novice’s sense of self-efficacy, and help reduce stress and uncertainty by providing instructional tips as well as emotional support (Staton & Hunt, 2009).

On the other hand, however, when veteran teachers do not provide these types of support that can have detrimental consequences on a novice’s efficaciousness (Staton & Hunt, 2009). In their research, Staton and Hunt (2009) found that the lack of supportive behavior of peers can impact how a novice views themselves in the workplace and can even trigger a desire to leave the profession. Novice teachers’ self-confidence and sense of self-efficacy in their socialization is greatly due to support, and mentoring programs (Chong, 2011). Mentoring support has been
found to ultimately contribute to more committed and dedicated teachers:

Mentoring is a key aspect of new teachers’ development. This therefore also has implications for the teacher induction period, where mentoring must help new teachers to assimilate to the realities of the school and the classroom settings and to bridge the perceived theory-practice gap consciously. Schools need to be organized in ways that integrate teachers’ learning from daily practice into a comprehensive change process that deals with impediments to, and facilitators of, student learning. Teachers who are formally initiated into the profession stand a better chance of developing norms that encourage self-perpetuating growth, and are more likely to develop better commitment to teaching. This may result in higher retention levels in the profession (Chong, Choy, & Wong, 2008). When teachers develop a sense of confidence and excitement about their teaching, it contributes to a richer understanding of the professional identity of an effective teacher (Chong, 2011, p.230).

Schools that provide support to novices contribute to their sense of self-efficacy and confidence, as teachers, and hence help cement their professional identities and guide them in their professional socialization (Chong, 2011).

All of these points lead me to the final stage of this literature review. Based on the evidence from these various studies and literature, there is a glaring need not only to maintain induction periods and mentoring programs but for more accountability and support from school administrators and colleagues. Schools need to formally, and also, informally help ease novice teachers into their new roles, effectively guide and support them in their professional roles and scaffold their professional development and socialization.
2.4: Support Systems for Novice Teachers: School Induction and Mentoring Programs

It has been established that novice teachers need support in the early stages of their career with all the struggles that they may encounter during their professional socialization such as: student achievement outcomes and behavior, the lack of collegial support, coping abilities, teacher burnout and so forth (Kyriacou & Kunc, 2007; Deal & Chatman, 2012; Caspersen & Raaen, 2013 Staton & Hunt, 2009; Blase, 1985; Uusiautti et al., 2014). Alhija and Fresko’s (2010) study delineates induction programs designed to deal directly with the professional socialization of teachers. Induction programs provide guidance, support, and assistance for teachers; they include components such as mentoring, orientations, workshops, instructional materials and methodology ideas, classroom observations and help with time management. These types of induction programs can be an important developmental phase for novice teachers and help them in their professional socialization (Kyriacou & Kunc, 2007; Deal & Chatman, 2012; Caspersen & Raaen, 2013 Staton & Hunt, 2009; Blase, 1985; Uusiautti et al., 2014; Alhija & fresco, 2010). Additionally, Alhija and Fresko (2010) carried out a study on various induction programs, such as: individual mentoring, pairing novices with veterans of the same school, teacher training workshops at a university and formative evaluations of teaching. Their findings suggested that beginning teachers greatly profited and thrived in their professional socialization when support from mentors, colleagues, and staff was provided. According to Caspersen and Raaen (2013), support from the school community, in particular from colleagues, has shown to help novices to cope with the challenges the beginning stages of their socialization may entail: “Teacher collaboration, particularly the mentoring of newly qualified teachers by experienced teachers, has proven important in helping newly qualified teachers to cope with their work”(Caspersen &Raaen, 2013, p. 192). In research conducted by Fletcher and Barrett (2004),
this aspect of a mentor aiding a novice’s socialization process is consolidated. A mentor’s role not only helps socialize novice teachers but also enables them to get to know other teachers and become more familiarized with the students. The outcome of their survey displayed highly positive outcomes and results from mentoring programs. Novices felt they had learnt more about instructional strategies and skills: “Respondents indicated that mentors helped them learn about the various aspects of instruction. Almost all the beginner teachers (98.6%) believed their mentors helped them to improve their instructional skills and teaching strategies” (Fletcher and Barrett, 2004, p.327).

Much of the literature reviewed placed an important emphasis not only on mentors but on the positive contribution colleagues can make towards novices’ assimilation and induction when their support is present (Kyriacou & Kunc, 2007; Deal & Chatman, 2012; Caspersen & Raaen, 2013; Staton & Hunt, 2009; Blase, 1985; Uusiautti et al., 2014; Alhija & fresco, 2010; Fletcher & Barrett, 2004).

Mentors as key players in induction as well as colleagues of the new teacher, have the greatest impact on new teachers’ assimilation. Besides providing pedagogical and personal assistance, they have an important role in new teachers’ adjustment to the school culture. Support from the principal and other colleagues, as well as more time spent in school, all augment the mentor’s contribution. In conclusion, there is evidence that induction programs can make a difference in terms of teachers’ socialization (Alhija & Fresko, 2010, p.1596).

According to Staton and Hunt’s (2009) research and essay, assigned mentors, having taught the same grades as novices, have proved effective to new teachers’ socialization.
However, informal mentoring provided by colleagues was found to be the most effective and positive form of mentoring. In their research, they observed that expert veteran mentor teachers were indeed valuable to a novice’s assimilation. Moreover, informal collegial support and natural mentoring relationships, which emerged in school communities, were shown to be the most effective in contributing to a novice’s professional socialization. Propitious acculturation programs were noted in Deal and Chatman’s (2012) article. Examples of schools and their acculturation programs were provided. Positive training sessions in one of the schools included introductory orientation sessions. These orientation sessions comprised of interviews, teaching handbooks and assigning novices to a buddy. School communities’ accountability for providing novices with support and guiding them in their professional socialization was underlined: “Skill development is the responsibility of employees or teachers in the newcomer’s department” (Deal & Chatman, 2012, p.27).

What was not considered in these studies, however, is the impact mentoring can have within the school community - when a novice is assigned to a veteran teacher from the same establishment. Previous research has stated that novices’ reticence includes a reluctance to voice their doubts about the challenges they may be facing as if it somewhat undermines their professionalism (Caspersen & Raaen, 2013; Barrett et al., 2009). According to Caspersen and Raaen’s (2013) findings, novices do have difficulty voicing their doubts and articulating their needs to their more experienced peers:

The novice teachers were reticent to make known their point of view in the presence of the more experienced teachers. They appeared to lack the ways to articulate their needs. This reticence sometimes manifested itself in other ways, such as in their lack of support and recognition of the potential solutions to problems that were put forth by the
experienced teacher (Caspersen & Raaen, 2013, p. 203).

What happens when a novice is paired with a veteran teacher within the same school? Relatability plays a key role in the successful outcome of this type of mentoring (Kyriacou & Kunc, 2007). This is echoed in a participant’s response from Kyriacou and Kunc’s (2007) study: “An experienced teacher would be the best mentor, providing they had a suitable personality. If you don’t get on with the person, then mentoring is a waste of time. You need someone you can trust, so you can say things without feeling inadequate or incompetent” (Kyriacou & Kunc, 2007, p. 1252). Would a novice truly benefit from a mentoring program if they, perhaps, felt insecure about revealing their potential weaknesses? Should mentoring programs primarily be conducted by a neutral party from outside of the specific school community? Participants in a study conducted by Barrett et al., (2009) expressed that external mentors would be less intimidating and thus allow novices to take more risks. However, research has also found that support from colleagues, as well as, veteran teachers, has proved beneficial to a novice’s assimilation (Kyriacou & Kunc, 2007; Deal & Chatman, 2012; Caspersen & Raaen, 2013; Staton & Hunt, 2009; Blase, 1985; Uusiautti et al., 2014; Alhija & fresco, 2010; Fletcher & Barrett, 2004). Perhaps more research is needed to see what types of mentoring programs benefit the novice more fully, such as: in service, veteran conducted, or other? This query could be reflected in the following quote from a novice teacher in an interview conducted by Deal and Chatman (2012): “Teachers are not great in sharing ideas or in helping others. Their philosophy seems to be, “I got my experience the hard way, and you can get it that way too” (Deal & Chatman, 2012, p. 24). Even if a veteran teacher is at a novice’s disposal, as a mentor, if the underlying sentiment between novices and veterans is similar to that reflected in this quote, how can the novice be uninhibited and feel free to expose their professional needs and lacuna fully?
What is important to note is that a strong and supportive school community has been found to benefit the novice teacher as well as the students (Deal & Chatman, 2012). The school community is responsible for ensuring favorable student outcomes and that includes aiding novice teachers in their professional socialization by providing induction and mentoring programs (Deal & Chatman, 2012; Gavish & Friedman, 2011). This notion of the accountability of the school community as a whole is reinforced in Gavish and Friedman’s (2011) study:

Responsibility for student learning now extends past the isolated classroom and embraces the entire school, as all adults in the school see themselves responsible for all students’ learning and start thinking in terms of school culture and how to support and develop it (Gavish Friedman 2011, p.243).

The role of mentoring is to essentially guide and help develop novices in their professional socialization and strengthen confidence and trust in their own abilities and expertise (Deal & Chatman, 2012; Gavish & Friedman, 2011).

The Ontario Ministry of Education introduced a mandatory induction program known as the New Teachers Induction Program in 2006. According to the NTIP Induction Elements Manual from the Ontario Ministry of Education (2010), it was designed to promote professional development in teachers and help novices achieve the required skills of experienced teachers. It provides a full year of support, and teachers failing to receive two satisfactory appraisal ratings, within the first year of the NTIP, receive an additional year of support. The ultimate goal of the NTIP according to the Induction Elements Manual (2010) is two-fold to support novices in acquiring improved teaching skills, confidence and ultimately improve student learning. The NTIP became mandatory in 2006 after the Student Performance Act, June 1, 2006. All publicly
funded schools are obligated to offer novice teachers the NTIP, which includes orientation, mentoring and professional development. The NTIP Induction Elements Manual (2010) also states that in order to be successfully endorsed by the NTIP, novices must show competencies and strength in the standards of practice for the teaching profession, as well as, its ethical standards. Additionally, novice teachers are expected to acquire extensive knowledge of the Ontario curriculum as well as its legislation guidelines. According to the Ontario Ministry of Education (2010), the role of the school principal in the NTIP, includes ensuring that new teachers have an effective professional mentoring relationship with their mentors, support in the school, relevant resources, as well as, an Individual NTIP Strategy Form specific to the novice’s needs and devised with the aid of the assigned mentor.

Mentoring in the NTIP needs to be relevant and appropriate to novices’ needs and provide a professional dialogue with colleagues or mentors. Mentors are expected to be excellent role models, be experienced teaching professionals of both children and adults, as well as, demonstrate problem-solving skills. Additionally, The Induction Elements Manual (2010), states that mentors are assigned to the specific needs of new teachers to ensure effective professional matches. In order to further support professional development (PD) activities such as, working with learning teams; shared PD for novice and mentor, as well as, PD sessions and opportunities to build on literacy and numeracy; student success; safe schools; and differentiated instruction approaches are provided.

According to a study conducted by Barrett et al., (2009) the structure of the NTIP has, however, some hidden implications. In their analysis, the hidden curriculum of the NTIP is defined as the conformity of standardized instructional practices and norms expected to be, adhered to, by teachers and school administrators. Although the aim of the NTIP is to better
prepare novices for the teaching profession, some unforeseen consequences may be encouraged by its very structure. What they underline, in their research, is that mentoring induction programs are implemented to bridge a gap between knowledge and experience and are also focused on standardized teaching models: “The assumption of these types of induction programs appears to be that standardization will ensure success for new teachers and, in turn, their students” (Barrett et al, 2009, p. 682). Some of the weaknesses of this model that they delineate are the following: the mentor’s skill level; the mentees’ uncritical emulating of the mentor, as well as, adopting particular teaching practices and reproducing certain attitudes. They refer to this as a transmission based model: “Thus, in a transmission based model of teacher induction/mentorship, the assumptions about good teaching that are being made are never interrogated because the transmission-based model does not encourage critique (Barrett et al., 2009, p.682). A concept of transformative models of mentoring is suggested, whereby the following are encouraged: constant reflection of instructional practice, allowing for criticism and the continual questioning of institutional structures as regards pedagogy. The transformative method takes into account the dynamic interactions between teachers and students within the school community, and surrounding social context. They recognize that there is a need to create a balance between the individual needs of the mentee and the external social issues.

Early in their careers, beginner teachers often dedicate too much focus on classroom management, as opposed to, investigating the origin of the students’ behavioral issues; this reflects a disconnect between student, teacher, and the curriculum (Barrett et al., 2009; Onafowora, 2004; Deal & Chatman, 2012; Caspersen & Raaen, 2013; Klassen, 2010). A transformative method allows for critical discussions, encourages the mentee to take more risks in their pedagogical approaches and not to focus too much on classroom management (Barrett et
Barrett et al. (2009) found that daily pressures and demands obscured teachers’ capacity to think critically about underlying issues that impact on teaching and students’ learning outcomes. Participants in their study found that the NTIP inherently ignored such problems. Additionally, they underline how the role of the mentor is different depending on the model the induction program adheres to: transmission or transformative based. Novices may be reluctant to take risks and embrace transformative models of teaching given their probationary status. In their findings, the unintended effects of the NTIP’s structure include the following: the problematic process of selecting an appropriate mentor; ensuring an effective mentor/mentee relationship; clear collaboration and support from the school community; mentorship and induction, as a space, for risk taking and growth. Another point raised by a participant in this study, was for the need of the mentor to focus on being a supporter rather than an evaluator, in order for the mentee, to be comfortable taking risks, instead of, being penalized. Findings from this study also reveal that a mentee may avoid contradicting a mentor to guarantee a decent evaluation. School principals are expected to ultimately evaluate mentees, and that can increase a mentee’s discomfort in risk taking (Barrett et al., 2009; Caspersen & Raaen, 2013). In their study, Barrett et al. (2009) additionally found that beginner teachers expressed an external mentor would be less intimidating and would encourage more openness and allow critical questioning of the system. Are current induction programs too embedded in standardized transmission based models of mentoring? This will be further explored in my research.
2.5: Conclusion

In this literature review I looked at research on the professional socialization of novice teachers, their professional development, the expectations of novice teachers and their well-being at work, as well as, literature on novice teachers and how they cope. Other literature reviewed included the themes of novices’ sense of self efficacy and its influence on their work; the benefits and pitfalls of induction and mentoring methods and programs, and the evolvement from novice to efficient teacher to name but a few. This review elucidates the struggles novice teachers face, in their professional socialization, and the effect that may have on their sense of self-efficacy as teachers. It also raises questions about collegial support and its importance in contributing to a novice’s successful professional development. It equally points to the need for further research in the areas of what can be done to aid novice teachers’ smooth transition in a school setting, and raises awareness of the importance of collaboration and collegial, as well as, formal and informal whole school support of a novice’s induction. It equally addresses the counteractive affects of standardized transmission based mentoring programs. This literature review enabled me to gain insight into the different factors influencing a novice’s professional socialization, as well as, the advantages and disadvantages of current mentoring practices. All of the above literature has set the premise for my research and will continue to guide me in further examining, and delving into effective methods to support teachers transitioning into their professional roles, as well as, shed light on the most beneficial practices required in order to better equip and support novice teachers.
3.0: Introduction

In this chapter, I describe the research methodology. Firstly, I outline the general approach and procedures, and data collection instruments before providing details on participant sampling and recruitment. In addition, I explain data analysis procedures and review the relevant ethical considerations for my study. Moreover, I identify an array of methodological limitations and strengths. Lastly, I conclude the chapter with a brief synopsis of principal methodological decisions and my underlying rationale behind my research purpose and questions.

3.1: Research Approach and Procedures

This study explores the concept of the professional socialization of novice teachers; novices’ expectations toward the profession of teaching; the socializing factors they experienced; the impact these had in the beginning stages and development of their teaching careers, as well as, effective measures that can help support novice teachers in the primary stages of their professional socialization and integration into school communities. To explore my research questions, I reviewed research-based literature including qualitative studies, articles, surveys, reviews and essays. Throughout the process of accumulating, reading, and researching literature for my literature review, several themes, which both upheld as well as confronted my research topic, emerged such as: the conceptualization of the socialization of teachers; common struggles novice teachers face; the impact that challenges surrounding socialization can have on a novice’s sense of self efficacy; existing support and induction programs for new teachers, as well as, their potential embedded drawbacks. The data obtained from this process provided me with vital background knowledge into the topic and helped me to pinpoint and identify additional
issues to further explore in my qualitative face-to-face interviews with three novice teacher participants from Ontario based school boards.

This research study was conducted using a qualitative research approach involving the aforementioned literature review and semi structured interviews with three novice teachers (still within the first five years of their professional socialization). Qualitative research is the most significant and suitable approach for my study, as it allows for a better understanding of the subject matter by deploying multiple interpretative practices (Norman Denzin, Yvonna Lincoln, 2011). By combining the research from my literature review, with the data retrieved from my interviewees’ multiple perspectives, the research design and analysis is nuanced and further strengthened: “Rather than interviews being regarded as competing with other methods, they can be combined in order to corroborate facts using a different approach” (Denscombe, 2003, p.166). This use of multiple methods, or triangulation, reflects an attempt to secure an in depth understanding of the phenomenon in question” (Norman et al., 2011). In this way, Norman et al., (2011) describe the qualitative researcher as a bricoleur of sorts: “The interpretive bricoleur produces a bricolage, that is, a pieced-together set of representations that are fitted to the specifics of a complex situation” (Norman et al., 2011; p.4) as well as, a montage or quilt maker:

The qualitative researcher who uses montage is like a quilt maker or jazz improviser. The quilter stitches, edits, and puts slices of reality together (…) As in quilt making and jazz improvisation, many different things are going on at the same time: different voices, different perspectives, points of views, angles of vision (Norman et al., 2011; p.5).

Qualitative research allowed me to assemble all of these different perspectives, angles, and findings and apply them to my research topic, as well as, enabled me to gain a broader
understanding of the main socializing factors in the professional socialization of novice teachers and uncover what can and could better aid novices in the primary stages of their teaching careers.

### 3.2: Instruments of Data Collection

The primary instrument for data collection used in this study was a semi-structured interview protocol. I conducted semi structured face-to-face interviews of approximately thirty minutes each in length - these consisted of five different sections and eighteen probing questions. I chose the open ended, semi structured interview method as it allowed for more flexibility, chances of serendipity, and the role of the unexpected in the inquiry process, whilst still maintaining a given structure in essence (Rose, 2013). Here, Denscombe (2003) further underscores the significance of this point:

> With semi-structured interviews, the interviewer still has a clear list of issues to be addressed and questions to be answered. However, with the semi-structured interview the interviewer is prepared to be flexible in terms of the order in which topics are considered, and, perhaps more significantly, to let the interviewee develop ideas and speak more widely in the issues raised by the researcher. The answers are open-ended, and there is more emphasis on the interviewee elaborating points of interest (Denscombe, 2003, p. 167).

A semi structured format allows the interviewer to create and organize an interview that concentrates on the research focus and questions, and also it, leaves room for participants to expand on, elaborate, and even redirect or shift attention to areas perhaps previously overlooked by the interviewer. The nature of the semi-structured, open-ended interview enables the interviewees to speak of, and share their personal experiences within structural contours. Kvale
and Brinkmann (2009) expand on this point: “The more spontaneous the interview procedure, the more likely one is to obtain unprompted, lively, and unexpected answers from the interviewees (…) the more structured the interview situation is, the easier the later conceptual structuring of the interview by analysis will be” (p.131). The semi-structured interview was the most suitable for the outcome of my qualitative study as it allowed for leeway during the interviews, as well as, provided a substructure.

3.3: Participants

In this section, I review the sampling criteria established for participant recruitment. I additionally review a range of possible avenues for teacher recruitment, and also, include a section to introduce the participants.

3.3.1: Sampling criteria. In order to gain insight into the struggles novice teachers face in the primary stages of their teaching careers when transitioning and assimilating into school culture, I believe it was essential to select teachers who are still within the first five years of their career. Choosing Canadian qualified teachers who have been working in Ontario school board run schools for at least five years, seemed to me, to be an appropriate maximum length of time. All of them underwent and availed of the NTIP New Teachers Induction Program established by the Ministry of Education in 2006. These teachers provided me with essential insight into what they deemed beneficial or disadvantageous about induction programs and the support and main socializing factors they experienced within the first few years of their careers. Considering the fact that they are still within the first five years of their professional socialization; the induction programs they experienced are still quite recent, and thus shed light on the effectiveness of current mentoring programs, as well as, contributed nicely to my research design. Other criteria
included gender and age. I decided to select female novice teachers between the ages of twenty-five and forty who are both experienced and accustomed to teaching primary and secondary grades (PJ-JI) in an array of different school backgrounds. My research for this study was personally driven; I wanted to choose teachers with a similar background to myself. Age is an important component of professional socialization as younger teachers have been shown to have higher levels of burnout than their older peers (Susan Hildebrandt; Minhee Eom, 2011). Gender also plays a salient role, as female teachers have been found to more frequently deal with recalcitrant student behavior than men (Sari Mullola; Markus Jokela; Niklas Ravaja; Jari Lipsanen; Mirka Hintsanen; Saija Alatupa; Liisa Kelikangas-Järvinen, 2011). Such factors play a significant part in the professional socialization and development of beginner teachers.

3.3.2: Sampling procedures and recruitment. I namely relied on existing contacts and convenience sampling by immersing myself into the teaching community by networking with my teacher colleagues in the various schools I was placed in for practicum. As a result, I acquired several contacts from both my first year fall, and winter practicum. Unfortunately, these contacts fell through when I contacted them over the summer. As a result, last September, I posted on teaching forums on social media outlining my research topic, and participant criteria requirements. This generated a lot of interest and thankfully several potential participants reached out to me. I interviewed three female participants, each whom, best fit the criteria for my study. Two of the interviews took place in person, and one on Skype.

3.3.3: Participant biographies. All three participants are women aged between twenty-five and forty years of age, and are in the first five years of their teaching careers. I assigned pseudonyms to all three interviewees. Each participant teaches at a school affiliated with an Ontario school board. The first participant Sandra, 37, currently teaches the Arts (visual, music,
drama, and dance) to Kindergarten and grade three students. Before acquiring a full time teaching position, Sandra was a supply teacher for a year. She has been teaching for precisely five years.

My second participant, Pamela, 28, currently teaches math, and business to grade 9 students. She has also taught grade 11 and 12, as well as, the subjects: drama, dance, social science and geography. She is a full time employee for an Ontario school board and is additionally in her fifth year of teaching. My third participant, Chloe, 32, teaches language, math, science, social studies, art, drama, and computers to a 2/3 grade split class. She also taught Kindergarten in the past. She is additionally in her fifth year of teaching in a school for an Ontario school board.

3.4: Data Analysis

Based on my literature review, I developed specific research questions in preparation for the qualitative semi structured face-to-face interviews with the three female novice teacher participants. The data derived from these one-to-one interviews was recorded with the use of a Dictaphone and subsequently transcribed and analyzed. For the analysis of the data, I started by interpreting the differences between the data gathered from my interviews with the initial research data collated when writing my literature review. The next stage involved compiling all of my accumulated data into sections, groups of information, themes, and codes. Kvale et al. (2009) describes the analysis stage of an interview as the interspersed between the initial story told by the interviewee to the researcher and the final story told by the researcher to an audience, and that: “To analyze means to separate something into parts or elements” (p.193). After transcribing each interview individually, I coded my interview findings into segments by categorizing my transcriptions into themes and sub themes, as well as, by grouping pertinent citations under the relevant research questions concentrated and focused on. These first stages of data analysis involved data reduction; I edited, segmented and summarized the data. Later stages
involved conceptualizing the data, and also, data display which involved compressing and organizing the data. The last stages included drawing and verifying conclusions. The coding process involved attaching meaning to pieces of data, as well as, summarizing data by pulling together themes and identifying emerging patterns (Keith Punch, 2009). Generating codes and themes essentially involved organizing the data into segments before attaching meaning to the information. More themes and distinct patterns emerged, in this stage of the data analysis, as I delved into a dialogue of sorts with the transcripts of the interviews:

An alternative approach to the transcripts involves entering into dialogue with the text, going into an imagined conversation with the “author” about the meaning of the text. The reader here asks about the theme of the text, goes into the text to seek to develop, clarify, and expand what is expressed in the text. (Kvale et al., 2009, p.192).

This process allowed me to broaden, enrich, and develop further meaning as to what was discussed, as well as, observe and identify areas of null data or points that were not broached by the teacher participants. Kvale et al. (2009) lay emphasis on this point: “The analysis of the transcribed interviews is a continuation of the conversation that started in the interview situation, unfolding its horizon of possible meanings” (p. 193). After coding and analyzing the interview data, I sought the approval of my analysis from my course instructor. This allowed any potential biases or instances of over analysis of the data to be detected and brought to my attention.
3.5: Ethical Review Procedures

I followed the ethical review procedures for the Master of Teaching program at the University of Toronto, which stipulates that participants must be agree to, and sign a letter of consent granting me permission to interview them. Participants were asked to sign the consent letter (see Appendix A) giving their accord, not only, to be interviewed, but to also be audio recorded. Their identities were not disclosed and full confidentiality was guaranteed for my study. All identifying factors were concealed, and the participants were provided with pseudonyms. My consent letter provided an overview of the study, addressed ethical implications and expectations of participation.

It is important to take into consideration the ethical issues that can arise with the use of the interview method, including the challenge of placing accounts of teachers’ experiences in the public arena (Kvale et al, 2009). When I was able to confirm my three participants, I provided them with a background on the nature of my study, reviewed my letter of consent with them, as well as, described the interview strategy. The chosen and consenting participants were able to review the interview questions, which I provided them with prior to our interview session. There were no known risks to participating in this study, as I had enabled the participants to review questions ahead of time. This minimized any potential risks and allowed them to voice any possible concerns. The participants were reassured throughout the interviews, as stated in the consent letter, that they had the right to refrain from answering any interview questions. Moreover they reserved the right to withdraw from the study and turn down the interview, at any time, even after having signed the consent letter.
The interviews took place at the convenience of the participants who chose the time, date, and location best suited. Two of my semi-structured, one-to-one interview sessions took place in a quiet location. The third interview was conducted via Skype, and the quality was clear. I explained to the participants that I would be assigning them pseudonyms and I additionally reassured them that their identities would remain anonymous and concealed. No identifying factors were disclosed throughout the entirety of my study. My interviews were recorded with a Mac compatible Dictaphone. The audio recordings were then transferred and saved on my Mac laptop, which was protected with my personal user password. I listened to my interviews several times and made notes of key words and sentences before commencing the process of transcribing them onto my computer. After I transcribed the interviews, I conducted a member check. Participants had the opportunity to review transcripts and to clarify or retract any statements before I conducted an analysis. All data was stored on my password protected computer laptop and will be destroyed after five years. Only my course professor has additional access to my research data.

3.6: Methodological Limitations, Strengths, and Reflections

I chose to interview three novice teachers who fulfilled my criteria for the study. This afforded an in depth exploration of how new educators negotiate the primary stages of the teaching profession, and all of the socializing factors that influence their professional socialization and assimilation into a school’s culture. To more fully explore the professional socialization of novice teachers, including veteran teachers or mentors would have strengthened this study. Contributions from expert teachers, or teacher mentors would have also provided key insights into the main socializing factors that would be relevant to gaining a better understanding of the professional socialization of novice teachers. Another limitation was time. Time
constraints limited the interviews to forty-five minutes to an hour, and also limited the total number of participants in this study down to three. Therefore, time and program constraints limited the methodological approach to exploring the experiences of the socialization of only three primary-junior/junior-intermediate female novice teachers. With more time and resources, a longitudinal study exploring additional novice teachers’ experiences in the primary stages of their careers would have afforded valuable insights, and data in terms of the socializing factors pertaining to the professional socialization of novice teachers. Lastly, the findings were informed by the personal experiences of my participants. This is both a limitation and also a methodological strength of a qualitative study of this kind. Every teacher’s experience is unique and is specific to the school’s context. Each participant has had a different experience with socializing agents in their school community: colleagues, superiors, students, parents of students, and mentors. Although the interview findings shed significant light on the professional socialization of teachers, they are not intended to be the basis for broad generalizations.

Some of the strengths of this study included capturing the perspectives of novice teachers who are in the midst of their professional socialization. This provided me with vital and indispensible insights into what they consider to be the main socializing factors and how those impacted their teaching and assimilation into their school communities. Another positive feature of this study was the opportunity to validate novice teachers’ voices, which additionally allowed them to make sense of their own practice, and recall the potential obstacles they themselves encountered. Shedding light on their own initial experiences of teaching, can ultimately uncover what can be done to better assist future beginner teachers.
3.7: Conclusion

In this chapter, I outlined the key methodological aspects and approaches employed for this study. To start with, the significance of the nature of qualitative research and its suitability for my specific study and research topic were delineated. I then went on to explain my choices for conducting semi-structured interviews - these are open-ended and allow for participants’ elaboration yet adhere to a pre-determined set of questions and structure. Recruitment sampling procedures for potential teacher participants were outlined. Data analysis methods and techniques were additionally described, as well as, considerations for ethical review procedures such as: confidentiality and consent; right to withdraw; risks of participation; member checks and data storage. Finally, the methodological limitations and strengths were defined. Throughout the process of accumulating research from my literature review and data from my teacher interviews, I aimed to examine and bring to light the principal factors that influence and impact a novice teacher’s experience of professional socialization. The research conducted for my literature review along with the findings and themes which additionally emerged from the interviews, has allowed me to gain in depth insight into methods to better support novices in the primary stages of their careers. Next, in chapter four, I will go on to report the research findings.
4.0: Introduction

In this chapter, I present the research findings obtained from three female (primary junior-junior intermediate) teacher participants all presently working in Ontario school boards, and who teach Kindergarten to grade 12. The three interviews were conducted throughout the month of October 2015. I assigned the following pseudonyms to the first, second and third interview participants: Sandra, Pamela and Chloe. In order to respond to my research questions and explore how my participants’ professional socialization has been shaped, I analyzed the interview data in light of the research literature. I have organized my findings into four overarching themes (and several sub themes). These themes are the following: 1) Validation and Recognition from the School Community is a Precursor to a Novice Teacher’s Sense of Self-Efficacy, 2) Students are Novices’ Primary Socializing Agents and Impact their Sense of Self-Efficacy, 3) Prior Expectations of the Teaching Profession are met with a Sense of Ill-Preparedness and Job Insecurity when Confronted with its Reality, 4) The Drawbacks of the New Teacher's Induction Program (NTIP) Include its Evaluation Based Approach and the Stress of Being Scrutinized.

4.1: Validation and Recognition from the School Community is a Precursor to a Novice Teacher’s Sense of Self-Efficacy

During the interview process, all three participants expressed the importance of recognition and validation from the school community, and how that impacts on a teacher’s sense of self-efficacy and essentially contributes to their professional socialization. This theme ultimately explores and responds to the following research question: How do teachers’
experiences of professional socialization prepare them to confront and navigate the challenges commonly experienced by novice teachers? In response to an interview question on feedback being received and aligning with one’s expectations of it, Sandra explained:

I would say it aligned with what I expected in terms of how I got the feedback, and administrators and other teachers were very helpful in helping you grow. What didn’t align was how infrequent that happens. I’m very surprised that you’re not given feedback more often in order to know that you are being successful. Last year was the first year I had a principal who came up and just sort of popped into the classroom and said: “Oh, I really liked that lesson you did” which does wonders for your confidence when you hear something validating like that. That was much more helpful because you can see that’s being recognized and you are making a difference.

Sandra expressed the value of receiving feedback but also underlined its infrequency. This is a noteworthy statement, and reflects Caspersen and Raaen’s (2013) findings, as stated in the literature review. Their research revealed that beginner teachers receive less feedback from peers and superiors in comparison to other organizations, and that there is often a deficit in support from these socializing agents. The ostensible lack of feedback, validation, and recognition are challenges commonly experienced by novice teachers and largely impact their professional socialization, and assimilation into a school's culture.

Pamela, my second interview participant, spoke of a common lack of recognition, and the bearing that can have on new teachers trying to assimilate into a school’s community: “You are hired under a secretary, and they don’t realize that you’re a full-time employee that has gotten where you are – they don’t really think you belong there sometimes”. My third and final
interviewee, Chloe, discussed the importance of validation and its relevance to a novice teacher, as well as, a veteran teacher’s sense of self-efficacy. She additionally expressed the value of it coming from different sources:

Last year the gym teacher said: “You’ve been noticed this year, you’re more confident . . . and you’ve got good control of the students and people have noticed and they are giving you compliments for it” . . . so I think that teachers and kids need so much feedback, it really means a lot. I think even for older teachers, right? I don’t think you become seasoned and all of a sudden you don’t want to hear that you’ve got fresh ideas. The principal gives some feedback, and sometimes the parents will go to the principal and say: “We are really pleased that our kids are in her class” . . . so it’s really nice to hear it from all levels.

Chloe went on to reinforce the point that validation is helpful in situating yourself as a teacher: “Just giving the positive feedback ‘you are on the right track’. The validation “you are doing fine, don’t worry, it settles down”. These points are consistent with current research. In reference to Klassen and Chiu’s (2010) research, and as introduced in the literature review, validation and recognition from agents of professional socialization such as superiors, peers, students and parents have been shown to strengthen a beginner teacher’s sense of self-efficacy.

Overall, these participants felt valued and appreciated when positively reinforced by their peers and different members of the school community. On the other hand, and in the case of Sandra and Pamela, sparse feedback, or not being fully recognized for your merit in the workplace, can have a detrimental impact on a beginner teacher’s sense of efficaciousness. This was a point raised in the literature review, and reflected in Staton and Hunt’s (2009) research
findings. As additionally stated by Uuiasutti et al., (2014), being accepted as a full member of the school community has been revealed to have a positive effect on new teachers in terms of their professional outcomes.

Within this theme, I have identified two sub themes: 4.1.1 The School Culture Nurtures or Hinders a Novice’s Professional Socialization and Assimilation and 4.1.2: Novice’s Develop Professional Relationships as a Support and Coping Mechanism. Validation from a school’s community and its bearing on a beginner teacher’s assimilation, leads to the following subsequent sub themes.

4.1.1: The school culture nurtures or hinders a novice’s professional socialization and assimilation. This sub-theme confronts the research question: How do these teachers conceptualize professional socialization, and what do these teachers identify as key components of their professional socialization? In order for a novice teacher to assimilate into a school’s culture, they need to become part of the school community. Becoming an integrated member of the school community facilitates a novice’s socialization. Developing relationships with teacher peers is just as important a component to integration, as validation and recognition. Sandra touched upon this during our interview: “I think that’s definitely a factor that plays in, it’s sort of how do you work yourself into a community, and if you are successful in doing that, what do you do to develop relationships?” When asked what methods were most effective and beneficial in helping her transition from a novice to a more experienced teacher, Pamela raised the significance of establishing friendships and feeling part of the school’s culture:

Friends and colleagues that I worked with, that told me the ins and outs whenever I vented or whenever I asked about something, they were there as support. The other thing
that was really important to me was just the sense of the actual school itself, so the actual culture.

Additionally, Chloe touched on the relevance and influence of the school’s culture on her assimilation and the significance of a supportive and nurturing community, especially when, confronted with unforeseen challenges:

I was getting a lot of parent criticism and harassment so it was really hard for me as a new teacher trying to build up my confidence in the profession. I did have a lot of support from ADMIN, other teachers, and parents.

As presented in the literature review, Uuiasutti et al., (2014), allude to the importance of support provided to novices by colleagues in moments of need. Their research has revealed that when novices feel supported in the school community and culture, an open and favorable school environment is created. Chloe was not the first teacher to experience difficulties with parent criticism at her school. The school climate mirrored an open and favorable environment by preparing her for this eventuality and fully supporting her: “They really tried to prepare me, and once it started happening, they really tried to back me up and kind of create a little buffer between me and the parents.” However, when support is not automatically provided, Chloe explained that novices are sometimes reluctant to voice their need for help: “You don't always want to seek help because teachers are such perfectionists - you don't want people to know you are struggling, so you sort of create this brave face to your school community”. These issues are significant, as new teachers need to feel supported by their school community, especially, in the first few years of teaching. They also need to feel safe enough to express themselves
uninhibitedly (Caspersen & Raaen, 2013). Not feeling able to express concerns from fear of being judged is a common challenge novice teachers face (Barrett et al., 2009).

These findings reveal that developing professional relationships within the school community, and actively seeking out help can aid beginner teachers better assimilate into a school’s culture, and cope with unanticipated struggles; an idea, which will now be probed further in the next sub section.

4.1.2: Novices develop professional relationships as a support and a coping mechanism. Developing relationships and finding allies in the workplace can be beneficial and help contribute to a new teacher’s successful integration and socialization. This particular sub theme is connected to my research question on how novice teachers’ experiences of professional socialization prepare them to confront, as well as, navigate commonly experienced challenges.

When asked about the stages in a novice teacher’s professional socialization, Sandra explains:

The first stage is recognizing that you want to make those relationships and improve yourself and do that by socializing with others. I think you need to develop your own network of people, who are in similar circumstances to you. So you are networking with others professionally, you are able to share ideas with them as well.

In response to what she deemed her personal definition of professional socialization, Sandra reinforces the importance of developing professional relationships:

To me it’s that networking piece of your colleagues. How do you communicate with other teachers in your school . . . and not just only on a professional level but in terms of
developing those relationships so that you have some mutual respect, and you understand where people are coming from.

Like Sandra, Pamela underscored the significance of developing professional relationships when describing her experiences:

I have an amazing network at my school. We get along, we have collaboration, and we also have socialization, and socialize outside of work. We can talk about issues . . . It’s working with your teacher peers - people you can confide in.

Determining whom you can and cannot turn to, finding allies within the school community and being your own self-advocate were points Chloe raised. These factors contributed to her successful assimilation into the workplace: “I think you kind of try and feel out who is on your team, who is going to be supportive . . . just finding out who are going to be your allies.” The data retrieved from the interview suggests that finding allies in the workplace can help new teachers develop self-assurance in their teaching approaches: “The more ‘old-school’ teachers didn’t like our fresh new approach to learning but we kind of stuck with it and kind of banded together and said, “we are used to full day Kindergarten, this is all we know.” During our interview, Chloe stressed the notion of joining forces with other novice teachers for support when integrating into a new school. Also, Chloe puts an emphasis on actively seeking out this support system, and she put forward the notion of self-advocacy:

I think seek support; don’t feel embarrassed that people are going to judge you, that you are a bad teacher. I think in the beginning years you always think you have no idea what
you are doing. Seek other people’s advice, and ask lots of questions - so just being an advocate for yourself is what I would say.

In response to a question on what methods best help a teacher transition from novice to experienced, Chloe discussed the benefits of additionally maintaining professional relationships outside of the school community:

Keep in touch with the contacts and teachers you meet; and it’s nice to have someone outside of your school, if you are worried that teachers might judge you or gossip or something. That’s nice that you kind of step outside and have another sort of community of teachers that can give you support as well.

These findings indicate that teachers outside of the school community are neutral parties, and can thus provide objective insights, and support to novice teachers.

Chloe mentioned that she had a negative experience with “a small handful of inappropriate parents that just put a negative spin on things” in her second year of teaching. The situation prompted her to consider leaving the profession: “I thought about leaving the profession; and then I thought, I’m not going to let that happen." Many studies reveal that the backing and support of colleagues and the school community are important in contributing to a novice’s well-being and successful socialization. As stated in studies conducted by Staton and Hunt (2013), and Blase (1985), struggles adapting to the socialization process, and to their new roles as teachers, can often lead to disillusionment and career dissatisfaction - when no proper backing or support is received. In accordance to Caspersen & Raen's, (2013) research; when colleagues do not provide novices with support, the effects were found to be disheartening, as well as, inhibiting to a beginner teacher's socialization process. Lack of support from colleagues and superiors has even been revealed to lead to teacher burnout and to affect a teacher’s sense of
self-efficacy (Brouwers, Evers & Tomic, 2001). When asked if she received a lot of support from her school community, peers and superiors, she expressed that she did, and that they had backed her up when issues did arise. Therefore, when such supports do exist such as: collegial, superior support and collaboration, this greatly reduces teacher burnout risks and contributes positively to new teachers’ socialization process, self-efficacy and skill appropriation. This was also found to be the case in a study conducted by Brouwers, Evers, & Tomic (2001). As equally reflected in Staton and Hunt’s (2009) findings, support from colleagues has been rated the most significant form of support for novices.

Validation, recognition and collegial support, together with, actively seeking support from the school community and colleagues helps advance a beginner teacher’s professional socialization. The next theme, which explores the notion of students being novices’ primary socializing agents, will examine the influence that students have both on a novice's assimilation and their sense of self-efficacy.

4.2 Students Are Novices’ Primary Socializing Agents and Influence their Sense of Self-Efficacy

Several socializing factors affect the professional socialization of novice teachers. Students, however, have a prominent role in the professional socialization of novice teachers. Two out of the three interviewees (Chloe, and Pamela) revealed that they considered their primary socializing agents to be their students. This theme additionally relates and responds to the research question on novices' conceptualization of professional socialization and the key components of it. When responding to the question on the main influencing factors, and what
methods are most effective and beneficial in helping them transition from the status of a novice to a more experienced teacher, Chloe replied:

I think just having the kids help you transition from your early years because kids do not know that you are a new teacher. The kids really help you get through that process or remind you why you got into teaching. Stay with the kids and the learning and know that you are being successful in that way.

Similarly, in her interview, Pamela referred to the impact students can have on a beginner teacher’s socialization: “I think the most important thing is that a student likes you . . . I feel like that's when you've gained their respect.” Pamela also considers young teachers to be more relatable to, and in tune with students, and raises the need to better support and integrate young teachers into school communities:

It's obvious that students look up to young teachers because they have more in common sometimes than with older teachers, and when there are no young teachers, it's hard for the students to have role models. I think by focusing on making young and new teachers in the school feel part of the culture, not only do they want to give back and they want to be part of it, but it actually carries a vision forward.

Pamela underscored the need not only to be appreciated and accepted by the students but by teacher peers as well: “There are supports that you need - you need teachers, you need students to like you.” According to Pamela, getting that positive response from students, means you have truly assimilated. This point was solidified when she discussed validation from students during observations and evaluations by an NTIP evaluator: “But she said to me: “I realized you
passed the program because the kids are just like – ‘Why are you here, Miss?’ You don’t need to be here in this classroom, she's a great teacher.” Deal and Chatman's (2012) research additionally found students to be novice teachers’ main and most influential socializing agents, as opposed to, their superiors or peers. The novice's primary socialization agent is the student body - which they, as teachers, are also expected to socialize. Novice teachers are mostly in contact with, and working closely with their students; therefore, students are their primary source of feedback. This is significant as it helps new teachers receive some form of validation on how they are doing. Student feedback allows them to better situate themselves, as teachers, and ultimately guides and shapes their professional socialization and assimilation as educators.

Although the outcome of the research literature and participant data has found that students are the primary socializing agents, many other factors influence a beginner teacher's professional socialization. This will be broached through the ensuing sub theme, which challenges the heuristic nature of teaching, and how it factors into a novice’s socialization process.

4.2.1: The heuristic nature of teaching as a contributing factor to a novice's socialization. One of the recurring challenges found to impact the participants' professional socialization was the heuristic, *sink or swim* nature of the teaching profession. This sub theme responds to the research question on novice teachers' experiences of professional socialization, and how it prepares them to confront and navigate commonly experienced challenges. Pamela described in her interview: “I was thrown into a geography timetable with no geography background - probably my weakest subject, in high school, and having to teach it. I did it because
you teach to get a job.” When discussing learning about the ins and outs of the profession such as grading systems, Pamela expressed:

Nobody tells you about Mark Book, you have to know how to load your classes - all these things, this is part of your job description; but, you don't really learn that anywhere, until you are thrown in and you have to do the report card two weeks later.

Pamela underscored the heuristic nature of the teaching profession: “It's really honestly like a sink or swim . . . you have to be willing to do everything it takes because nobody is going to hold your hand - it's pretty much, you are your own boss.” When discussing her conceptualization of what the professional socialization of novice teachers' entails, Pamela explained that professional standards are something you progressively learn from practical teaching experience and not in teacher's college: “I have to figure out ways of why or how to change my curriculum to adapt to my students. So professional standards are things you don't learn . . . I did not learn that stuff in teacher's college”.

Echoing Pamela's points of discussion and in response to how her expectations were or were not met, in the beginning stages of her career, Chloe also expressed this notion of being thrown straight into the deep end:

I certainly knew I would be immersed and jumping right into it, which is of course what happens. I got my very first LTO (long term occasional contract) on August long weekend. This meant I had about three days to set up, meet my ECE (early childhood educator), and kind of get started so I didn't really have much time to plan or prepare or anything.
Similarly to Pamela and Chloe, Sandra experienced much the same, and also expressed a comparable viewpoint:

You are thrown in and it's up to you to put that effort forward. No one is coming along and saying, “Let me give up my time after 20 years of teaching and creating my own lesson plans to sit down and hand everything over to you”. Teachers just don't do that; they don't have the time, right? So it is entirely up to you as the new teacher to sort of force your way into that and find solutions for yourself.

These findings are significant. The concept of the ‘learn by doing’ nature of teaching also manifests itself in much of the research. In Caspersen & Raaen (2013) and Uusiautti et al., (2014) findings - novices have often been found to be left to their own devices and learn to adapt to their professional responsibilities through trial and error. Deal and Chatman's (2012) findings were similar - new teachers have been found to fend for themselves, and predominantly work alone and in isolation, which reinforces this notion of the “learn by doing”. Adapting to the role of a teacher, ultimately, involves discovering and learning professional duties along the way.

A correlation can be made between the inherently heuristic roots of the profession, and novices' expectations of it prior to embarking into the world of teaching. The upcoming theme investigates prior expectations novices have for the teaching profession and how, once in practice, these may bring a sense of ill preparedness and the feeling of job insecurity. The findings related to this theme will be subsequently explored, and analyzed.
4.3: Prior Expectations of the Teaching Profession Are Met with a Sense of Ill-Preparedness and Job Insecurity when Faced with its Reality

All three participants expressed a feeling of being inadequately prepared for the realities of the teaching profession. This theme addresses the main research question: How is a sample of novice teachers being professionally socialized and what outcomes do they perceive this having on their teaching and their expectations of the teaching profession? And includes the subsidiary question: How is their experience of professional socialization impacting their expectations toward the profession of teaching? When asked what her expectations going into the profession were, Sandra conveyed that she expected more of a focus on collaboration given the emphasis on group work at teacher's college: “I thought there would be a lot more sharing of resources between staff, a lot more time to do co-planning, that was the focus in the Bed Program - to spend a lot of time with your colleagues - planning, sharing and creating things together.” Another aspect she felt un-prepped for, prior to working, was the inconsistency and instability of teaching placements in the beginning stages of her career: “Everyday, I would be at a different school and that was even at a long term placement. I don't think they prepared us for that piece of it - the isolation of being in different communities and trying to make that connection.” When asked if she felt, as though, teacher's college had addressed, or prepared her for the challenges in transitioning from student to professional, Pamela responded: “I feel like they were preparing us to get out of Ontario, to get a job somewhere else, in the world, because we were not going to get a job in Ontario”. Chloe's expectations going into the profession were based on recollections of her own schooling, as well as, acquired practicum experience: “You kind of expect that it will be like the experience you had of elementary school when you were a kid. What you remember of school. And your practicum experience, I think, are what prepares you the most for what to
expect of the profession.” Chloe's reflections support the findings in Blase's (1985) research. Pre-service experience sets the tone for a teacher's socialization; but once in service, the realities of the profession shape a teacher's professional growth. Staton & Hunt (2009) and Deal & Chatman (2012) equally support these findings. Research shows that novice teachers enter the profession with models of what type of teacher they will be, based on their experiences as students, and on practical teaching experiences. Chloe additionally felt inadequately prepared for the teaching career after teacher's college: “I find that teacher's college prepared me very little for teaching in general . . . what to expect, how to conduct yourself with parents . . . how to get used to things, how to acclimatize.” Job insecurity was another significant finding that emerged from the interviews. In order to achieve a full time position, the interview data findings reveal the importance of enhancing one's eligibility by undergoing additional qualifications. This was voiced in Sandra's interview: “I have done seven AQ's now. I did five before finishing my first year of teaching”. Sandra explained that finding a full time teaching position is an arduous journey. Many novices are required to work several jobs, which negatively impacts on a novice's professional socialization, and integration into a school's community: “I also think another stumbling block too is that a lot of novice teachers are working other jobs so you might only be able to show up for the bell and leave after the day because you have another job to get to.” Pamela alluded to the precariousness of job security due to the surplus of teachers: “I go in everyday just doing what I do because there are still hundreds of teachers who don't have jobs - had jobs last year and that's the reality of it.” She also referred to being shifted around, within her school board, and the effect that has on a new teacher's professional socialization:

   Half of the time I don't think people realize that even if you have a permanent job; by the end of the year, your school board can move you to another school . . . The
teachers that are there that are older are always going to be there, but the younger ones are replaceable.

Chloe echoes Pamela’s point about the unpredictability of teaching positions: “If you are bouncing around from LTO to supply work, I know that can be pretty tough for teachers”. Teaching jobs are precarious and inconstant. This sense of insecurity impacts a novice’s professional socialization and contributes to the challenges they face.

These findings suggest that teaching positions are hard to come by; and that often, there is no guarantee of being kept in the same position long term. This is a factor that greatly impacts on a novice’s professional socialization, and expectations towards the teaching profession. This leads to the next sub theme, which discusses and explores findings related to how newcomers feel they must render themselves invaluable in order to maintain a teaching position.

4.3.1: To maintain a teaching position newcomers felt they must render themselves invaluable and indispensable. The data findings from the interviews indicated the fact that novice teachers feel the need to standout, in the workplace, and make an impression, in order to sustain a teaching post. Additionally, this sub theme answers my research question on the common challenges facing novices and how they confront and navigate these. One way of keeping a teaching position, in an unpredictable career climate, is by striving to become an invaluable member of a school's community. In order to be memorable, Sandra emphasized the importance of making connections within the school community:

I think I was lucky enough to get a contract in less than 4 years of teaching because I made myself part of every school community. I knew the staff, I knew the parents -
people wanted me back in their school whereas teachers in our board who just sort of show up . . . are not getting hired because they are not being memorable.

Pamela echoed Sandra's reference to being distinctive. Furthermore, she expressed the unfairness of the profession that sees young teachers often rotated and sent to new schools because of a teacher surplus: “I feel like it's very hard to even stay anywhere unless you yourself make yourself irreplaceable - because it's constantly changing.” She also touches on the competitive job market, as a result of this surplus, making it imperative to impress in order to keep your position: “There is so much competition that unless you can stand out, or hold your grounds, you will just go back onto the supply list”. This point cements and ties back into the importance of connecting with the school community and forging professional relationships as previously discussed findings have shown. Moreover, Chloe underlined the importance of making oneself invaluable in order to maintain a teaching position: “Just make your presence known, make yourself visible.”

Pamela explained what she did in order to render herself irreplaceable:

I wrote my own course for grade 12 and I am also a dance teacher, drama teacher and math teacher; so, my timetable last year was why I was kept because I can jump from my math class, go to a business class, and then teach a dance class and there are not many teacher who can do that.

These findings show that novices feel the need to be even more industrious, in the workplace, in order to make an impression and keep their teaching posts. Teachers’ sense of needing to stand out in the workplace is significant; as it is yet, another socializing factor that
shapes the professional socialization and development of novice teachers and contributes to the struggles they may face. Support programs such as the New Teachers Induction Program have been put in place by the Ministry of Education to support new teachers. The evaluation based roots of the NTIP, however, compromise the capacity of the NTIP to be an effective support; especially, in relation to novice teachers’ sense of job insecurity and concern with perceived professional performance. The interview findings revealed some of the drawbacks of the program, experienced by the participants. The following theme explores the findings and uncovered limitations and drawbacks regarding the NTIP as described by the participants.

4.4: The Drawbacks of the NTIP Include the Evaluation Based Approach and the Stress of Being Scrutinized

This particular theme deals with the research question: What do these teachers think are the implications of their professional socialization for their teaching practice and experience of teaching? Induction programs are provided to guide, support, and assist teachers in the beginning stages of their teaching careers and hence significantly contribute to their professional socialization. All three participants availed of the mandatory New Teacher's Induction Program (NTIP) offered by the Ministry of Education - put in place to support beginner teachers in their first few years of teaching. During our interviews, we discussed the advantages and disadvantages of this current induction and mentoring program. Sandra mentioned that the NTIP is solely offered to contract teachers, which results in novice teachers not always availing of the program in the first few years of teaching. There is, however, the option for teachers under a long-term occasional contract to participate in the induction program:
Once you are in an LTO in our board of 97 consecutive days, or more, then you have a choice to participate in it. So you can voluntarily put yourself in that program, find your own mentor, go through all the PD (professional development), and receive feedback from your principal. It's as if you were a contract teacher; but, there is just nothing formalized for that. And then when I became a contract teacher, I had to do that. So I got a lot of supports once I got to that point - but that was three years into the profession. The first three years of the profession, there is no support as an occasional teacher.

By the time Sandra received support, she had already acquired several years of practical teaching experience. She even availed of the NTIP twice:

When I joined the NTIP program as an LTO teacher, I found a mentor so that we could actually do some co-planning, and I made sure to use my time for that. When I was a contract teacher then it was mandated to do so.

Sandra had both an insider and outsider view of the NTIP as she sat on the NTIP committee. When asked what her thoughts on existing models of novice teacher induction programs were, she explained:

I sat on the NTIP steering committee for two years with our board - once as an LTO teacher, and once as a contract teacher. And my opinion has been the same for both of them. That it's not beneficial, and that's the feedback that came from every survey, every year, from every teacher. New teachers are not getting the training that they need; and by the time they are getting that training, you're not really a new teacher. You've been teaching five years, and then you are in the NTIP.
These findings show the repetitive and redundant nature of the program for novices. As Sandra discussed, many teachers only get a contract after several years of teaching and then have to go through the mandated program. What emerges from the interview data is that the NTIP appears somewhat superfluous for them, as well as, time consuming; ultimately, it takes away from teaching time. Sandra explained: “It caused more problems in your classroom because you were absent.” Given these findings, the Ministry of Education may need to review its mentoring program. Sandra also mentioned the lack of relevant professional development workshops within the NTIP: “A lot of the PD workshops are based on literacy and numeracy and that didn't help me if I was a Spec Ed teacher or if someone was a French teacher”. She also highlighted the fact that mentors were not always representative of diversity: “In our school board, we actually have Ojibway teachers; we have three in our school board and two of them were new teachers. There were only two possible mentors to mentor them. So that makes it very difficult in terms of the program that way”.

Pamela experienced stress with the evaluation and paperwork features of the NTIP: “I don't think the NTIP did anything but give me stress; because all it was, was to do a huge binder book . . . I had one evaluator that looked at every single thing - every binder that I had.” Pamela echoed Sandra's point on essentially losing teaching time to go to the PD workshops. She also revealed not fully exploiting the NTIP services, due to its complicated system, and that it was not always fully supported by her superiors:

I never used my PD days because it was more work and time to find codes to actually be sent somewhere. There wasn't help or support, it felt like you were taking a day off work
so the vice principals and principals are not inclusive in saying: “Ok, go on and get out there”.

She also stressed the inconsistency and delay in receiving approval for these PD workshops: “You have to go through the process of getting approved and it is more work.” Chloe also echoed this: “You can struggle depending on how quickly the board gets back to you. I think two months later I got the email.” These findings suggest the need for a more efficient system to speed up the application and approval process for PD workshops.

Veteran teachers mentoring novices was another drawback according to Pamela and her experience of it. She finds them to be out of sync with the teaching methods younger teachers employ or situations they encounter nowadays: “It's usually teachers that have been out of the classroom for 5 or 10 years, so they don't know what new teachers deal with.” Pamela expressed not fully seeing the value in the program, as teachers are rarely failed, and it is more of a bureaucratic program: “It is more work to fail someone - they don't actually want to fail somebody, so really, what's the point?” Pamela additionally mentioned new teachers' reticence in openly voicing their complaints about the NTIP system and its flaws: “New teachers are too scared to say anything about it”. As aforementioned, this concept was broached in the literature review findings. Research has shown (Caspersen & Raaen, 2013; Barrett et al., 2009) that novices' reserve in regards to voicing doubts or challenges they are facing is due to their probationary status and being anxious about undermining their professionalism. This point additionally reflects the notion of the transmission-based model of teacher induction/mentorship. The findings, from the literature review, revealed (Barrett et al., 2009) that in a transmission-
based model of induction or mentorship assumptions about teaching are not questioned because this model does not encourage critique.

Chloe availed of the NTIP in her first contract year, which was her second year teaching. Like Pamela, she also alluded to the fact that the paperwork was overwhelming, but she found being paired with a mentor to be useful: “So they give you a big booklet, it's a little over-whelming . . . But they certainly provide you with a mentor . . . so having a mentor was super helpful.” Chloe also discussed mentor pairings. Although she was indeed happy with the mentorship aspect of the NTIP; there was a slight imbalance, as her mentor was not from her school community: “At the alternative school, there was actually someone in the non-alternative section of the school, and she was fantastic but she wasn't part of the alternative school, so she wasn't immersed, she had different stuff going on in her classroom.” This is a salient finding as the question of whether an external or internal mentor would, more fully, benefit novices was broached in the literature review. The finding suggests that an internal mentor would have more of an insider perspective of the school's community and would thus be more relevant to a novice mentee's professional socialization. All the aforementioned drawbacks of the NTIP ultimately impact on a novice teacher’s teaching practice and professional socialization.

All of the above findings suggest that certain changes and improvements need to be made to the NTIP in order for novice teachers to truly benefit from it and successfully evolve, in their professional development, as part of their socialization. This therefore leads to the final section and sub theme, which will elucidate the participants' suggestions for NTIP improvement.
4.4.1: Improvements and suggestions involve regular check-ins, faster PD approval and focusing more on young teachers. This final sub theme examines the main research question on how novice teachers are being socialized, the outcomes they perceive this having on their teaching and expectations of the teaching profession. Induction programs such as the NTIP are professedly there to aid a new teacher in adapting to their professional role and responsibilities. The interview findings, however, revealed inconsistencies within this current induction model, which essentially impacts on a novice teacher's professional socialization, and teaching outcomes. All three participants suggested improvements or retractions that could be made to the current NTIP program. In response to my interview question: “What do novice teachers need more in terms of institutional support mechanisms?” Sandra replied:

I think boards need to offer networking opportunities for teachers to get together. I also think that there should be someone appointed at every school that is sort of like a welcoming committee to new teachers - someone who recognizes that there are new faces coming into the school, on a regular basis, and just touching base with them - seeing what supports they need or what kind of difficulties they've been coming across.

Another suggestion Sandra made was to create a database for novice teachers: “to create a database of teachers who are willing to mentor novices and start to match them up.” Sandra also referred to integrating services to support novice teachers' mental health, and the focus of the NTIP being on PD’s:

I think the main goals should be on novice teachers' mental health . . . building up their confidence, making sure that they understand that they are going to make mistakes all the time; that, that's ok - that you learn from it. I think the focus should also be on reflective
practice . . . Another part should be on actual board initiatives; so whatever, your board is really focusing on there should be time to do some professional development around that.

Sandra also mentioned the value of integrating mandatory observations before starting to teach: “So two or three days observation of the teacher and then you start teaching the lessons. You never get to see teachers teach their class and what that looks like.” Sandra also mentioned the need to retract mandatory orientation sessions for newly contracted teachers who have several years teaching experience but still have to undergo the compulsory NTIP:

I think a lot of the mandatory orientation sessions need to be stripped or relooked at and evaluated from a board perspective rather than a ministry's perspective; because like I said, you've been teaching for five to eight years before doing your NTIP program, you've already absorbed all the orientation pieces and you don't need to hear those again.

Furthermore, she expressed that the focus should be on finding valuable mentorship: “Someone that is being useful and helping you advance in your career.” This statement is very pertinent as good mentor-mentee partnerships help contribute to the professional socialization of beginner teachers, help them transition into their professional roles and better assimilate into their school communities. Research findings from the literature review equally consolidate this notion. As relayed by Fletcher and Barrett (2004), a mentor's role does not only help socialize novices but allows them to get to know their teacher peers and students.

Pamela, on the other hand, put an emphasis on the need to steer away from evaluation and make the NTIP more support-based: “I think they could improve on it by making it more supportive - to help you, rather than, you think you are just being evaluated. When somebody is
in your classroom, you do feel judged. The NTIP I felt, was just stress, just check marks”. This notion of evaluator versus supporter was also raised in Barrett et al.’s (2009) study. Pamela also judiciously underlined the inconsistency of evaluations: “I just find evaluation inconsistent. Everyone evaluates in different ways”. She suggested check-ins as opposed to evaluations: “So why not, instead of making an evaluation, why not make it a sort of check in at certain points? Have them come into a snippet of your class or see one activity.” Chloe echoed this notion of incorporating regular check-ins by the NTIP: “I know that it would be helpful to have weekly check-ins just to see, just a casual lunch and learn you know, ‘Is there anything you want to talk about, is there anything you want to plan today?’”

Pamela alluded to the fact that the NTIP was not as beneficial as practicum. Her suggestions included more support for mentors, in order for them, to better assist novice teachers: “I think one thing is to actually work with department heads, and let the department help mentors”. Pamela also stressed the importance of better supporting young teachers that are coming into the profession; as, they are the future of teaching: “We have new people coming in and when everyone retires, we are not going to have these veteran teachers anymore; so, we need to focus on the young and bring young teachers into schools”. Chloe's suggestions for NTIP improvement consisted of breaking down the NTIP into practical segments and making them relevant to the time of year:

Maybe it would be easier if they broke it into little practical chunks . . . In September: the focus is on setting up your program and your schedule and maybe do a little workshop on scheduling . . . In October that's when we are going to start report cards - have our focus be on how to write report cards. Make things specific to the time of year.
In addition, Chloe suggested creating a handbook for novices based on novice teachers’ experiences:

Putting together a written resource package on little things like writing report cards, writing IEP's for beginner teachers - just really straightforward documents; even if it's like created by novice teachers, their experiences and putting together their experience profiles, FAQ's, tips, and can share resources and ideas.

She also proposed the idea of a new teacher mentoring exchange between novice teachers:

Maybe even a new teacher mentoring and not just having a mentor in the school but someone who is also new . . . For example: a new teacher parent communication meeting- someone facilitates it; but, just let the new teachers use each other's advice and experiences as well.

Chloe's suggestions, such as her proposed model of new teacher exchanges, the interview findings, and proposed practical improvements to the NTIP - all relate back to the concept of the benefits of collegial support for new teachers. As stated in the research, Caspersen and Raaen (2013) found that teacher collaboration has been shown to help newly qualified teachers cope with their work.

All of the above findings suggest a need to review the current NTIP model and make adjustments in order to better aid novices assimilate into their professional roles and guide and support their professional socialization. All three participants voiced similar recommendations for improvement based on their own experiences of the NTIP. The suggestions harnessed from the interviews underline a significant need to render the NTIP more practical, relevant and
therefore valuable for beginner teachers. The interview findings suggest that certain aspects are problematic. The evaluation function of the current NTIP model, together with the mandatory sessions for novice-teachers, with prior teaching experience, have not been the most conducive to the interviewees’ professional socialization.

**4.5: Conclusion**

The interview data casts light on the chief socializing factors novice teachers experience and what aids them in their professional socialization, and adaption to their professional roles as teachers. The themes, which emerged and collated from the interview and literature review data, allowed me to fully explore and confront my research questions. Key findings included the need for validation from colleagues, superiors, students and all members of the school community. Validation and recognition were shown to improve a teacher's sense of self-efficacy, build on their teaching confidence and trust in their abilities. These findings suggested that validation and recognition were noteworthy contributing factors to their professional socialization and teaching outcomes. The importance of a supportive school community and developing professional relationships were other key findings. Salient socializing factors such as: feeling supported or actively seeking out a support system came to the fore in these three interviews. The participant data also revealed the importance of students, and their significance on a teacher's professional socialization - students have been found to be a novice teacher's main source of teaching validation and feedback. Teachers’ expectations of the profession were shaped by their biographical experiences; these assumptions appeared to create a sense of being unprepared on encountering the reality of the classroom. The findings additionally revealed that teachers sensed a need to stand out and become an invaluable member of staff, in order, to keep their teaching
posts. Suggestions for NTIP improvement were additionally broached. The findings revealed practical measures such as regular check-ins, faster professional development approval, and more focus on supporting young teachers entering the professions; all of which, were discussed and explored. All of these findings highlight what factors hinder, as well as, benefit a novice teacher's socialization, and what can be done to improve current induction programs to better support new teachers. In the next and final chapter, I will review the implications of these findings and make recommendations, as well as, review potential areas for further study.
MTRP Chapter 5: Discussion

5.0: Introduction

In this concluding chapter, I will be discussing my interview findings and how they relate to, and correlate with, the data that emerged from my literature review research. I will then go on to discuss the broader implications of these findings on the educational community at large, as well as, gauge the implications these findings bear on me, as a novice teacher, and researcher. Based on what I have learned throughout the research process, and as a result of the findings which materialized from both my literature and interview data, I will make subsequent recommendations to the Ministry of Education, school boards, teacher education programs, teachers and administrators. I will then review the limitations of my study and bring to light the questions that stemmed from my research, as well as, make suggestions for areas of further and future study.

5.1: Discussion of my Findings and their Relation to my Literature Review

The importance of recognition and validation from school communities and its contribution to a novice teacher’s sense of self efficacy was a key finding, which continually emerged in the interviews, and also, resonated in the literature (Caspersen & Raaen’s, 2013, Klassen & Chiu, 2010; Uuiasutti et al., 2014). Another prominent finding, which manifested in both the interviews and literature, was developing professional relationships and its relevance to a novice teacher’s professional assimilation. Developing professional relationships and actively seeking out internal school support systems are essential to a beginner teacher’s successful integration into their school’s culture. (Staton and Hunt, 2013; Blase, 1985; Caspersen & Raen,
Throughout the research process, students were found to be beginner teachers’ main socializing agents - a clear correlation was made between the interviews and literature. Students are the most influential socializing agents for beginner teachers; they are their main source of feedback, recognition and validation (Deal & Chatman, 2012). The heuristic nature of the teaching profession was another key theme, which was reflected in the interviews and across numerous research studies. Teachers are often ‘left in the lurch’ and learn to adapt to their professional roles through ‘trial and error,’ as well as, practical experience (Deal & Chatman, 2012; Caspersen & Raaen, 2013; Uusiautti et al., 2014).

The interview findings additionally revealed the inconsistencies between idealized expectations prior to entering the teaching profession, and the challenging realities of teaching, once in service. These findings directly tied into and were supported in much of the research. Once in service, the realities of the profession shape a novice’s professional socialization and development (Staton & Hunt, 2009; Deal & Chatman, 2012; Blase, 1985). An interesting facet that came to light in the interviews, but not reflected in the literature, was the precariousness of the teaching profession. The interview participants stated their sense of job insecurity, the unpredictability of teaching positions and the need to become invaluable, in order to, remain in their post. This is a recent phenomenon due to the current issue of teacher surplus in Ontario.

Other key relevant interview findings included the repetitive and redundant nature of the Ministry of Education’s current NTIP program (New Teacher’s Induction Program), as well as, its inherent flaws. The drawbacks of the standardized and evaluation-based aspects of the NTIP were prevalent in both the interviews and literature (Barrett et al., 2009). The need to improve the current NTIP model was disclosed across all three interviews and supported by the literature. The interview findings and literature suggest that the induction program be reformed, in order to,
effectively benefit new teachers entering the profession (Barret et al., 2009).

All of these key findings have implications for the educational community at large such as: the Ministry of Education’s NTIP initiatives, as well as, present day teacher education programs and school community members such as: principals, administrators, teacher mentors and teacher colleagues etc. The implications for the educational community will be approached in the ensuing section.

5.2: Implications: Broad Implications for the Educational Community

The participants voiced many inconsistencies with the current NTIP model, which has significant implications for the educational community at large. Teachers, for example, who have accumulated several years of teaching practice as supply or LTO (Long Term Occasional) teachers are still mandated to undergo the NTIP - when they finally obtain a full time contract. These findings reveal a flaw in the Ministry of Education’s current NTIP framework. The NTIP is offered solely to contracted teachers regardless of their teaching experience. Such a shortcoming needs to be acknowledged by the Ministry of Education, in order to, improve upon the NTIP and better support beginner teachers. These findings also affect teacher education programs and school boards. Novice teachers need to be prepared for the realities of the profession and briefed on what to expect with the mandatory NTIP. School boards need to acknowledge previous teaching practice experience and remove redundant aspects of the NTIP for newly contracted (experienced) teachers. Findings also suggested the need for the NTIP to be more support-based rather than evaluation-based. Focusing on mentoring, and support-based aspects of the NTIP, and veering away from its evaluation features, needs to be acknowledged by the Ministry of Education, and by mentors. The findings have implications on the broader
educational community and also impact novice teachers such as me. These more particular implications will be explored in the following section.

5.3: Narrow Implications for me as a Teacher and Researcher

My reasons for undertaking and researching the topic of: the professional socialization of novice teachers was a personal endeavor. Having taught English for two years as a high school teacher, I experienced the heuristic nature of the profession and learnt to adapt to my role of teacher through ‘trial and error’. Although, I assimilated into my school’s culture quite successfully; overall, I felt I could have done with more support from the community in the primary stages of my career. Throughout my research, I realized that what I experienced was not uncommon, and that many beginner teachers feel they could do with more support, feedback, and validation from their superiors and peers when starting off in their careers. The need to receive more support from a school’s community has implications on teachers and the school community. The findings from my study unveil a conscious exigency for teacher colleagues, administrators, superiors, and other members of the school community to more actively support and aid beginner teachers’ acculturation into a school’s environment. It additionally brings to light the onus on novice teachers to actively seek out support systems themselves. Thus, it is ultimately my responsibility as a new teacher coming into a school to make those connections and reach out to the community. New teachers should take into account the importance and benefit of becoming involved with their school’s community, and its part in helping them evolve into a fully-fledged staff member. Other implications from the findings include my expectations of the NTIP and its apparent discrepancies. Given that I have extensively researched the current NTIP model, I will be cognizant of its innate issues and limitations going into the program. For
example, when I finally obtain a full-time contract after a period of supply teaching or a long-term occasional contract, I will be able to bring any potential NTIP overlap concerns (for example: repeated mandatory orientation sessions) to my mentor or the school administrators’ attention. With all of these aspects taken into consideration, and based on the salient findings throughout the research process, I will proceed to make some recommendations to the educational community.

5.4: Recommendations

There are several key recommendations and these are aimed at: school boards; the Ministry of Education for suggestions of improvements to the current NTIP; teachers’ college programs to better prepare novices for the realities of the profession such as: practice shock; and school communities, in terms of what can be done ‘in schools’ to better assist new teachers in their professional socialization.

The need for NTIP improvement: the Ministry of Education and school boards’ initiative

Networking

The interview findings from my study suggest a need for the Ministry of Education or local school boards to implement a welcoming committee for new teachers with facilitators who can point novice teachers in the right direction. Other recommendations include monthly new teacher ‘lunch and learns’ or ‘get-togethers’, to allow teachers to network and exchange ideas. My findings suggest a need to provide novice teachers with the possibility to exchange and express experiences and queries with each other as a support mechanism.
Mentors

Other recommendations, in light of the research findings, include creating a database for teachers in order to effectively match up novices and mentors. There is an obvious need for beginner teachers to avail of valuable mentoring. Another recommendation involves formal training for mentors, to better equip them, for their role in supporting new teachers. Moreover, there is the need to provide opportunities to equip new teachers with the means to find suitable mentors. Other recommendations involve mentoring exchanges between novice teachers.

Services and resources to support novice teachers

Supporting novice teachers’ mental health could help new teachers, in the beginning stages of their career, and avoid factors that lead to teacher burnout. My findings suggest that supporting novice teachers’ mental health is indispensable to their wellbeing. Other recommendations include board initiatives. Opportunities should be provided for professional development, co-planning and co-teaching, in relation to, the school board’s focus. Mandatory teacher observations, is another recommendation that could improve upon novice teacher’s integration into a school’s community. My findings suggest that having the opportunity to observe other teachers teach could improve a beginner teacher’s socialization. Steering away from the evaluation based aspects of the NTIP and rendering it more support-based is another initiative that could be taken into consideration by the Ministry of Education. Suggestions for regular check-ins, as opposed to the NTIP’s standardized evaluations were other recommendations derived from my findings. Breaking down the NTIP into more practical segments is yet another idea based on my research findings. For example, during report card season, there could be a support session on how to write report cards. Creating a handbook or
written resource package for novice teachers compiled by novice teachers with practical tips, and resources, is another recommendation, which emanated from my findings.

**NTIP Retractions**

Retractions of mandatory NTIP orientation sessions for newly contracted teachers with prior years of teaching experience, is yet another recommendation based on my findings. This issue needs to be acted upon by the Ministry of Education, as it is a ‘crack’ in the system, which could be easily changed and resolved. Attending mandatory orientation sessions previously attended and assimilated is ultimately superfluous to the newly contracted teachers’ professional development and socialization. Mandatory orientation sessions should, additionally, be reviewed and reevaluated from a school board’s perspective.

**5.5: Support from the School Community**

In order for novice teachers to successfully assimilate and become proficient members of their school community, support from their school community must be present. My findings reveal the importance of validation and recognition from a school’s community and its impact on a novice teacher’s professional socialization. Developing professional relationships and actively seeking out support systems, and allies, in the workplace have been found to improve a beginner teacher’s sense of self-efficacy. Recommendations to facilitate this process include the Ministry of Education or school boards providing networking opportunities for new teachers. Other recommendations include teacher education programs implementing these concepts, into existing courses, and highlighting beginner teachers’ need to be become actively involved in their school communities. Other suggestions point directly at new teachers - being their own advocates.
Ultimately, the onus is on the novice teacher to branch out and make connections in their school community, in order to, improve their experiences assimilating into their school’s culture, and find colleagues they can rely on for support.

5.6: Limitations of the Study and Suggestions for Areas of Further Study

My three participants provided me with wonderful insight into what makes for a smooth transition into their teaching and professional roles, as well as, what can enhance or impede their successful professional socialization. Due to the nature of this study, one cannot take too much time interviewing many other participants due to the restrictions of deadlines. With more time and resources, a longitudinal study exploring and covering such an extensive topic as: The Professional Socialization of Novice Teachers would have afforded more precious insights and data. All novice teachers have a unique experience when transitioning into their professional roles, and assimilating into their school’s community. Hence, the findings, from my participant interviews, are specific to their personal lived experience and circumstances, and although they provide a significantly rich and in depth portrait, they cannot provide the full picture. As a result of these constraints, further research is recommended in this area of study.

The findings from this research study revealed that developing professional relationships and attempting to maintain these connections is often a struggle for novice teachers. LTO and supply teachers are most times perceived as probationary. As a result, novice teachers have been found to have a feeling of being replaceable which negatively impacts on their sense of self-efficacy. The aim of the NTIP is to support teachers. There are many benefits to such a program; however, the underlying drawbacks are of the standardized evaluation-based model. The model has been found to, ultimately, limit and impede its efficiency in successfully benefitting novice
teachers. As a result, the NTIP goes somewhat against its intentions - to support novice teachers in their professional socialization. In order to rectify these drawbacks, action needs to be taken in order to better assist new teachers starting off in their careers. The research reveals that the mentoring aspect is the most beneficial part of the NTIP program, but more often than not, the NTIP has been found to cause more stress than not. Why is this the case? Perhaps it is the evaluation-based aspect and the overwhelming amount of paperwork a new teacher must produce - as revealed in the findings. More research needs to be conducted in this area to bring about improvements to the current NTIP - what can be done to render it more valuable and beneficial to novice teachers? Other suggestions for areas of further and future study include researching how teacher education programs can better prepare beginner teachers for the realities of the profession, as well as, the eventuality of practice shock. Novice teacher self-advocacy is another potential area for research. How can novice teachers truly campaign for themselves when starting off in the profession? What strategies can they undertake? Studies in this area could shed further light on what can be done to better equip novice teachers, in the early stages, of their career.

Studies, such as these, can highlight the factors that positively influence a novice teacher’s professional socialization and help avoid undesirable outcomes such as teacher burnout, or resignations.
5.7: Conclusion

In this chapter, I discussed and summarized my key findings, highlighted the implications of these findings, as well as, made recommendations to the educational community and highlighted areas for future study. My key findings comprised of: the importance of recognition and validation from the school community and its effect on beginner teachers’ sense of self-efficacy; the value of novice teachers developing professional relationships, seeking allies and support systems, and being their own self advocates; the NTIP’s redundant nature and intrinsic loopholes; and, the need to reshape the current NTIP model in order to better benefit novice teachers’ assimilation into a school’s climate. Through these key findings, I explored the implications for the Ministry of Education, school boards, teacher education programs, school community members, mentors and novice teachers like myself. These research findings significantly underscore what needs to be done in terms of improving a novice teacher’s professional socialization. Better equipping, assisting, and supporting teachers in the primary stages of their careers will make for more skillful, confident and capable teachers in the long term. It is not only the responsibility of novice teachers to be their own self-advocates; but for the educational community, at large, to support beginner teachers, starting off in the profession to the highest degree.
REFERENCES


Appendix A: Consent Form

Dear ________________,

I am a Master of Teaching candidate and student at OISE, University of Toronto. I am studying the Professional Socialization of Novice Teachers for my MTRP: Master of Teaching Research Project. I am interested in interviewing teachers who have been teaching PJ-JI students in Ontario school board run schools for at least 5 years, and who are therefore still in the midst of their professional socialization. I believe that your knowledge and experience will provide me with vital and essential insights into my topic.

I am required to conduct interviews as part of my research on my MTRP study topic. My course instructor who is providing me with support for the process this year is Rodney Handelsman. The objective of the research component of the MT program is to familiarize us with various ways of conducting and carrying out the research process. My data collection consists of a 45 minute to an hour face-to-face interview that will be audio-recorded with the use of a digital Dictaphone. I would be extremely grateful if I could have the opportunity to interview you. The interview would take place at your convenience at whichever location or time suits you best.

The data and material collected from our interview will be used for the purposes of my research project assignment. The contents may also be shared informally with my peers and perhaps even used at a conference or in a publication. I will not, by any means reveal your name, or any other identifying factors in my written work, oral presentations, or potential publications. I guarantee that this information will remain confidential throughout and you will be assigned a pseudonym. Only my course instructor and myself will have access to my assignment work. You are of course free to change your mind at any point, or retract from the interview process even after providing your consent. You are under no obligation to answer any specific interview questions if you do not wish to. The audio recordings will be erased and discarded of after the presentation of the paper or potential publication of the study. This may take up to 5 years all together. There are no known advantages or disadvantages that will have a bearing on you if you decide to partake in this project. For the sake of accuracy, I will also share a copy of my notes with you after the interview has been conducted.

If you agree and consent to be interviewed by me, please sign the consent form below. Please keep the second copy for your records. Thank you, I very much appreciate your help.

Yours sincerely,

Victoria Roucaud.
Consent Form

I acknowledge that the topic of this interview has been explained to me and that any questions that I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I can withdraw at any time without penalty.

I have read the letter provided to me by Victoria Roucaud and agree to participate in an interview for the purposes described. I agree to having the interview audio-recorded.

Signature: ____________________________________________

Name (printed): _______________________________ Date: ________________

Researcher: Victoria Roucaud

Phone number, email: 416-856-4267, victoria.roucaud@mail.utoronto.ca

Date: ________________

Course instructor: Rodney Handelsman Email: rodney.handelsman@utoronto.ca
Appendix B: Interview Questions

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this research. The aim of this study is to learn what factors influence a novice teacher’s professional socialization and what can be done to better aid novices to transition from beginner to experienced teachers. The interview will last approximately forty-five minutes to an hour and consists of eighteen probing questions. I will ask questions concerning your background information, your experience of professional socialization, and challenges you have faced. Do you have any questions before we begin?

Section 1: Background information

To start, I would love to hear more about your educational and teaching background.

1. What grades and subject areas do you currently teach? Where do you teach?
2. How many years have you worked as a teacher?
   What other grades and subjects have you taught in the past? Can you tell me a bit about your teacher education program-where did you attend teacher’s college? What, if anything, do you recall about how teachers college addressed the topic of professional socialization into the teaching profession?
3. At that time, what were your expectations going into the profession?
4. How did you experience your first few years of teaching? How were your expectations met and not met?
5. What were some of the main challenges, if any, that you contended with in the beginning years of teaching? And what supports were you provided with?
Section 2: Teachers’ conceptualization of professional socialization.

1. What does professional socialization mean to you?

2. In your view, what are the socializing factors a novice teacher faces when integrating into the workplace? *Tell me more:* To what extent do you feel these factors contributed to or impacted your professional socialization, assimilation and integration into your school community?

3. Why do you think novices in the midst of their professional socialization deal with these particular aforementioned challenges and obstacles that you described? *E.G.:* Do you believe it to a reflection of the “learn by doing” nature of the profession?

4. Based on your experience, what does the professional socialization of novice teachers entail? (What did it entail for you?)

Section 3: Beliefs and Values

1. What do you consider to be the main stages of a novice teacher’s assimilation and transition into a school’s community, in regards to acquiring the necessary skills and attitudes to become an effective and proficient member of the workplace?

2. Based on your experience, what are your thoughts on existing models of novice teacher induction programs? Please be as specific and detailed as possible. *E.G.:* What do you consider to be the advantages and disadvantages of current programs and initiatives? What could be improved upon to better assist and aid novices during their transition from a novice to an experienced teacher? What do novice teachers need more of in terms of institutional support mechanisms?
3. Why do you believe some of these additional supports are not in place? What obstacles and barriers stand in the way, in your view?

4. According to your own personal experiences, what should the principal goals of mentoring and induction programs be? Where should the focus lie?

5. In your opinion, what must be implemented into or retracted from current induction program models, and what simply cannot be overlooked according to your own experiences of it?

Section 4: Influencing Factors

1. What methods were most effective and beneficial in helping you transition from a novice to an experienced teacher? In other words, what were the main and most significant influencing factors? Please be as detailed as possible.

2. Please elaborate: What kind of formal and informal feedback and support did you receive in the beginning years of teaching? How did this feedback and support contribute to your professional development and impact your professional socialization? Did the support you receive align with the expectations you had going into the profession? How/How not?

Section 5: Next steps

1. What advice would you give to novice teachers starting out in their teaching careers?

2. What advice would you provide school administrators and mentor teachers for how they can better support the professional socialization of novice teachers?