

ORGANIZATIONAL AND PROFESSIONAL COMMITMENT OF
ALTERNATIVELY CERTIFIED TEACHERS

by

BRANDILYN HAYES

(Under the Direction of Elaine Adams)

ABSTRACT

The requirements in *No Child Left Behind* have put pressure on states, districts, and schools to attract and retain teachers that are adequately prepared, *highly qualified*, and have the organizational and professional commitment to remain in the classroom. The Georgia Teacher Alternative Preparation Program (Georgia TAPP) is one alternative preparation program that allows individuals with a four-year degree an opportunity to earn a teaching certificate.

The purpose of this descriptive survey was to describe Georgia TAPP certified educators in terms of their organizational commitment, professional commitment, and perceptions of adequate preparation. Independent variables, including age, gender, years of work experience before entering Georgia TAPP, and grade(s) taught, were used as a means of composing groups for comparison. Previous studies have found that each of these variables can influence commitment. A series of one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) procedures were used to compare participant groups. A series of correlations were also conducted to discover if relationships existed between perceptions of adequate preparation, organizational commitment, and professional commitment.

The sample for this study was 116 Georgia TAPP teachers certified through the Northwest Georgia Regional Educational Service Agency from 2001-2007. Three different

questionnaire instruments were used, including a demographic data questionnaire, the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (Mowday, Steers, & Porter, 1979), and the Career Commitment Scale (Blau, 1988).

Age was statistically significant in relation to organizational and professional commitment, as well as perceptions of adequate preparation. Years of previous work experience before entering Georgia TAPP was also significant for professional commitment. Participants' perceptions of adequate preparation had only a slight, positive effect on organizational and professional commitment. Organizational and professional commitment were found to have a low, positive correlation. An awareness of the multi-dimensional quality of commitment in teachers, as well as the practical need to nurture it, could be beneficial as schools, school boards, administrators, parents, and communities engage in education-related activities and attempt to recruit and prepare committed teachers.

INDEX WORDS: Teacher preparation, Alternative certification, Adequate preparation, Georgia teacher alternative preparation program (Georgia TAPP), Organizational commitment, Professional commitment, Teacher shortage

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B.S., Reinhardt College, 2000

M.Ed., University of West Georgia, 2004

A Dissertation Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of The University of Georgia in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements for Degree

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

ATHENS, GEORGIA

2010

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my family. To my husband Robert, thank you for your encouragement and the sacrifices you made during this graduate program. I love and appreciate all your help and support. To my son Holcomb, born during this graduate program; I hope you will never remember the time that Mama had to spend away working, but that you always know how much I love you and that I will support you throughout your life. To my parents, Richard and Teresa Pewitt, for the appreciation for education and love of learning that you instilled in me that inspired me to pursue this degree and for listening to my complaints and always encouraging me to continue. To my in-laws, Ron and Susan Hayes, for their selfless acts of love and kindness, during this lengthy process. And to all of my other family and friends, thank you for your support and encouragement. I love you all!

Acknowledgments

This dissertation represents an aspiration in my life that would not have been possible without the support of many individuals. There are not enough words to express my sincere gratitude to those that have guided, encouraged, and assisted me through the journey of completing this program.

A very special thank you goes to my Major Professor, Dr. Elaine Adams. Dr. Adams spent countless hours talking with me and coaching me through every step of this process. Thank you for your time, patience, and support and for never letting me give up.

I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to Dr. Jay Rojewski and Dr. John Schell for serving on my doctoral committee. Your recommendations, contributions, and challenges have been invaluable.

I would like to acknowledge my family and friends for their continued support and encouragement throughout this process. Thank you all!

Without the invaluable assistance of Betsy Dellenback, formerly of Northwest Georgia RESA, this study would not have been possible. Thank you for your willingness to facilitate this study by sending out my surveys.

Also, thanks to the Georgia Teacher Alternative Preparation Participants who took the time and energy to complete the surveys and who are making a difference in the lives of children.

Table of Contents

	Page
Acknowledgements.....	v
List of Tables	ix
Chapter	
1 Introduction.....	1
Purpose.....	7
Research Objectives.....	8
Theoretical Framework.....	9
Importance of Study.....	11
2 Review of Literature	13
Historical Evolution of Teacher Education.....	13
Impact of Reforms on Teacher Education	16
Alternative Teacher Certification	25
Organizational and Professional Commitment	34
Mowday's Theory of Organizational Commitment.....	38
Blau's Theory of Professional Commitment	43
Opposing Theories	45
Factors Influencing Organizational and Professional Commitment.....	50
Measurement of Organizational Commitment.....	56
Measurement of Professional Commitment.....	58
Rationale for Studying Organizational and Professional Commitment.....	61

Summary	64
3 Method	69
Design	71
Participants.....	72
Instrumentation	74
Procedures.....	80
Data Analysis	83
4 Data Analysis	91
Research Objectives.....	92
Additional Data	103
5 Conclusions and Recommendations	106
Findings.....	114
Conclusions.....	116
Recommendations for Further Research.....	124
Summary	126
References.....	128
Appendices.....	158
A Personal Data Questionnaire.....	159
B Organizational Commitment Questionnaire	162
C Professional Commitment Scale	165
D Request for Approval to use Blau Career Commitment Scale	167

E	E-Mail Granting Approval to use Modified Blau Career Commitment Scale.....	170
F	Request for Approval of Research and Approval Letter	172
G	Initial E-mail Sent to Participants from Third Party	183
H	First Follow Up E-mail Sent by Third Party.....	186
I	Second/Final Follow UP E-mail Sent by Third Party.....	189

List of Tables

	Page
Table 3.1: Georgia Teacher Demography.....	77
Table 3.2: Analysis Strategy	83
Table 4.1 Descriptive Statistics- Organizational Commitment, Professional Commitment, Perceptions of Adequate Preparation Instruments	94
Table 4.2 Mean, Standard Deviation, and Distributions for Age	94
Table 4.3: Mean, Standard Deviation, and Distributions for Years of Work Experience before entering GA TAPP	95
Table 4.4: ANOVA- Organizational Commitment by Age	96
Table 4.5: ANOVA- Organizational Commitment by Gender	96
Table 4.6: ANOVA- Organizational Commitment by Years of Work Experience before entering Georgia TAPP	97
Table 4.7: ANOVA- Organizational Commitment by Grades Taught	97
Table 4.8: ANOVA- Professional Commitment by Age.....	98
Table 4.9: ANOVA- Professional Commitment by Years of Work Experience before entering Georgia TAPP Professional Commitment	99
Table 4.10: ANOVA- Professional Commitment by Gender	99
Table 4.11: ANOVA- Professional Commitment by Grades Taught	99
Table 4.12: ANOVA- Perceptions of Adequate Preparation by Age	100
Table 4.13: ANOVA- Perceptions of Adequate Preparation by Gender	101

Table 4.14: ANOVA- Perceptions of Adequate Preparation by Years of Work Experience before entering Georgia TAPP.....	101
Table 4.15: ANOVA- Perceptions of Adequate Preparation by Grades Taught	101
Table 4.16: Correlation Matrix for Organizational Commitment, Professional Professional Commitment, and Perceptions of Adequate Preparation	103
Table 4.17: Summary of Missing Responses from Personal Data Questionnaire (Questions 1-7)	104
Table 4.18 Summary of Missing Responses from Personal Data Questionnaire (Questions 8-13)	104
Table 4.19 Summary of Missing Responses from <i>Organizational Commitment</i> <i>Scale (Questions 14-28)</i>	105
Table 4.20: Summary of Missing Responses from <i>Professional Commitment</i> <i>Scale (Questions 29-36)</i>	105

Chapter 1

Introduction

Throughout the United States, public school officials are facing a widely publicized shortage of qualified teachers. It is projected that by 2012, 2.2 million new teachers will need to be hired (The White House, 2002). Not only do greater numbers of teachers need to be hired, school systems must also recruit educators that meet *high standards of quality* as dictated by the *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) Act (United States General Accounting Office, 2003). In response to the anticipated shortage, district and state lawmakers have implemented policies to encourage new candidates, other than those from traditional educator certification programs, to enter the teaching profession through accelerated programs (Feistritzer, 1994; Hawley, 1990).

Alternative certification, which offers on-the-job training and supervision of candidates with little to no prior experience, has been one popular approach (Feistritzer, 1994; Hawley, 1990). The perceptions of adequate preparation of candidates certified through these programs can help determine the level of their commitment to the profession. Although a great deal of research has been compiled on alternative certification programs, additional research about the organizational and professional commitment of alternatively certified teachers was necessary, because recruiting candidates into alternative preparation programs is only the first step toward addressing the needs of the teacher shortage. Preparation and commitment should be addressed because these are important considerations that must be factored in when considering continuing alternative preparation programs and strengthening the teaching workforce (Jorissen, 2002).

The demands of the No Child Left Behind Act and federal budget proposals have also impacted the teacher shortage. The Act required states to have a *highly qualified* teacher in every public classroom by the end of the 2005-2006 school year by attempting to establish a universal standard for all teachers (Brownell, Bishop, & Sindelar, 2005). More recently, the NCLB requirements state that schools should at least have a minimal annual increase in the percentage of qualified teachers (Cohen-Vogel, 2005). This means that all new teachers must hold at least a bachelor's degree, pass a state test on subject knowledge and teaching skills, and be certified by the state. Existing teachers are also required to meet similar standards (The White House, 2002).

In order to accomplish the goals of No Child Left Behind and meet the demands of the teacher shortage, quality alternatives to traditional educator certification programs have been made available (United States General Accounting Office, 2003). The federal government has instituted initiatives to address the teacher shortage. Started in 1994 and continuing through the present, the Troops to Teachers (Troops to Teacher [TTT], 2005) program is an initiative designed to recruit quality teachers for schools serving students from low-income families throughout the country. Teach for America (Teach for America [TFA], n.d.) was created in 1989 to attract recent college graduates to teach in urban and rural school districts. In 2003, the federal government provided \$41.65 million in budget allocations to support programs that allow candidates to transition into teaching positions via alternative certification programs (Blair, 2003; Feistritzer, 2004).

Numerous states have instituted alternative certification programs. In 1983, only eight states reported having some kind of alternative certification route for teachers. As of 2010, 48 states (excluding Alaska and Oregon) and the District of Columbia reported having alternative

certification programs. In total, states reported 136 different programs being implemented by 600 different providers throughout the nation (National Center for Alternative Certification, 2010).

Alternate route programs differ in the amount of preparation offered, some requiring a few weeks of training and others requiring more than one year. Teachers who are adequately prepared when entering the profession are more likely to feel more competent developing curriculum, addressing the multiple learning styles and levels of students, managing classrooms, motivating learners, and knowing how to teach content (Jorissen, 2002a).

The state of Georgia first began identifying critical shortage areas in the 1998-1999 school year (Georgia Department of Education, n.d.). One initiative used to help alleviate the teacher shortage occurred when the Georgia Student Finance Commission (2005) expanded the HOPE Scholarship Program to include the HOPE Teacher Scholarship. This program was designed to help recruit potential teachers in critical shortage fields by paying for their education in return for years of service after degree completion.

In order to further ease some of the shortages, the state of Georgia established eight different alternative teacher certification routes, including Teach for America, Preparation Program for Military Personnel, Post-Baccalaureate Non-Degree Preparation Programs, Master's Degree Level Initial Preparation, Permitted Personnel, Probationary Certificate, the Georgia Teacher Alternative Preparation Program (Georgia TAPP), and a five-year non-renewable certificate (Feistritzer, 2004; Georgia Professional Standards Board, 2007). Some programs are designed to help teachers in specific areas earn certification, while others help a more general population.

One specific program, the Georgia Teacher Alternative Preparation Program was instituted in 2000 in an effort to help teachers in a variety of certification areas. Georgia TAPP is an alternative preparation option for potential post-baccalaureate teacher candidates. The two-phase

program, consisting of a brief introduction to teaching through a four to six week intensive introductory program and then a two-year classroom based internship/induction training period, allows candidates to attain the pedagogical knowledge and skills necessary for successful entry into teaching (Georgia Professional Standards Commission, 2008). Since its inception, the program has certified over 2,900 teachers in more than 80 areas (Georgia Professional Standards Commission, 2008).

Recruiting candidates into alternative preparation programs is only the first step toward addressing the need for more qualified teachers. The preparation of and longevity of alternatively prepared teachers is an important consideration for policymakers when deciding whether alternative certification programs are a way to address the teacher shortage and provide a stable workforce (Jorissen, 2002). Previous studies by Arranya, Kushnir, and Valency (1986), Reyes (1989), and Zumwalt (1996) regarding the preparation of alternatively certified teachers, organizational, and professional commitment have found that there are numerous factors that influence the levels of commitment. Age (Angle & Perry, 1981; Brimeyer, Perucci, & Wadsworth, 2010; Giffords, 2009; Hrebiniak, 1974; Hrebiniak & Alutto, 1972; Mannheim & Papo, 2000; Mowday, Porter, Steers, 1982; Welsch & Lavan, 1981), gender (Angle & Perry, 1981; Dinham, 1994; Giffords, 2009; Hrebiniak & Alutto, 1972; Reyes 1989, 1990), years of experience (Giffords, 2009; Grusky, 1966; Hrebiniak & Alutto, 1972; Mowday et al., 1982; Steers, 1977), and grade level(s) taught (Jorissen, 2002a), are four specific factors that have been found to have an affect on the commitment of educators.

There are numerous definitions of commitment, but one common theme is a psychological bond or identification of an individual with an object that takes on special meaning and importance (Firestone & Pennell, 1993). Work commitment includes a commitment to a

number of objects, such as the organization, work group, occupation, union, or one's job. These variables have been shown to predict important outcomes, including turnover, turnover intentions, performance, job satisfaction, presocial organizational behavior, absenteeism, and tardiness (Cohen, 1999). A committed worker believes strongly in the goals, values of an object, complies with orders and expectations voluntarily, exerts considerable effort beyond minimal expectations for the good of the object, and strongly desires to maintain an affiliation with the object (Mowday et al., 1982).

Organizational and professional commitment have been studied together and separately in relation to various occupations. Studies (Avery, 1960; Berger & Grimes, 1973; Blau & Scott, 1962; Flango & Brumbaugh, 1974; Friedlander, 1971; Grimes & Berger, 1970; Goldberg, Baker, & Rubenstein, 1965) found that organizational and professional commitment may be independent of each other. Individuals could be high on organizational commitment and professional commitment (Filley & Grimes, 1968; Wallace, 1993), low on both (Abrahamson, 1956; House & Wigdor, 1968), or high on one and low on the other (Gouldner, 1957, 1958; Kornhauser, 1962; Sorenson & Sorenson, 1974; Wilensky, 1964).

It is important to distinguish between commitment to the profession of teaching and commitment to an employing school. For example, a teacher may be highly committed to the profession, but not to his or her specific school (Billingsley & Cross, 1992). According to Meyer and Allen (1997), most literature on organizational commitment reflects the definition created by Mowday et al. (1982). They defined organizational commitment as "the relative strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organization" (p. 27).

Organizational commitment in the workplace is directed toward the employing organization.

Therefore, teachers' organizational commitment is directed to a school, including its goals, and

the individuals associated with the school, employees and students (Tyree, 2001). This is demonstrated through extra investment of personal resources like time, money, and effort (Becker, 1960). Numerous studies have found that organizational commitment is a strong predictor of employee turnover and turnover intentions (Allen & Meyer, 1996; Lee, Carswell, & Allen, 2000; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Meyer, Allen, & Smith, 1993; Mowday, Steers, & Porter, 1979; Tett & Meyer, 1993).

Although sometimes considered closely related, professional commitment, often used interchangeably with career commitment, should be distinguished from organizational commitment (Blau, 1985). Blau (1988) defined professional commitment as “one’s attitude towards one’s vocation, including a profession” (p. 89). The terms profession and vocation are necessary in order to anchor the concept of career or professional commitment in a concrete way, and not overlap professional commitment with other work attitude referents (Blau, 1989). Therefore, professional commitment of teachers is the teachers’ attitude toward their vocation and profession and is crucial to achieving good instruction. Blau (1988) created the *Career Commitment Scale* that has been extensively used to determine the extent to which an individual identifies with and values his or her profession and the level of effort expended toward acquiring relevant knowledge. Numerous studies have found professional commitment to be a predictor of occupation and job withdrawal intentions (Blau, 1985, 1988, 1989; Blau, Tatum, & Ward-Cook, 2003; Carson, Carson, Phillips, & Roe, 1996; Cohen 1996).

Organizational and professional commitment are important areas of interest related to alternatively certified teachers. Due to the teacher shortage, schools will need teachers who are organizationally and professionally committed to school goals and educational values. Committed individuals are more likely to remain with the organization, work toward the

organizational goals, and invest more effort in their jobs (Somech & Bogler, 2002). The goal of the Georgia Teacher Alternative Preparation Program is to recruit, train, and retain highly qualified teachers in Georgia classrooms (2001). However, if candidates are not adequately prepared when entering the program or do not continue teaching long-term once the initial certification is obtained; the program may not be sufficiently addressing the teacher shortage.

Further research into the organizational and professional commitment and perceptions of adequate preparation of Georgia TAPP teachers, based on age, gender, years of work experience before entering Georgia TAPP, and grade(s) taught could prove to be a valuable contribution to the area of alternative certification and teacher retention. According to Darling-Hammond (1992), the decision for alternate route teachers to remain in teaching is a factor of preparation. Retaining teachers prepared through alternative certification programs is critical, because if these teachers do not remain committed to the profession and to their organizations, investment in these programs is futile (Darling-Hammond, 1992). In addition, if alternatively certified teachers do not remain in education, the teacher shortage will continue to grow. Policymakers may be better equipped to design working and learning environments that encourage teachers' organizational and professional commitment if they have a better understanding of Georgia TAPP certified teachers' experiences and views (Jorissen, 2002b).

Purpose

Several curriculum areas in Georgia have faced critical teacher shortages since the late 1990s (Georgia Department of Education, n.d.). The Georgia Teacher Alternative Preparation Program, as well as other alternative certification programs, was instituted to address these shortages, growing steadily since its inception in 2000 (Georgia Professional Standards Commission, n.d.). This study examined the organizational and professional commitment of

Georgia TAPP Certified teachers who received training from the Northwest Georgia Regional Educational Service Agency (NW GA RESA) since 2001. The findings of this study add to the existing body of research about alternative certification, as well as teacher organizational and professional commitment. The organizational and professional commitment of teachers, as well as perceptions of adequate preparation were examined based on four independent variables, including age, gender, years of work experience before entering Georgia TAPP, and grade(s) taught.

Research Objectives

Teacher turnover and other problems confronting new teachers have been of great interest in education literature (Ingersoll, 2001). These factors have helped to cause a tremendous shortage of qualified educators, forcing many states, including Georgia, to turn to alternative certification programs to recruit *highly qualified* educators (McCabe, 2004). According to the National Center for Education Statistics (1997), although there are many factors that affect teacher turnover, commitment is one of the most important aspects related to teacher behavior, quality, and performance. In addition, it directly affects professionalism. The organizational and professional commitment of alternatively certified new teachers will play a large part in teacher retention, thus determining the future of education in the nation (Somech & Bogler, 2002). The specific objectives addressed in this study included:

1. Provide a descriptive profile of teachers certified through the Georgia Teacher Alternative Preparation Program (Georgia TAPP) who received training from Northwest Georgia RESA since 2001.

2. Compare the organizational commitment of Georgia TAPP teachers who received training through NW Georgia RESA since 2001 by age, gender, years of work experience before entering Georgia TAPP, and grade(s) taught.
3. Compare the professional commitment of Georgia TAPP teachers who received training through NW Georgia RESA since 2001 by age, gender, years of work experience before entering Georgia TAPP, and grade(s) taught.
4. Compare the perceptions of adequate preparation of Georgia TAPP teachers who received training through NW Georgia RESA since 2001 by age, gender, years of work experience before entering Georgia TAPP, and grade(s) taught.
5. Determine the relationship between perceptions of adequate preparation, organizational commitment, and professional commitment of Georgia TAPP teachers who received training through NW Georgia RESA since 2001.

Theoretical Framework

The concept of commitment has been a phenomenon of ongoing interest to researchers (Morris & Sherman, 1981; Stevens, Beyer, & Trice, 1978). However, there has been a “general lack of agreement concerning how best to conceptualize and measure” commitment (Mowday et al., 1979, p. 255). Stevens et al. (1978) noted that there is overlap and ambiguity with regard to competing concepts of commitment (p. 393). Morris and Sherman (1981) concurred that a common theoretical framework was lacking throughout research. Morrow (1983) identified commitment as a multidimensional concept. One distinction made in the workplace has been between the related concepts of organizational commitment and professional commitment (Arranya & Ferris, 1984; Bartol, 1979; Morrow & Goetz, 1988; Norris & Niebuhr, 1983).

The majority of research studies that have been conducted on commitment have dealt with technical and professional employees in occupational settings other than education, including lawyers, auditors, and other professionals (Huang, 2001; Wallace, 1993, 1995). It was important to examine commitment related to educators, where the distinction between the two dimensions of commitment, organizational and professional commitment, are particularly important, because of individual relationships with teacher decision-making and attitudes (Somech & Bogler, 2002). Shedd and Bachrach (1991) examined the tangled hierarchies that define the working life of teachers and found that professional and bureaucratic (organizational) roles of teachers are often competing concepts. Hoy and Miskel (1991) also investigated the conflicting interaction between the two commitment types.

Employee commitment is a widely studied topic related to schools and businesses, because of its importance to organizations. Researchers (Billingsley & Cross, 1992; Shepherd & Mathews, 2000) studied employee commitment to determine the extent to which it cultivates proactive behavior for workers to expend effort beyond their contract and influences teachers' intent to stay. The human resources theory, founded on works by Argyris (1970), theorizes that organizations and humans need each other, and that in order to capitalize on human talent, the organization must develop processes and conditions which lead to meaningful and satisfactory work (Reyes, 1992). The expectancy theory asserts that performance is a function of expectancy, instrumentality, and valence. This means that effort will lead to performance, performance will lead to rewards, and valence represents the perceived value of the rewards for performance (Locke & Latham, 1990).

Other specific theories of commitment have been studied. The human capital theory suggests that employees evaluate the benefits and costs associated with staying in or leaving a

profession, considering monetary and non-monetary rewards, costs, and investments or capital. This theory found that as capital rises, employees are less likely to leave (Macdonald, 1999). Organizational theory proposes that employee commitment to an organization must be studied, due to the fact that it is largely a function of organizational conditions and policies (Gold, 1996).

The theory of work adjustment is another theory that uses job satisfaction as a measure of commitment. Work adjustment theory suggested that retention is a function of two factors, satisfaction and satisfactoriness. The level of work adjustment is measured by the satisfaction of the work environment by the individual and by the individual's satisfaction with the work environment. The satisfactoriness of an individual results in tenure (Dawis, 1996).

This study used the constructs of organizational and professional commitment and was guided by the theoretical frameworks of both. Organizational and professional commitments are related concepts; however, the division between the two is important. Organizational commitment focuses on commitment to a single organization such as a school or business. Organizational commitment can be defined as having three components: (a) a strong belief in and acceptance of the organization's goals and values, (b) a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization, and (c) a strong desire to continue membership within the organization (Mowday et al., 1982). Contrastly, professional commitment is a behavioral view of commitment, which finds that professional commitment is a function of the costs and rewards of being associated a member of a profession (Reichers, 1985).

Importance of Study

The importance of this study was its contribution to the existing body of literature on teacher commitment and alternative certification. According to the Southeast Center for Teaching Quality (2000), the projected shortage of *highly qualified* teachers that is expected over

the next several years could have an enormous impact on the United States. In addition, the requirements in No Child Left Behind have put additional pressure on states, districts, and schools to find teachers that are *highly qualified* and prepared to remain in the classroom (The Southeast Center for Teaching Quality, 2000). It is important to not only know if alternative certification programs are recruiting and preparing new teachers, but to understand the commitment of alternatively certified teachers. With this information, policymakers will be able to make informed decisions about continuing such programs (Birkeland & Peske, 2004).

Furthermore, the results of this study help to fill the deficiency of information that is currently available about the Georgia Teacher Alternative Preparation Program. According to the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (2001), "Georgia TAPP seeks to equip teacher-candidates with the skills to endure a reasonable expectation of initial success in their classrooms, and to put in place supervised internship/induction program, that will help them move toward subsequent mastery of teaching". However, little research is available related to the preparation or commitment of these teachers. This study led to increased knowledge about the perceptions of adequate preparation, as well as the outcomes and commitment of teachers certified through Georgia TAPP.

Determining the professional and organizational commitment of Georgia TAPP educators, based on age, gender, years of previous work experience, and grade level taught, provided insight into how Georgia TAPP participants regarded their preparation and about their commitment to their organizations and their profession. With the passing of the No Child Left Behind bill, recruiting and training prepared teachers who will remain committed to the education profession and their organizations is critical.

Chapter 2

Review of Literature

Historical Evolution of Teacher Education

Since the United States was founded, Americans have embraced education as a cornerstone of society. This is witnessed by the long tradition of free public education and the active involvement of citizens in the governance of schools (National Board of Professional Teaching Standards [NBPTS], 2004). All aspects of education, including teacher preparation, have changed over the past two centuries. In the mid-1700s, the first organizations used to prepare teachers were “academies.” Typical academies were terminal secondary schools, modeled after academies in London, mostly offering practical subjects; however, some private academies were used to train teachers (Parker, 1990).

During colonial times, teachers were sometimes college graduates, although no type of professional training was available. Female seminaries and academies during the period often advertised pedagogical programs that included a review of basic elementary subjects and some information about keeping school. However, it was considered adequate for secondary teachers to have some subject knowledge, without any training in teaching methods or psychology (Pulliam & Van Patten, 2003).

Throughout the 19th century, a majority of teachers obtained jobs and began teaching without any formal preparation or advanced studies. These teachers, typically teenage females, passed along the information for the level of education they had completed (Warren, 1998). In addition, teachers often received little or no salary. Many local communities paid teachers by providing food and/or housing. Most teachers were responsible for educating all students, usually

encompassing many grades and ages, as well as being expected to clean the schoolhouse, maintain a fire during the winter, and display a personal life of near puritanical rectitude. By 1857, the year the National Teachers Association (now known as the National Education Association [NEA]) was founded, many teachers still worked in one room schools and were paid less than \$100 per year (Cameron, 2005). The NEA was concerned with recruiting teachers, supporting normal schools, promoting teachers' institutes, and raising salaries, but had little power over teacher certification, controlled by local and district governments (Parker, 1990).

The idea of formal teacher education came from the works of Mary Lyon, Henry Barnard, and Catherine Breecher in the 1800s (Warren, 1998). At this time, schools of education originated with the founding of "normal schools." Reverend Charles Brooks campaigned for normal schools, which were teacher-training facilities. Normal schools were created using the Prussian model of teacher education as a guide and the students in these schools were predominantly female. The name normal school came from the model schools in Europe, in which curriculum and methods were observed (Pulliam & Van Patten, 2003).

Early in the 20th century, normal schools were still more like secondary schools than colleges (Pulliam & Van Patten, 2003). However, as the number of secondary students grew, normal schools evolved into teachers' colleges or four-year state schools, which included an expanded post-secondary curriculum and teacher training programs. At the same time, established universities were developing departments, schools, and colleges of education. However, the mission of these programs differed from that of normal schools, with much focus on the philosophy and psychology of education, preparation of secondary rather than elementary teachers, and the training of school administrators (Hofer, 1997).

For a number of years throughout the late 1800s and early 1900s, a shortage of teachers

created a reluctance to enforce general teacher certification standards (Parker, 1990). States had gained control of certification standards, but often the need for teachers was so great that standards were bypassed. Many rural teachers were given teaching certificates on the basis of passing examinations or because they had one or two years of college work. With the great number of teachers needed, and so few with actual training, teacher quality was inevitably poor (Parker, 1990). The Depression years caused the first teacher oversupply (Pulliam & Van Patten, 2003). This condition gave rise to higher minimum standards for teachers. After World War II, most teachers were prepared with a liberal arts or general education, specialized knowledge in the area to be taught, professional courses in psychology and methods, and practice teaching (Pulliam & Van Patten, 2003).

In the 1950s, many teacher colleges became state colleges and universities (Urban, 1990). With the growth of colleges and universities came the development of departments of education (Hofer, 1997). The focus of these departments shifted to be on the philosophy and psychology of education and the training of school administrators. College and university teacher education programs, both public and private, now vary widely in size, institutional mission, and range of students served, but all have the primary responsibility for training teachers (Hofer, 1997).

More recently, the primary path for teacher education in the United States has been fairly consistent among the more than 1,340 teacher education programs (Corrigan & Haberman, 1990). The primary path for teachers is through a bachelor's degree program, which usually includes two years of general liberal arts courses, followed by admission to an education program for coursework and school-based field experiences (Hofer, 1997). Teacher education also often extends to the graduate level with five year extended programs and postbaccalaureate work (Hofer, 1997).

Impact of Reforms on Teacher Education

In 1983, the National Commission on Excellence in Education published a landmark report, *A Nation at Risk*. The report warned of a “*rising tide toward mediocrity*” (p. 5) that threatened to swamp schools and imperil the opportunity of both present and future youth. Furthermore, the report defined the central problem in education as low expectations for academic schoolwork, weak preparation for teachers, and insufficient time for academic work in schools (Elfmere, 2003). Since the publication of the report, dialogue on school improvement has increasingly focused on the improvement of teacher preparation (Hurst, Tan, Meek, & Sellers, 2003; National Commission on Excellence in Teacher Education, 1985; Valli, 2000).

Immediately after *A Nation at Risk*, policymakers took up the challenge to reverse the “rising tide of mediocrity” in American education. In policy efforts identified as the *excellence* movement, focus on raising standards for teacher preparation moved forward by stiffening the requirements for teacher certification and licensure (Fuhrman, 2003). Recommendations of the report identified a need to raise the status, salaries, and standards of teachers. Although reforms regarding teacher compensation and career opportunities were not popular in most states, many did respond with focus on the preparation and professional development of teachers, in addition to focus on standards, assessment and accountability, school finance reform, and school choice options (Grossman, 2003; Hurst et al., 2003). By 1984, 28 states had enacted or approved new policies regarding teacher preparation and certification. Many new policies focused on competence testing for individuals entering teaching or increasing subject-matter expectations for student teaching (Grossman, 2003).

The acknowledgement of the state of teaching and teacher preparation in *A Nation at Risk* drew attention of educators and policymakers. Initiated by the American Association of Colleges

for Teacher Education, the National Commission on Excellence in Teacher Education (NCETE) published *A Call for Change in Teacher Education* in 1985. The Holmes Group, a consortium of education deans from research universities, issued a report, *Tomorrow's Teachers*. The Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy also published a report in 1986, *A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century*. All of these reports supported the findings of *A Nation at Risk*, focusing attention on the need to better prepare teachers within subject areas and improve student teaching experiences (Grossman, 2003). These reports concentrated on the “twin goals of the reform of teacher education and the reform of the teaching profession,” which laid the groundwork for efforts to professionalize teaching (Holmes Group, 1986, p. 9).

A specialized knowledge base is a hallmark of any profession. Following the instrumental reports in the mid-1980s, research began to focus on teachers' knowledge. This was evidenced by the 1987 book, *The Knowledge Base for the Beginning Teacher*, giving details as to what new teachers should know when entering the classroom. Another attempt to professionalize teaching was the creation of the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards in 1987. In their report, the Carnegie Forum Task Force explicitly called for the creation of a national board to set standards for accomplished teaching. Although the NBPTS did set new standards for expert teaching, states varied widely on how they recognized and made use of the experience and knowledge of National Board certified teachers (Grossman, 2003). Therefore, in order to ensure that all candidates met the proper requirements, many states instituted professional standards boards or advisory councils to be responsible for the development and oversight of state standards (Christie, 2001).

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, teacher education underwent intensive transformation (Grossman, 2003). Changes were marked by a movement away from teachers receiving

education degrees and increased attention to content matter preparation. States began to raise the academic requirements for entry into teacher education programs, as well as requiring teacher candidates to major in a subject area, rather than in general education (Grossman, 2003; Hurst et al., 2003).

Admission and graduation requirements were affected by reforms (Hofer, 1997).

Admissions criteria to teacher education programs were typically determined by individual colleges and universities. However, the practice of state mandated minimum standards increased (Hofer, 1997, Hurst et al., 2003). Darling-Hammond (1990) found that numerous states enacted minimum grade-point standards for students entering education programs due to the calls for change in the reform initiatives. In addition, most states set standards that specified the type of coursework that a potential teacher must complete in college. Requirements varied by the grade level the candidate was preparing to teach. Most prospective teachers were expected to complete a core set of education classes, including courses in teaching methods, child development, and a supervised teaching experience. In addition, individuals who wanted to teach in secondary schools were required to take a certain number of hours in the subject they planned to teach (Hurst et al., 2003).

An additional application of standards of teacher education was through the accreditation of preparation programs. In 1987, the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), the only recognized accreditation body of teacher preparation programs in the U.S., consulted experts to help develop more rigorous accreditation standards for teacher education programs. However, accreditation of teacher education programs was voluntary. In fact, less prestigious regional universities were more likely to seek the accreditation than

research universities. The process was a costly expenditure of institutional time and money (Hofer, 1997).

Reforms also focused on the quality and character of field experiences and student teaching, causing teacher education programs to increase the requirements for these experiences. Following the recommendations of the NCETE, the Holmes Group, and Carnegie Forum, schools of education began to create professional development schools in partnerships with local schools and districts (Darling-Hammond, 1985). The NCATE developed standards for the clinical preparation of teachers and the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards called for intensive teaching internships (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995). The goal of the NCATE efforts was to raise the standards of teacher education programs, to remove the program approval process from states to a national body, and become the basis for a national system of reciprocity of teacher licensure (Wise, 1994).

In 1994, in response to well-publicized shortcomings of education, the *Goals 2000: Educate America Act* (Goals 2000, 1994) was an attempt to promote education reform on a national scale (Superfine, 2005). It emphasized student learning through a long-term, broad-based effort to promote coherent and coordinated improvements in education. *Goals 2000* included standards regarding teacher training and professional development (Goals 2000, 1994).

The Act required that states have processes for familiarizing teachers with state standards and developing the capability of teachers to provide high quality instruction within content area. *Goals 2000* funds supported a number of preservice and professional development activities, including the alignment of teacher and student standards, peer mentoring, content study groups, additional coursework, summer institutes, and action research (Goals 2000, 1994). According to Massell, Kirst, and Hoppe (1997), higher educational standards required new pedagogy,

instructional organization, and attitudes. In order for teachers to improve the way they taught and thought about learning, professional development activities had to change. Based on this information, states increasingly looked to improve teacher preservice, licensing, and recertification requirements to support reform (Massell et al., 1997).

The standards and accountability movement swept the nation during the 1990s. In 1996, the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (NCTAF) (composed of business, education, and political leaders) echoed many of the concerns first voiced in *A Nation at Risk*. The NCTAF report, *What Matters Most: Teaching for America's Future*, detailed the steps needed in preparing knowledgeable, skillful, and committed teachers, as well as arguing for policies and practices to support quality teachers. It warned that success of educational reforms would hinge on the quality of teachers and teaching in the nation's schools. The NCTAF charged states to develop stronger policies regarding the preparation and support of teachers to emphasize student and teacher learning (NCTAF, 1996).

Several state-level efforts attempted to increase student achievement by reorganizing teacher training and school resources (National Education Goals Panel, 2001). Many of the reform initiatives were reinforced by the National Education Goals and the movement towards increasing standards (National Education Goals Panel, 2001). These efforts particularly focused on improving the effectiveness of teachers, increasing the resources available for teachers and students, and improving the academic climate of schools. State attempts to ensure that all students have high-quality teachers led some states to apply a standards-based reform model to the preparation and certification of teachers. This initiative led some states to institute alternative certification programs (Council of Chief State School Officers, 1998). States intended to provide

teachers with the skills necessary to enable students to attain high academic standards (Feistritzer, 2002).

The passage of the No Child Left Behind Act in 2001 included a federal mandate to address teacher quality (U.S. Department of Education, 2004). According to McCaffey, Lockwood, Koretz, and Hamilton (2003), “Teachers are an important determinant of a child’s education, of a good school and ultimately-of the future economic health of this great nation” (p. 8). In addition, the academic achievement levels of students who are taught by qualified teachers increase at greater rates than those students taught by other teachers.

The NCLB Act required that all public school teachers of core academic subjects meet the highly qualified requirements of their state by the end of the 2005-2006 school year (U.S. Department of Education, 2004). In order to meet this standard, all new teachers needed to possess at least a bachelor’s degree, pass a state test on subject knowledge and teaching skills, and have full state certification. Existing teachers were required to meet similar standards (The White House, 2002). While NCLB outlined minimum requirements related to subject knowledge and teaching skills that highly qualified teachers must meet, the Act also provided flexibility for each state to further develop the definition of highly qualified to be consistent with national NCLB standards and met the unique needs of each state (U.S. Department of Education, 2004).

Since the implementation of NCLB, numerous states have made progress in addressing teacher quality. In recognition of the importance of ensuring that potential teachers have significant content knowledge, many states reported that they have raised academic standards in certification requirements, including ending emergency certification. By 2003, 49 of the 54 recognized states and territories had developed content knowledge standards, including Mississippi, Montana, and New Jersey, which each developed certification and licensure

standards for the first time (Hurst et al., 2003). Many states, including Colorado, Connecticut, Indiana, Kentucky, and North Dakota also reported progress in implementing criteria for assessing teacher preparation programs and implementing alternative routes to certification for prospective teachers (U.S. Department of Education, 2004).

Reform initiatives throughout the late twentieth century had a great impact on teacher certification, licensing, and professional development. Certification of individuals has been the primary way that states control teaching. In recent years, with the implementation of reform initiatives, it has become commonplace for states to require prospective teachers to complete one or more assessments before receiving licensure (Hurst et al., 2003). Most states use certification tests such as the Praxis, developed by the Educational Testing Service (ETS) or tests created by the National Evaluation Systems (NES) (Hurst et al., 2003). Written tests typically include questions regarding basic skills, professional teaching knowledge, and content area pedagogy. In fact, in 1999, 41 states required specific written tests as part of the initial teacher certification process, up from only 26 in 1990. At the same time, 30 states required subject matter tests and 26 required potential educators to take knowledge of teaching tests (U.S. Department of Education, 1999).

In a response to federal reform efforts in recent years, development of teacher education programs measured by national standards for effective teaching became a focus (Cochran-Smith, 2005). In Georgia, three universities, including the University of Georgia, Valdosta State University, and Albany State University, along with other educational partners used federal grant money from the standards-based education program (STEP) to create the Georgia Systematic Teacher Education Program (GSTEP) (Symanoskie, Adams, & Hall, 2006). Together, these

groups developed the GSTEP Principles and Framework for Accomplished Teaching (Georgia Systematic Teacher Education Program, 2005).

In 2005, the title GSTEP Principles and Framework for Accomplished Teaching was changed to *Georgia Framework for Teaching* when it was adopted by the Georgia Department of Education (DOE), the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (PSC), and the University System of Georgia Board of Regents (BOR) to represent the state definition of quality teaching (Georgia Systematic Teacher Education Program, 2005). The *Framework*, through the use of six domains and accompanying indicators, describes the knowledge, skills and dispositions identified by research that effective teachers display when they have a positive impact on student learning (Overview of the Integrated Standards, 2006). The six domains include: (a) Content & Curriculum, (b) Knowledge of Students & Their Learning, (c) Learning Environments, (d) Assessment, (e) Planning & Instruction, and (f) Professionalism (Georgia Systematic Teacher Education Program, 2005).

The domains and the associated indicators of each provide a common language and definitions for all stakeholders who are interested in quality teaching (Georgia Systematic Teacher Education Program, 2005). They also have been aligned to follow several of the state and national standards utilized by many teacher education programs, including those created by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission, the Georgia Board of Regents, the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium, the National Board for Professional teaching Standards Core Propositions. In addition, they are aligned with Charlotte Danielson's Indicators from *Enhancing Professional Practice: A Framework for Teaching*, which serves as the standards that candidates must meet in the Georgia TAPP program (Overview of the Integrated Standards, 2006).

Due to the push for teacher accountability, once teachers are certified and in the classroom, many states require that a school administrator or committee assess the performance of the teacher. In a few states, classroom performance assessments of new teachers are administered by the state (Hurst et al., 2003). In 1999, more than 30 states required the principal, another administrator, or a committee to assess the abilities of the new teacher (Edwards, 2000). In addition, because of the demand for teachers to continue educational training and participate in professional learning activities, the practice of granting lifelong certification has ceased. Once all teacher preparation requirements have been met, states now grant initial teaching certificates for a limited time, usually five years (U.S. Department of Education, 1999). However, depending on the state, teachers may need to complete additional requirements in order to maintain licensure, or complete other requirements in order to advance to a second stage of licensure. Requirements include additional coursework, one to two years teaching experience, additional assessments, or participation in professional development activities (Hofer, 1997).

Once certified, teachers are encouraged to continue training. Professional learning activities have become a common requirement in many states for teachers to maintain licensure. In 2000, 44 states and the District of Columbia required teachers to complete professional learning activities (Hurst et al., 2003). Although specific requirements for professional development activities vary by state, they include seminars and workshops on various teaching topics, including new strategies, technology, content-area specific information, or addressing the needs of specific groups of students (Lewis, Parsad, Carey, Bartfai, & Westat, 1999).

Alternate route to certification programs and alternative certification have proliferated during the past 15 years in response to several policy issues in education (Jorissen, 2002a). Beginning with "*A Nation at Risk*" and continuing throughout other instrumental reports,

educators and policymakers began to warn of impending teacher shortages (Darling-Hammond, 1985). Due to increases in student enrollment, teacher retirement, class size reductions, and attrition, widespread shortages were predicted. In 2002, forecasts projected a need for more than 10 million teachers by 2012 (Jorissen). In response to the demand for teachers and fears of teacher shortages, states began to create alternative routes to certification (Grossman, 2003).

Alternative Teacher Certification

Definition of alternative certification.

States have the authority to regulate teacher certification in the United States, setting the minimum requirements for all teacher education programs and teacher licensure. The standards vary significantly from state to state on the entry and exit requirements for teacher preparation programs, tests required for licensure, and licensure maintenance requirements (Hofer, 1997; Hurst et al., 2003). Traditionally, postsecondary institutions have been the sole entities in the states to educate teacher candidates and recommend them for licensure upon completion of the state-approved programs of study. However, the control of higher education over teacher preparation practices has been diminished and new teacher education models have been developed with the growth of alternative certification models (Stoddart & Floden, 1995).

The terms “alternative certification” and “alternative licensure” have used interchangeably and include any routes to teacher certification other than the pre-service four-year baccalaureate approach (Ruhland & Bremer, 2003). Typically, this has included everything from emergency certification programs to 5th and 6th year post-baccalaureate preparation programs. Others restrict the term “alternative certification” to non-traditional certification routes that include a teacher education element (Allen, 2003; Dill, 1996; Feistritzer, 2004; Humphrey et al., 2000; Ruhland & Bremer). Still others define “alternative certification” to mean programs

that allow individuals with a bachelor's degree in a field other than education to become fully certified to teach with less pre-service preparation than is required in traditional programs (Mayer, Decker, Glazerman, & Silva, 2003).

Need for alternative certification.

In order to meet the demands of the teacher shortage, quality alternatives to traditional educator certification programs have been established. The federal government has instituted initiatives to address the teacher shortage. Started in 1994 and continuing through the present, the Troops to Teachers program is an initiative designed to recruit quality teachers for schools serving students from low-income families throughout the country (TTT, 2005). Teach for America was created in 1989 to attract recent college graduates to teach in urban and rural school districts (TFA, n.d.). In 2003, the federal government provided \$41.65 million in budget allocations to support programs that allow candidates to transition into teaching positions via alternative certification programs (Blair, 2003; Feistritzer, 2004).

As of 2010, all states and the District of Columbia, except Alaska and Oregon, reported having alternative certification programs. In total, states currently report 136 different programs being implemented by 600 different providers throughout the country (National Center for Alternative Certification, 2010). Although numerous states have instituted alternative certification models, there is no real consensus on what "alternative certification" means. It has only been broadly defined as a method of entry into the profession of teaching that does not require completion of a traditional teacher education program (Bradshaw, 1998). Alternate route programs differ in the amount of preparation offered, some requiring a few weeks of training and others requiring more than one year (Jorissen, 2002b).

Alternative teacher education models.

Feistritzer (2004) provided a comprehensive review of the state policies regarding alternative certification. Some routes are true teacher preparation programs, while others provide little to no pedagogical preparation and are available to provide add-on certification to already licensed teachers. The review classified the alternative certification routes approved by all states into nine categories. Prior editions of the review included 11 categories, but the Class F and Class J categories were eliminated in the 2004 review, because they dealt with emergency certification routes, which have now been eliminated. The nine categories identified by Feistritzer (2004) included the following:

1. Class A: These programs are not restricted to shortage areas, by grade level, or by subject areas. They are designed to draw individuals who have a bachelor's degree in a field other than education into elementary and secondary education. They include teaching with a trained mentor and instruction that deals with teaching theory and practice either the summer before, summer after, or during the school year.
2. Class B: Similar to Class A programs, these programs are designed to attract talented individuals who hold a Bachelor's Degree, include mentoring and formal instruction, but are restricted to shortage areas, to specific grade levels, or by subject.
3. Class C: With these programs, the state and/or local school district have the major responsibility for program design. This begins with a transcript analysis, as well as a review of academic and professional background. Individuals are provided with a specially designed in-service program or with a list of courses that are necessary for the individual to reach competencies required for certification.

4. Class D: Much like Class C, these programs include a transcript analysis, and academic and professional background review, with specific in-service or course-taking required. However, a higher education institution has the major responsibility for program design.
5. Class E: These are post-baccalaureate programs based at institutions of higher education.
6. Class G: These programs are for individuals who have few requirements left in order to fulfill traditional college or university based teacher education programs, such as individuals who are certified in one state and move to another or individuals who are certified, but seek certification in another area.
7. Class H: These programs include routes that enable an individual with “special” qualifications to teach certain subjects.
8. Class I: This class identifies states that do not offer alternatives to traditional teacher certification programs.
9. Class K: These programs allow individuals in special populations, such as Troops to Teachers, Teach for America, and college professors, to obtain certification.

Although many alternative certification programs include a professional preparation component, the extent of the requirements varies extensively. They differ on a number of aspects including: (a) the stringency of their entrance requirements; (b) the entities managing the program and providing instruction; (c) the length, content, and timing of the preparation program; (d) the quality of in-service support; (e) their goals; and (f) exit requirements and state requirements for certification (Feistritzer, 2004). Some programs are highly selective, some only require candidates to have a degree in the area to be taught, and some admit candidates who do not hold degrees. Preparation programs are managed by numerous organizations, including states, school districts, postsecondary institutions, private groups, or a mixture of cooperative

groups. Preparation varies from a few days, to a few weeks, to a year or more, and may or may not include pre-service instruction. In some cases, in-service support is limited, while in others induction supports, mentoring, and ongoing professional development is extensive (Allen, 2003; Bradshaw, 1998; Dill, 1996; Feistritzer, 2004).

Despite the vast differences among many alternative certification programs, many share general characteristics. Typically, district and state organized programs are internship type programs that: (a) require candidates to have a bachelor's degree in the subject area to be taught; (b) require the candidate to meet established screening criteria, such as minimum grade point average, test scores, and experience; (c) provide some level of pre-service training; (d) provide professional preparation while candidates teach full time on provisional certificate; (e) require mentoring; (f) require on going class work; (g) last between one and two years; and (h) require assessment of candidate performance prior to program completion and full licensure (Humphrey et al., 2000; Tatel, 1999; TFA, n.d.).

More specifically, some states, including New Jersey and Connecticut took a highly centralized approach in the development of alternative teacher certification programs. With these programs, the state department of education is responsible for managing the program, creating the instructional design, and the final assessment of teachers who complete the program. The state coordinates delivery of instruction to be provided by school district personnel, postsecondary faculty, or a combination that includes other professionals (Feistritzer, 2004). Other states allow school systems to manage their own alternative programs in a decentralized approach. The California District Intern Certificate and Texas Alternative Teacher Certification programs were created to meet the needs of the states' multicultural districts. With these, districts

are responsible for design, management, implementation, and evaluation of candidates.

However, there is a variation of how instruction is delivered (Harris, Camp, & Adkison, 2003).

Alternative certification in Georgia.

In order to address the teacher shortage, Georgia began recognizing eight different alternative teacher certification routes (Feistritzer, 2004; Georgia Professional Standards Board, 2007). Some programs were designed to help teachers in specific areas earn certification, while others helped a more general population. Feistritzer (2004) identified seven different alternative certification programs available in Georgia, including Teach for America, Preparation Program for Military Personnel, Post-Baccalaureate Non-Degree Preparation Programs, Master's Degree Level Initial Preparation, Permitted Personnel, Probationary Certificate, which is no longer available, and the Georgia Teacher Alternative Preparation Program. In 2004, the state introduced the eighth alternative certification program that provided a teacher candidate with a five-year non-renewable certificate. Upon meeting program requirements, including completion of coursework requirements and passing the appropriate Georgia Assessment of the Certification of Educators (GACE) exam, a candidate would receive full licensure (Georgia Professional Standards Board, 2007).

The Georgia Teacher Alternative Preparation Program is a classroom-based teacher preparation model for individuals who have the basic qualifications needed to teach early childhood, middle grades, secondary, or P-12 education, who have not completed a teacher preparation program. The Georgia TAPP program was not created with the intent of replacing regular college teacher education programs, but to serve as an alternative option for individuals who hold a bachelor's degree or higher from an accredited institution, but who did not complete a teacher education preparation program as part of their degree. The purpose of the Georgia TAPP

is to equip teacher-candidates with the skills to ensure a reasonable expectation of initial success in the classroom, and to institute a supervised internship/induction program that will help candidates move toward mastery of teaching (Georgia Professional Standards Commission, 2008).

In order to enter the Georgia TAPP program, candidates must have a bachelor's degree in an appropriate field, with a minimum grade point average of 2.5 in all college-level work completed, a satisfactory background check, have an offer of a full-time teaching position by a participating school system, and have a passing score on any one of several assessments. The possible exams include the reading, writing, and math sections of the GACE Basic Skills Assessment, the SAT (1000), ACT (43), or the GRE (1030). Individuals who have completed any portion of a teacher education program or held any type of teaching certificate in the state are not eligible to participate in the program (Georgia Professional Standards Commission, 2008).

Once admitted to the Georgia TAPP program at a participating institution, most candidates go through an orientation and individual counseling. This includes instruction on the *Essentials of Effective Teaching*, a three to six week intensive instructional program, an assessment of the teacher-candidate's content background, development of individualized plan of study for each teacher-candidate, including scheduling of any required course work, assignment of a three person support team, including a school-based mentor and school-based administrator. In addition, the candidate will complete a required PSC candidate information form and complete an Intern Certification application (Georgia Professional Standards Commission, 2008).

Following initial orientation, candidates begin the first year of the internship/induction. This includes a minimum of six seminars for the first year of internship, based on Charlotte Danielson's (1996, 2007) *Enhancing Student Achievement: A Framework for Teaching*. During this time, if required, the candidate will participate in any required content coursework, as well as completion of course work required to meet Georgia Special Requirements for the grade level taught, including the identification and education of children and youth with special needs, the teaching of reading, and the integration of technology in the classroom. The candidate is required to take the appropriate GACE Content Assessment by the end of the first semester of teaching. If passed, no further action is necessary. However, if a teacher-candidate fails, the test results may be used to modify the individualized plan of study. At this point, the candidate also begins collecting evidence for an achievement portfolio and is assessed by the support team. At the end of the first year of teaching, the support team either makes a recommendation to the candidate's principal for continuation or denial of Intern Certificate for the second year (Georgia Professional Standards Commission, 2008).

In the second year of the internship/induction, candidates are required to complete a minimum of four seminars based on Danielson's Framework for Teaching and teacher-candidates' identified problems or interests. Mentoring and assessment by the teacher-candidate's support team continues and the candidate must complete any remaining required course work. By the end of the second year, the teacher candidate must have successfully passed the GACE Content Assessment, completed the achievement portfolio, and received a positive evaluation by the teacher-candidates' support team. After these guidelines are achieved, the teacher can receive full certification (Georgia Professional Standards Commission, 2008).

In few instances, candidates can apply and participate in a one year supervised practicum through the Georgia TAPP program. In order to qualify for this type of program, candidates must meet several criteria, including: (a) secure a position with a system in the RESA service area; (b) the employing system must submit a recommendation for the individual to participate in the one year supervised practicum; (c) and electronic application is sent to the potential Beginning Teacher (BT); (d) the potential BT receives the electronic application from RESA and provides RESA with a completed application packet, which includes an application, transcripts from all colleges attended, copy of GACE Basic Skills Assessment scores (or SAT, ACT, or GRE scores high enough to exempt or passing Praxis I scores), copy of GACE Content Assessment score (or Praxis II Content prior to September 1, 2006), copy of GACE Professional Pedagogy Assessment score (or Principles of Learning and Teaching (PLT) prior to September 1, 2006), copy of relevant Special Education GACE Assessment if hired for a Special Education position, a current resume, two letters of reference, and a \$2500 registration fee (Southwest Georgia Regional Educational Services Agency [SWGARESA] n.d.).

Following admittance to the program, candidates are required to demonstrate competencies in the knowledge, skills, and dispositions required for accomplished teaching. This is done through the creation of a portfolio, classroom observations with pre and post conferences with the Beginning Teacher Support Team, an Individual Induction Plan, transcripts for completion of all Georgia Special Requirements courses, and completion of required class sessions. Assessments are done on the beginning teacher through observations by the RESA assigned supervisor and the portfolio is scored with a rubric based on Danielson's Framework at a minimum of a proficient performance level (NWGARESA, n.d.).

Organizational and Professional Commitment

The concept of commitment has been a phenomenon of ongoing interest to researchers and is the topic of a large body of research literature (Kadyschuk, 1997; Morris & Sherman, 1981; Mowday et al., 1979; Stevens et al., 1978). However, there has been a “general lack of agreement concerning how best to conceptualize and measure” commitment (Mowday et al., 1979, p. 255). Initial studies on commitment focused on organizational commitment then expanded to include other areas, including professional commitment (Kadyschuk, 1997). Stevens et al. (1978) noted there is “both overlap and ambiguity with regard to competing concepts of commitment” (p. 393). Morris and Sherman (1981) concurred that a common theoretical framework was lacking throughout research. A vital part of the theory-building process includes the development of reliable instruments to be used to measure the dimensions of commitment (Kadyschuk, 1997).

Commitment can be characterized specifically in terms of commitment to an occupation, a certain job, a specific profession, or to an organization. The dimensions and characteristics of commitment are defined and measured depending on how it is being applied. Researchers studying organizational and professional commitment have been proactive at trying to capture the meaning and essence of each concept, but there is considerable diversity in the definitions offered for these concepts and for the methods used in measuring each (Sayeed, 2001).

Numerous terms have been used to refer to organizational commitment, including affective commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1984), organizational identification (March & Simon, 1958; Patchen, 1970), and organizational involvement (Gould, 1979). A prevailing theme throughout each of these is the individual’s psychological attachment to the organization.

O'Reilly and Caldwell (1981) said that it is this psychological attachment that appears to be the construct of interest in much commitment literature.

A review of other studies on organizational commitment reveals other widely divergent definitions of organizational commitment. Sheldon (1971) defined organizational commitment as, "an attitude or orientation toward the organization which links or attaches the identity of the person to the organization" (p. 143). Hall, Schneider, and Nygren (1970) defined commitment as, "the process by which goals of the organization and those of the individual become increasingly integrated or congruent" (p. 176). Salancik (1977) also defined organizational commitment, stating that it is "a state of being in which an individual becomes bound by his actions and through these actions to beliefs that sustain the activities and his own involvement" (p. 62).

Meyer and Allen (1991) developed a well-known approach to organizational commitment as a multi-dimensional construct. They proposed that organizational commitment has three components, including affective, continuance, and normative commitments, and that an employee's relationship with an organization might reflect varying degrees of all three. They defined organizational commitment as "a psychological state that (a) characterizes the employee's relationship with the organization, and (b) has implications for the decision to continue membership in the organization" (p. 67). In this definition, affective commitment refers to the employee's emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization. This component is similar to the Mowday et al. (1982) definition of organizational commitment. Continuance commitment refers to the employee's judgment of the costs associated with leaving the organization. Finally, normative commitment refers the feeling of obligation to continue employment. This essentially means that employees feel a moral obligation to the organization or as if they "ought" to remain (Meyer & Allen, 1991).

Porter, Steers, Mowday, & Boulian (1974) created one of the most popular definitions of organizational commitment, “the relative strength of an individual’s identification with and involvement in a particular organization” (p. 604). Mowday et al. (1982) further categorized commitment into two types, attitudinal and behavioral, with attitudinal commitment being related to organizational commitment. The attitudinal conceptualization of commitment includes three factors. The first factor is a strong belief in and acceptance of the goals and values of the employing organization. The second factor is a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization and the third is a strong desire to maintain membership in the organization.

In contrast, the behavioral concept of commitment is defined as a function of the costs and rewards associated with membership in a profession or organization (Reichers, 1985). The behavioral view of organizational commitment is derived from Becker’s (1964) construct of “side bets.” According to Becker (1964), commitment to an organization results when side bets, such as job-specific skills, age, friendship, or other factors combine. These accumulated investments are too meaningful to give up, causing commitment to increase. Mowday et al. (1982) indicated a cyclical relationship between attitudinal and behavioral commitment, where commitment attitudes lead to commitment behaviors, which thereby reinforce commitment attitudes.

For this study of alternatively certified teachers, the Mowday et al. (1982) definition of organizational commitment was used. Often, employing schools and school systems pay for the training and additional preparation for alternatively certified teachers; therefore, it is important to investigate whether these teachers believe in the goals and values of the employing organization and are willing to remain as a member of the organization and exert the necessary effort to be successful (Jorissen, 2002b).

Organizational commitment in the workplace is directed toward the employing organization. For teachers, organizational commitment is most often directed to a particular school. Numerous studies have found that organizational commitment is a strong predictor of employee turnover and turnover intentions (Allen & Meyer, 1996; Kacmar, Carlson, & Brymer, 1999; Lachman & Aranya, 1986; Lee et al., 2000; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Meyer et al., 1993; Mowday et al., 1979; Tett & Meyer, 1993).

Likewise, numerous terms have been used concurrently with professional commitment, including occupational commitment (Arranya & Ferris, 1983; Ritzer & Trice, 1969; Rotondi, 1975), career commitment (Blau, 1985, 1988; Steffy & Jones, 1988), and career salience (Greenhaus, 1973; Morrow & McElroy, 1986; Wiener & Vardi, 1980). Similar to the Porter et al. (1974) approach to organizational commitment, Morrow and Wirth (1989) defined professional commitment as “the relative strength of identification with the involvement in one’s profession (pg. 41). Furthermore, Ritzer and Trice (1969) and Sorensen and Sorensen (1974) characterized professional commitment as a person’s belief in and acceptance of the values of their chosen occupation or line of work, and willingness to maintain membership in that occupation.

Carson and Bedeian (1994) defined professional commitment as “one’s motivation to work in a chosen vocation” (pg. 249). Marshall and Wijting (1982) said that career commitment is the extent to which work activities figure into life plans and the desire to work in hypothetical situations, when there is no financial need. Finally, Blau (1988) defined professional commitment as “one’s attitude towards one’s vocation, including a profession” (p. 89).

The professional commitment of teachers is crucial to achieving strong instructional programs and is a key factor when determining the organizational commitment of teachers (Somech & Bogler, 2002). For this study of alternatively certified teachers, the Blau (1988)

definition was used. Numerous studies have found professional commitment to be a predictor of occupation and job withdrawal intentions (Blau, 1985, 1988, 1989; Blau et al., 2003; Carson et al., 1996; Cohen 1996).

Organizational and professional commitments are important areas related to alternatively certified teachers (Somech & Bogler, 2002). Due to the teacher shortage, schools need teachers who are committed to local goals and values. Committed individuals are more likely to remain with the organization, work toward organizational goals, and invest greater effort in their jobs (Somech & Bogler, 2002).

Mowday's Theory of Organizational Commitment

Organizational commitment has been defined as both an attitudinal and a behavioral construct (Cohen, 2003; Meyer & Allen, 1996; Mowday et al., 1982). Mowday et al.(1982) determined that since the object of attitudinal commitment is the organization they would use attitudinal commitment and organizational commitment interchangeably, defining organizational commitment as:

the relative strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organization. Conceptually, it can be characterized by at least three factors: (a) a strong belief in and acceptance of the organization's goals and values, (b) a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization; and (c) a strong desire to maintain membership in the organization. (p. 27)

When organizational commitment is defined this way, it signifies something beyond mere passive loyalty to an organization. It represents an active relationship with the organization, so that individuals are willing to give something of themselves in order to contribute to the well being of the organization. Therefore, commitment can be inferred from the expressions of an

individual's beliefs and opinions, as well as from their actions (Mowday et al., 1982). However, this definition does not preclude the possibility and probability that individuals who have strong organizational commitment could also be committed to other aspects of their environment. It asserts that regardless of other possible commitments the organizationally committed individual will tend to exhibit the three characteristics explained in the definition (Mowday et al., 1982).

A common theme throughout much conceptual research on organizational commitment is the notion of exchange (Farrell & Rusbult, 1981; March & Simon, 1958). Individuals come to organizations with certain needs, desires, and skills and expect to find a work environment where they can use their abilities and satisfy their basic needs. When an organization provides such an avenue, the likelihood of increasing commitment is increased (Steers, 1977).

Furthermore, the theory of Mowday et al. (1982) suggested that organizational commitment is developed over time as a function of the interplay of an individual's personal characteristics, role-related characteristics of the job, structural characteristics of the organization, and the individual's experiences on the job. Therefore, individuals who are highly committed to the organization exhibit positive work-related behaviors, including a desire and intent to remain in the organization, lower levels of tardiness and absenteeism, increased job effort, and lower turnover.

Empirical studies conducted on organizational commitment represent a rich collection of findings with respect to both the antecedents and consequences of the construct. Studies suggested that the major influences on organizational commitment can be grouped into three categories, including personal characteristics, job or role related characteristics, and work experiences (Mowday et al., 1982). Steers (1977) conducted similar studies with hospital

employees and scientists and engineers and replicated Mowday's, supporting the importance of all three categories as major influences on commitment.

One important antecedent of commitment is personal characteristics. A variety of personal characteristics, such as age (Angle & Perry, 1981; Hrebiniak, 1974; Hrebiniak & Alutto, 1972; Mowday et al., 1982; Welsch & Lavan, 1981), gender (Angle & Perry, 1981; Dinham, 1994; Epstein, 1981; Hrebiniak & Alutto, 1972; Reyes 1989; 1990), race (Angle & Perry, 1981; Ingersoll, 1997; Singer, 1993), tenure (Grusky, 1966; Hrebiniak & Alutto, 1972; Mowday et al., 1982; Steers, 1977; Welsch & Lavan, 1981), content area certification (Dvorak, 1993; Kirby & Grissmer, 1993), as well as various personality variables (Angle & Perry, 1981; Dornstein & Matalon, 1989; Hrebiniak, 1974; Jorissen, 2002a; Mowday et al., 1982; Wallace, 1993) have been found to be related to organizational commitment in numerous correlational studies across various work samples. Results of these studies clearly indicate that individual differences must be accounted for in any model of commitment processes in organizations (Mowday et al., 1982).

Job or role related characteristics are the second group of antecedents that correlate to organizational commitment (Stevens et al., 1978). Within this dimension, there are at least three related aspects of work role that can potentially influence commitment, including job scope or challenge, role conflict, and role ambiguity. Much work has been conducted on examining the relationship between job scope and commitment (Rizzo, House, & Lirtzman, 1970). The basic thought related to this is that increased job scope increases the challenge employees experience, thereby increasing commitment. It is thought that employees respond positively when provided with more challenge in their jobs (Mowday et al., 1982).

Additionally, studies by Morris and Koch (1979) and Morris and Sherman (1981) examined the related concepts of role conflict and role ambiguity as they relate to commitment. These studies found that role conflict is inversely related to commitment, while they found mixed results for role ambiguity. Therefore, with respect to role-related factors on commitment, it can be assumed that these influences may be positive as long as the employee has clear and challenging job assignments. If assignments become ambiguous, place the employee in conflict, or provide excessive stress, the effects on commitment tend to be adverse (Mowday et al., 1982).

A third antecedent of organizational commitment is the work experiences that occur during an employee's tenure with an organization (Steers, 1977). Work experiences are viewed as a crucial socializing force and represent an important influence on the extent to which psychological attachments are formed with the organization. A number of work experience variables have been linked to organizational commitment. Organizational dependability, or the extent to which employees felt the organization could be trusted to look after employee interests, was related to commitment (Buchanan, 1974; Hrebiniak, 1974; Steers, 1977). Commitment attitudes were also found to increase because of feelings of personal importance to the organization, when employees felt they were needed or important to the organization's mission (Buchanan, 1974; Steers, 1977). Grusky (1966) and Steers (1977) also found that when employee expectations were met in the workplace that organizational commitment attitudes increased. Another work experience factor that has been found to positively affect commitment is positive attitudes. Buchanan (1974) determined that positive attitudes of workers toward the organization can transfer to coworkers and increase commitment for employees within the organization.

In addition, Rhodes and Steers (1981) found that perceived pay equity and group norms regarding hard work were also related to organizational commitment. Leadership style, specifically relating to leader initiating structure, has been found to relate to commitment (Morris & Sherman, 1981). Finally, the degree of an employee's social involvement in the organization has been found to be an important work experience that affects commitment. Buchanan (1974), Rotondi (1975), and Sheldon (1971) found that the greater the social interaction among employees, the more social ties the individual develops, which increases the employee's commitment to the organization.

Throughout research on organizational commitment, at least five consequences or possible outcomes have been studied, including job performance, tenure with the organization, absenteeism, tardiness, and turnover. In individual and group studies, job performance has consistently correlated with commitment. Motivation level, role clarity, and ability are some factors that may impact job performance (Porter & Lawler, 1968). A second outcome of organizational commitment is job tenure. If highly committed employees desire to remain with the organization, then commitment and job tenure would be related. In fact, significant positive correlations have been found between increased tenure and commitment (Mowday et al., 1982).

Furthermore, theory predicts that committed employees would be more likely to have better work attendance, in order to facilitate organizational goal attainment (Mowday et al., 1982). This attendance motivation should exist even if the employee does not enjoy the tasks required by the job. Similarly, Angle and Perry (1981) found commitment and tardiness to be strongly inversely related. Again, theory underlying this construct suggests that employees who are highly committed are likely to engage in behaviors consistent with their attitudes toward the organization. Finally, theory finds that turnover is the strongest and most predictable behavioral

outcome of employee organizational commitment. Highly committed employees desire to remain with the organization and continue working toward organizational goals; therefore, they are less likely to leave (Mowday et al., 1982).

Blau's Theory of Professional Commitment

Theoretically, professional commitment has most often been approached from the same perspectives as those used for addressing organizational commitment, using either an attitudinal, behavioral, or multidimensional approach (Cohen, 2003). Although related, professional commitment should be distinguished from organizational commitment (Blau, 1985). Blau (1988) defined professional commitment as “one’s attitude towards one’s vocation, including a profession” (p. 89). Blau (1985) argued that in order to prevent professional commitment from being redundant with other concepts, such as work involvement, job involvement, or organizational commitment, the focus of this commitment form should be more specific than simply work in general. Career, occupation, and profession represent somewhat different entities; however, all three seem to be in accord with Blau’s (1985) case; each is more specific than work in general and broader than job or organization (Cohen, 2003). Furthermore, Blau (1985) found that profession and vocation are necessary in the definition in order to anchor the concept of career or professional commitment in a concrete way.

Morrow (1983) emphasized the importance of focusing on occupational commitment, because “It is one of the few commitment concepts that attempts to capture the notion of devotion to a craft, occupation, or profession apart from any specific work environment, over an extended period of time” (p. 490). Some researchers submit that the term professional commitment should be reserved for vocations that are consistently high on characteristics of professionalism, such as requiring specialized knowledge or expertise, autonomy, a sense of

calling, and beliefs in the importance of the service provided (Blau et al., 2003) To the contrary, Cohen (2003) argued that both professionals and non-professionals could experience commitment to their work. Blau's (1988) study of professional commitment of first level supervisors in insurance and newspapers supported this contention. Teaching is typically recognized as having several characteristics of a profession; therefore, professional commitment will be used in the study of alternatively certified teachers.

Much like his measurement instrument, Blau's (1985) framework for professional commitment evolved from the work of numerous others. The frameworks surrounding many professional commitment theories developed into an integrative principle, with a definition, conceptual approach, and a measurement scale to operationalize the concept (Cohen, 2003). Due to problems he found with other approaches, Blau (1985) argued for and developed an alternative approach and scale. Blau (1985) posited that research related to career commitment concepts, including professional commitment, occupational commitment, and career orientation, suggested both a conceptual definition and a means to operationalize the definition. He then created his first definition of career commitment, "one's attitude towards one's profession or vocation" (Blau, 1985, p. 278). Blau's (1985) widely used Career Commitment Scale took an attitudinal approach and used items drawn from previously developed scales assessing professionalism, professional commitment, and career salience.

Much of Blau's (1988) work on career commitment considered the commitment of both professional and nonprofessional employees. Blau (1988) expanded the theoretical base for the concept of professionalism and outlined six characteristics of "ideal professions" that had previously been developed by Hall (1971) and Kerr, Von Glinow, and Schriesheim (1977). He incorporated these six characteristics into his work, including expertise, autonomy, commitment

to work and the profession, identification with the profession, ethics, and collegial maintenance of standards.

Typically, expertise is developed from extended specialized training in a body of knowledge, such as higher educational requirements or long-term company training (Blau, 1988). Autonomy is the perceived right of an individual about both the means and goals associated with one's work. Means entails deciding how to accomplish something; goals involves choosing what to accomplish. Commitment to work and profession, translated as professional or occupational commitment, entails looking at one's dedication to work and career aspirations (Blau, 1988).

Kerr et al. (1977) recognized identification with profession as the fourth characteristic of ideal professions. As part of the operationalization of career identification, Schein, McKelvey, Peters, and Thomas (1965) asked individuals if they had an institutional or noninstitutional frame of reference. An institutionalist identifies with the organization and its goals, sees his or her career in terms of the organization, and is not willing to leave the organization, while a noninstitutionalist does not. Ethics is the fifth characteristic and is the perceived obligation to render service without concern for self-interest and without emotional attachment to the client. Often times, a code of ethics among certain occupations and companies represent the code of ethics concept. Collegial maintenance is the final characteristic of ideal professions. This is the belief that standards or rules should be enforced by fellow professionals (Kerr et al., 1977).

Opposing Theories

Although most organizational commitment literature is based upon the Mowday et al. (1982) framework, the related Allen and Meyer (1990) definition and conceptualization have been used frequently (Cohen, 2003). The Allen and Meyer (1990) view conceptualized

organizational commitment as a multidimensional construct. Their definition proposed the three components of commitment, affective, continuance, and normative, and that an employee's relationship with an organization might reflect varying degrees of each.

Allen and Meyer (1990) developed a three dimensional instrument to measure the three components. However, Jaros (1997) and Ko, Price, and Mueller (1997) indicated problems with the dimensionality of commitment of Allen and Meyer's (1990) scales, particularly with the continuance and normative scales. Although Meyer and Allen (1997) modified their scales to help control the problems, the revised scales were problematic. Ko et al. (1997) concluded that the three-component model of commitment contained conceptual problems, which were the cause of psychometric properties of the continuance and commitment scales. Due to the problems with construct validity of the continuance and normative scales, the more validated Mowday et al. (1982) framework and instrument were used for the present study of alternatively certified teachers.

Whereas Mowday et al. (1982) took an attitudinal approach to organizational commitment; the behavioral or calculative views of organizational commitment (Hrebiniak & Alutto, 1972; Salancik, 1977) are rooted in Howard Becker's (1960) "side-bet theory." Becker described commitment as a process in which individuals made side-bets or investments, such as interpersonal relations or a large retirement, in the organization that bound the individual to the organization. Once these commitments were made, the individual adjusted their attitudes toward the organization to justify their committed behavior. Therefore, in this view, the development of organizational commitment was a self-reinforcing cycle in which behavioral commitment caused the individual to adjust attitudes accordingly, which led to more committed behavior (Cohen, 2003; Mowday et al., 1982).

Proponents of the calculative view would define organizational commitment as the individual's propensity to maintain membership in the organization (Scholl, 1981). The side-bet theory suggested that the individual was bound to the organization by the outcome of an inducements-contribution transaction between the individual and the organization, not by attitudes. Commitment was based on a cost-benefit assessment and on the extent to which the perceived magnitude of investments bound the individual to the organization, not on the individual's identification and acceptance of organizational values (Cohen & Gattiker, 1992). In this attitude, unlike the Mowday et al. (1982) framework of organizational commitment, past committed behavior drove attitudes and future behavior. The study of alternatively certified teachers was driven by the attitudinal dimension of commitment, not past behaviors; therefore the Mowday et al. (1982) framework was more suitable for the study.

The theory of work adjustment is another framework that relates to organizational commitment (Dawis, 1996). This framework assumes that retention is mediated by the employee's levels of job satisfaction and commitment to the employing organization. The theory describes the relationship of an individual to his or her work environment. The work environment requires that certain tasks be performed, and the individual brings the proper skill sets to perform the tasks. In exchange, the individual requires compensation for work performance and certain preferred conditions, including a safe and comfortable work place. The environment and the individual must continue to meet each other's requirements for the interaction to continue. The work adjustment theory suggests that retention is a function of two factors, satisfaction and satisfactoriness. The level of work adjustment is measured by the satisfaction of the work environment with the individual and by the individual's satisfaction with the work environment. Satisfactoriness of an individual results in tenure (Dawis, 1996).

However, this theory better relates to the study of job satisfaction. It does not differentiate what type of satisfactoriness is being reached, organizational or professional; therefore, it was less beneficial for use in the present study of alternatively certified teachers.

Motivation is a term frequently used in relation to commitment (Scholl, 1981). The expectancy theory is one motivation model used in explaining the individual decision-making processes of an individual's membership and performance. This theory makes use of the exchange model and predicts that individuals will engage in behavior and membership that they perceive as ultimately leading to valued results (Scholl, 1981). Angyal (1958) found a conflict with the use of expectancy as a motivating force for commitment. He stated that it is not the goal of the membership in an organization that determines direction, but rather the intrinsic pattern of direction that defines what object can become a goal. In relation to employment models, expectancy may lead to a consistent behavioral direction; however, once established the direction may cause expectancy to change (Scholl, 1981).

Like organizational commitment, there are several theories and approaches that could be considered for use in the study of professional commitment. Conceptually, one approach to professional commitment arises from the concept of career. This notion defined career commitment as the magnitude of an individual's motivation to work in a career he or she chose (Hall, 1971), or as the degree of centrality of one's career for his or her identity (Gould, 1979). However, much research on this notion of career commitment lacked a precise and systematic approach (Cohen, 2003). Important contributions to the understanding of career commitment concept came from the work of Greenhaus and colleagues (Greenhaus, 1971, 1973; Greenhaus & Simon, 1977; Greenhaus & Sklarew, 1981). Greenhaus attempted to rectify the lack of research on career commitment by defining and designing a 28-item scale for what he called "career

salience.” Career salience included three broad categories, general attitudes toward work, degree of vocationally relevant planning and thought, and the relative importance of work (Cohen, 2003).

The work of Greenhaus (1973) predominantly focused on occupation and job search not on the work setting. Blau (1985), Morrow (1983), and Wiener and Vardi (1980) criticized Greenhaus’s work in that its definition and measurement of career salience overlaps other commitment foci, specifically job involvement and work involvement. This overlap prevents researchers from applying this scale; therefore, Greenhaus’s approach and scales are not regarded as foremost research on commitment forms (Cohen, 2003).

Meyer et al. (1993) advanced another conceptual approach to occupational commitment. Rather than developing a completely new concept and measure, Meyer et al. (1993) simply applied to occupational commitment Meyer and Allen’s (1991) three component scales of organizational commitment. The dimensions, including affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment were applied to occupational commitment by substitution of the word “occupation” for “organization.” Meyer et al. (1993) found that occupational commitment showed good psychometric properties and the three components were found to be related to variables considered antecedents and consequences of commitment. Therefore, Meyer et al. (1993) concluded that evidence existed for the generalizability of the Meyer and Allen three-component model of commitment. However, Blau (2001) argued that more work using a longitudinal design was necessary in order to establish discriminant validity among the three components in the occupational commitment measure.

The theory of career motivation could have served as a framework for examining the antecedents and outcomes of professional commitment. London (1983) and London and Mone

(1987) proposed an integrative model of career motivation that considers both individual and situational characteristics as determinants of career decisions and behaviors. The theory of career motivation conceptualized career motivation as a multidimensional construct that is internal to an individual, influenced by a situation, and reflected in the individual's career behaviors.

Within the career motivation model, variables are clustered into three dimensions, including career identity, career insight, and career resilience (London, 1983). Career identity refers to the extent to which individuals define themselves in terms of their area of work. Career insight refers to the extent to which one has a realistic perception of one's self. Career resilience refers to one's resistance to career disruption in a less than optimal environment. The relationships between the components are based on prospective and retrospective rationality. Prospective rationality is the process by which an individual's career decision and behaviors are affected by what they believe will happen in the future. Retrospective rationality holds information processing and social learning influence individual characteristics (London, 1983). However, Brousseau (1983), Dubin (1976), and Raynor (1978) found that the variables included in the career motivation framework needed more theoretical model linking than variables involved. The career motivation framework has a more literal view of career commitment, identifying both individual and situational variables that affect that impact commitment (London, 1983; London & Mone, 1987). The definition used in the present study of alternatively certified teachers had a more attitudinal framework, based on the Blau (1988) definition of professional commitment.

Factors Influencing Organizational and Professional Commitment

Weiner and Vardi (1980) discussed the consequences of work commitment. They hypothesized that professional commitment would make the largest relative contribution to effort

and overall performance effectiveness, while organizational commitment would make the largest relative contribution to the attachment to the organization. The majority of research studies that have been conducted on commitment have dealt with technical and professional employees in occupational settings other than education; therefore, further research in the area of education was suggested (Cohen, 2003). Research on personal characteristics in relation to commitment have addressed a number of variables (Hrebiniak & Alutto, 1972), including gender (Adam & Baer, 1984; Angle & Perry, 1981; Dinham, 1994; Epstein, 1981; Hrebiniak & Alutto, 1972; Reyes 1989; 1990), age (Angle & Perry, 1981; Dornstein & Matalon, 1989; Hrebiniak, 1974; Hrebiniak & Alutto, 1972; Mowday et al., 1982; Parasuraman & Nachman, 1987; Welsch & Lavan, 1981), race (Angle & Perry, 1981; Betancourt-Smith, Inman, & Marlow, 1994; Ingersoll, 1997; Singer, 1993; Tyler, Yzquierdo, Lopez-Reyna, & Flippin, 2004), years and type of prior work experience (Angle & Perry, 1981; Betancourt-Smith et al., 1994; Dornstein & Matalon, 1989; Hrebiniak, 1974; Mowday et al., 1982; Wallace, 1993), professional preparation (Jorissen, 2002a; Lewis et al., 1999), and length of time in the job (Grusky, 1966; Hrebiniak & Alutto, 1972; Mowday et al., 1982; Steers, 1977; Welsch & Lavan, 1981).

Arranya et al. (1986) indicated the relationship between gender and commitment, finding that women tend to have lower levels of organizational commitment than men in professional organizations. Specifically, female lawyers were found to be less attached to their employing organizations because of conflicting demands of a legal career and familial obligations (Adam & Baer, 1984; Epstein, 1981).

Contrastly, Hrebiniak and Alutto (1972) found that professional women, especially married women, have greater commitment because of the higher costs attached to leaving an organization than single, unattached individuals, including loss of insurance and retirement

benefits. Angle and Perry (1981) also determined that females were more strongly committed to their employing organizations than males. Another rationale for the higher levels of commitment for women is that they often have to overcome greater obstacles to secure a place in the workforce than men (Mowday et al., 1982). Other studies, including Reyes (1989, 1990) found that women were more committed to their schools than men, but suggested that more research be conducted using gender as a variable.

Several studies related to teaching have found that women tend to exhibit higher levels of professional commitment than men (Angle & Perry, 1981; Dinham, 1994; Hrebiniak & Alutto, 1972). In a study of teachers, Konanc (1996) found that male teachers left at a rate of 65% after 15 years, in contrast to 52% of female teachers. In addition, Ingersoll (1997) reported that female teachers were slightly more committed than male teachers.

Like gender, age is a personal variable that can also affect commitment. Age can reduce the desirability of individuals to other organizations, due to the higher salaries and benefits that might have to be paid for their experience (Hrebiniak & Alutto, 1972). In addition, age often implies the accrual of investments, which enhances the attractiveness of the employing system and can increase commitment to the organization (Hrebiniak & Alutto, 1972). Across organizational studies, age has been positively related to commitment (Angle & Perry, 1981; Dornstein & Matalon, 1989; Hrebiniak, 1974; Mowday et al., 1982; Welsch & Lavan, 1981). As individuals get older and accumulate experience, commitment increases. The consistent relationship between age and commitment further suggests that individuals accrue investments over time (Parasuraman & Nachman, 1987).

Regarding race in relation to organizational commitment, Angle and Perry (1981) found no significant difference between racial and ethnic subgroups on commitment. A study of teacher

attrition conducted by Betancourt-Smith et al. (1994) found that minority teachers are less professionally committed. Likewise, Ingersoll (1997) and Tyler et al. (2004), found that minority teachers were less committed than White teachers (Ingersoll, 1997). However, Singer (1993), found no differences between Black and White teachers regarding commitment to the teaching profession.

Another factor that influences commitment is experience and type of previous position held. Experience has been found to be positively related to commitment, with older individuals who have more work experience typically demonstrating greater commitment (Angle & Perry, 1981; Dornstein & Matalon, 1989; Hrebiniak, 1974; Mowday et al., 1982). In a study of lawyers, Wallace (1993) found that workers who perceive that they have few alternate job opportunities are likely to feel more committed to their employing organization. In addition, national research indicates that teachers who come from blue-collar backgrounds or who had to work their way through college tend to be more committed to the profession (Betancourt-Smith et al., 1994).

Reyes (1990) found that total years of experience contributes significantly to organizational commitment, indicating that the fewer the years of overall experience that teachers have, the less committed they are. Zumwalt (1996) found that alternate route teachers, who are often mid-career entrants and have spent a varying number of years in other careers, may be preconditioned by prior career experiences to be less tolerant of unsatisfying working conditions in schools; therefore, they are often less committed.

Likewise, previous type of position held can influence commitment. Typically, the higher the position held within the organization, the more employees have invested. A higher position within the organization can be seen as a reward, which indicates the work of the employee is being recognized, therefore, the employee's identification with the organization is enhanced

(Amernic & Arranya, 1983; Cohen & Gattiker, 1992; Sheldon, 1971). In addition to increasing organizational commitment, promotion within an organization, which signifies career advancement, can increase professional commitment as well (Wallace, 1997). Dubin, Champoux, and Porter (1975) found that no matter what the previous position, individuals who were highly job-oriented tended to have higher levels of organizational commitment. Also regardless of previous position, Mowday et al. (1982) found that employee ownership of organizations positively correlated with commitment.

Tenure or experience has been found to be a strong predictor of commitment (Mowday et al., 1982). In a study of administrative professionals, Grusky (1966) and Welsch and Lavan (1981), found that organizational commitment increased with years spent in the organization. Using samples of hospital employees and scientists, Steers (1977) found that work experience was a strong correlate of organizational commitment. One explanation could be that the longer an employee remains in the organization, more challenging job assignments may be received, greater autonomy may be awarded, or additional extrinsic rewards may be received. It is suggested that time and energy invested with an organization become valued resources and make it increasingly difficult for employees to leave. Therefore, as the length of time spent in a job increases, the more committed an individual is to an organization (Hrebiniak & Alutto, 1972).

In a study of teachers, Reyes (1990) found that teachers with greater experience had higher levels of organizational commitment. According to Reyes (1990), this relationship can be expected because teachers who spend some years with a school have a sense of commitment toward the organization. Contrastly, a National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) study of professional commitment found that teachers with more teaching experience were slightly less committed than teachers with less experience (Ingersoll, 1997).

Professional preparation has also been found to be a variable related to commitment. Teachers' feelings of preparedness are an important indicator of the extent to which they are prepared to meet the challenges characterized by the profession (Lewis et al., 1999). In general, teachers who feel prepared are more committed to remain in the profession. The preparation of and longevity of alternatively prepared teachers is an important consideration for policymakers when deciding whether alternative certification programs are a way to address the teacher shortage and create a stable work force (Jorissen, 2002a).

The method of teacher preparation and certification is an influential factor in determining a teacher's perceptions of preparedness for teaching (Justice, Greiner, & Anderson, 2003). Studies of teachers from two alternative certification programs in Texas and Georgia found that traditionally certified teachers were more positive about their long-term commitment to education than alternatively certified teachers (Guyton, Fox, & Sisk, 1991; Lutz & Hutton, 1989). Likewise, in their study of traditionally and emergency prepared teachers in Texas, Justice et al. (2003) found that emergency certified teachers typically felt sufficiently less prepared in the classroom and were less likely to remain in education.

In contrast, Stoddard (1990) found that over a three year period candidates trained through a Los Angeles program remained in education at an average higher than traditional certified teachers based on the national average. Similarly, following their training, a group of alternatively certified teachers from the University of Tennessee were found to be teaching at a rate of 89%, compared to 60% of traditionally certified teachers who began at the same time (Zeichner & Schulte, 2001). In addition, Natriello and Zumwalt (1992) found that the most striking differences were not between college prepared and alternatively certified teachers, but that subject matter and grade level differences were important in considering the consequences

of alternate route programs. For educators, the desire and intention of employees to seek additional educational advancement, through additional coursework or degrees can imply organizational and professional commitment (Blau & Scott, 1962; Grusky, 1966).

According to Darling-Hammond (1992), the decision for alternate route teachers to remain in teaching is a factor of preparation. The better prepared a teacher is, the more satisfied the teacher will be; therefore, the likelihood of the teacher having organizational and professional commitment will increase. In addition, Darling-Hammond (1992) found that alternative preparation programs that combine pedagogical training with supervised field experience are more likely to produce teachers who are committed to remaining in education.

Measurement of Organizational Commitment

Growing interest in organizational commitment has contributed to the conceptual richness of the definition, which has in turn led to diverse approaches in measuring this construct (Mowday et al., 1982). An instrument based on the behavioral approach to organizational commitment, originating from the side-bet theory of Becker (1960), can be used to measure organizational commitment. Based on this theory, an individual is bound to an organization by extraneous factors, such as income, hierarchical position, and internal factors, such as comfort and interpersonal relations. The instrument questions respondents on two hypothetically situations to discover the likelihood of their leaving the organization. Respondents have six response choices based on various levels of inducement in pay, status, responsibility, job freedom, and opportunity for promotion. However, this instrument does not fully measure all concepts related to behavioral or attitudinal commitment; therefore, it was not be used to measure the organizational commitment of alternatively certified teachers (Cohen, 2003).

Drawing on the work of Porter et al. (1974), researchers created the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ). Mowday et al. (1979) identified the items in the instrument as the means “to tap the three aspects of our definition of commitment” (p. 227), meaning a strong belief in and acceptance of the organization’s goals and values, a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization, and a strong desire to maintain membership in the organization. Numerous studies on nonprofessional and professional groups, including educators, have used the OCQ to measure organizational commitment (Buchanan, 1974; Mowday et al., 1979, 1982; Steers, 1977). The OCQ has been established as a credible measure for the study of organizational commitment (Kadyschuk, 1997).

The Organizational Commitment Questionnaire is a well-known instrument that has been used in numerous studies and is recognized as one of the best indicators of attitudinal organizational commitment. Studies by Huang (2001), Morris, Steers, and Koch (1979), Mowday, Porter, and Dublin (1974), Steers (1977), Steers and Spencer (1977), Stone and Porter (1975), and Zaccaro and Dobbins (1989), successfully used the OCQ to measure the organizational commitment of employees in numerous areas. Other studies have used the OCQ to specifically measure the organizational commitment of teachers (Billingsley & Cross, 1992; Bogler & Somech, 2004; Moran, 2005; Reames & Spencer, 1998).

The OCQ instrument is in the public domain and the authors have granted blanket permission for its use. In several studies, a nine-item short-form of the instrument using only positively worded items has been used (Mowday et al., 1979). The traditional OCQ; however, includes 15 items with a seven-point Likert scale for measurement. Some items, including numbers 3, 7, 9, 11, 12, and 15, were negatively phrased and reverse scored to reduce response bias. A total organizational commitment score was computed by summing the scores for the 15

items, providing a possible overall commitment score between 15 and 90. The OCQ has been used to measure the commitment of various groups in numerous studies, including public employees, university employees, hospital employees, bank employees, telephone company employees, scientists and engineers, auto company managers, psychiatric technicians, and retail management trainees. Overall, the array of job classifications and work organizations that have used the OCQ was thought to be sufficiently broad to tap a reasonably representative sample of the working population and be useful for measuring the commitment of other groups (Mowday et al., 1979).

Measurement of Professional Commitment

Inconsistencies in the way that professional commitment has been defined and conceptualized have reflected in the way that it is measured. These inconsistencies prevent research on occupational commitment from advancing valid, generalizable conclusions. Carson and Bedeian (1994) conceptualized career commitment as a multi-dimensional construct made of three components: career identify, career planning, and career resilience. The Carson and Bedeian (1994) career commitment measure includes 12 items measured with a Likert scale. However, more research on this scale was needed in order to form a firm conclusion about the usefulness of the instrument; therefore, Blau's Career Commitment Scale was considered more useful for measuring professional commitment (Cohen, 2003).

Arranya and Jacobson (1975) measured degree of occupational commitment by asking if one would be willing to remain in one's occupation if offered incentives to change, such as pay and self-development. Downing, Dunlap, Hadley, and Farrell (1978) and Scarpello and Vandenberg (1986) measured occupational commitment in terms of the individual's desire to remain in a profession following an assessment of feasible alternatives. Price and Mueller (1981)

approached professional commitment by asking individuals the extent to which they engage in certain professionally related activities, such as attending meetings, joining associations, or reading journals. Professional commitment has also been operationalized by identifying an individual's reluctance to leave the professional role (Thornton, 1970). However, the problem with each of these measures was that each lacks supporting reliability and validity information (Blau, 1988); therefore, none are appropriate for the study of alternatively certified teachers.

Arranya et al. (1986) used the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) as a basis for constructing a professional commitment measure. They justified this approach in several ways. According to Arranya et al. (1986) both profession and organization are objects of commitment and the concept of commitment is independent of any particular factor. In addition, they showed that they were following a methodology used by numerous other researchers from 1973 to 1984. Finally, Arranya et al. (1986) found the internal consistency of the OCQ to be .91 when "organization" was replaced by "profession" in their work. However, due to the fact that much research on the validity and reliability of this measure is directed from studies where "organization" is used, Blau's (1985) Career Commitment Scale would seem to be a better instrument for measuring the professional commitment of alternatively certified teachers.

Blau's *Career Commitment Scale* (CCS) has been extensively used to determine the extent to which an individual identifies with and values his or her profession and the level of effort expended toward acquiring knowledge (Blau, 1985, 1988, 1989; Blau et al., 2003; Carson et al., 1996; Cohen 1996). To date, Blau's (1985) Career Commitment Scale is short, reliable, and has demonstrated adequate validity. The instrument has less potential for overlap with other commitment measures, because it does not rely on the substitution of career wording in a preexisting job involvement or organizational commitment instrument (Morrow, 1993). In

addition, correlational and factor analytic data supported the independence of career commitment relative to job involvement and organizational commitments in studies of professional and nonprofessional employees, including nurses (Blau, 1985), newspaper employees (Blau, 1988), insurance company employees (Blau, 1988), and bank tellers (Blau, 1989). Due to this strong evidence of independence from other measures, Blau's (1985) career commitment measure is preferable to numerous other measures (Morrow, 1993).

Blau's (1985) Career Commitment Scale is a well-established instrument often used to measure professional commitment. Studies by Aryee and Tan (1992), Blau (1985, 1988, 1989), and used Blau's Career Commitment Scale to measure professional commitment. Moran (2005) also used the instrument to measure the professional commitment of alternatively certified Career and Technical Education Teachers. According to Morrow (1993), the CCS should be used in studies that explore career commitment "because it appears to be the cleanest conceptualization with the best psychometric properties" (p. 31).

Various forms of Blau's Career Commitment Scale have been used. One common form of the instrument includes eight items with a seven-point Likert scale, in an attempt to gauge a person's commitment to his or her career. Negatively phrased and reverse scored items, including item numbers 1, 3, and 7, were included in order to reduce response bias (Blau, 1988). A total professional commitment score was computed by summing the scores for the eight items, providing a possible overall commitment score between 8 and 48 (Cohen, 2003). The instrument has been found to have discriminant validity and generalizability (Blau, 1985, 1988, 1989). Overall, Blau's CCS scale was one of the better approaches to defining and measuring professional commitment (Cohen, 2003).

Rationale for Studying Organizational and Professional Commitment

Commitment is a phenomenon that occurs in all social systems (Cohen, 2003). As a research topic, commitment is important regardless of the setting because it increases the comprehension of the phenomenon and can assist individuals in better understanding the nature of the psychological processes through which people choose to identify with objects in their environment and how they find purpose in life (Mowday et al., 1982). Lack of loyalty, or commitment, is cited as a determinant for employee absenteeism, turnover, reduced effort expenditure, theft, job dissatisfaction, and unwillingness to relocate (Morrow, 1993).

Since the development of research studies on commitment there has been tension as to the relationship between organizational and professional commitment. Early studies of role conflict found that organizations often place individuals into two simultaneous roles with incompatible demands, indicating an inherent conflict between organizational and professional commitment (Flango & Brumbaugh, 1974; Kahn, Wolfe, Quinn, Snoek, & Rosenthal, 1964; Rizzo et al., 1970). Reichers (1985) also suggested that role conflicts might arise when individuals are involved with groups that have different goals. Moreover, Gouldner (1957) implied that an individual cannot have strong attachments to both an organization and profession. In addition, Wallace (1993) summarized the literature on the two dimensions as commonly assuming “an inherent conflict between professional and organizational goals” (p. 334).

However, other researchers have refuted the necessity of an either-or choice of organizational and professional commitment and advocated the potential compatibility between the two orientations (Ritzer & Trice, 1969; Thornton, 1970). Furthermore, Miller and Wager (1971) stated, “The two orientations need not be mutually exclusive when the expectations and role demands of profession and organization remain congruent” (p. 34). Organizational and

professional commitment are both forms of work commitment, but they differ with respect to the focus of the commitment. While organizational commitment focuses on commitment to a particular organization (a school, school system, company, etc.); professional commitment is concerned with commitment to one's occupation, career, or profession. In addition to the difference in the focal point of the commitment, Blau and Lunz (1998) and Morrow (1993) suggested that the two commitment forms differed in terms of stability, contending that professional commitment was less likely to be influenced by situational elements. There is ample evidence throughout research that these commitment forms are related, but distinguishable. In meta-analysis, Lee et al., (2000), Mathieu and Zajac (1990), and Wallace (1993) each found that organizational commitment was significantly correlated with professional commitment.

It is important to examine commitment related to educators, where the distinction between organizational and professional commitment is particularly important (Reyes, 1990). Shedd and Bachrach (1991) examined the "tangled hierarchies" that define the working life of teachers and found that professional and organizational roles of teachers often compete against each other. Hoy and Miskel (1991) also investigated the conflicting interaction between the two commitment types. Work commitment includes commitment to a number of objects, such as the organization, work group, occupation, union, or one's job. Work commitment forms have been shown to predict important outcomes, including turnover, turnover intentions, performance, job satisfaction, presocial organizational behavior, absenteeism, and tardiness (Cohen, 1999). Therefore, a committed person believes strongly in the goals and values of an object, complies with orders and expectations voluntarily, exerts considerable effort beyond minimal

expectations, and strongly desires to maintain an affiliation with the object (Mowday et al., 1982).

In general, research has supported an association between individuals' occupational concerns and orientations and their intentions and concerns toward their organization (Lachman & Arranya, 1986). It is important to empirically investigate the nature of professional and organizational commitment. Research shows that employees who are highly committed to both their profession and organization may perform better than less committed ones, which results in improved overall effectiveness of an organization (Arranya & Ferris, 1984; Steers, 1977). Professional commitment is considered to be a major determinant of organizational effectiveness (Pfeffer, 1994) and individual motivation (Hackman & Lawler, 1971). Organizational commitment has been found to affect employee identification with the organization, level of effort, and turnover (Stroh & Reilly, 1997). In education, both types of commitment, to the organization and the profession, are necessary for accomplishing school objectives, initiating changes in teachers' practices, and improving teacher professionalism (Bredeson, Fruth, & Kasten, 1983; Firestone & Pennell, 1993; Wallace, 1993).

Due to the demand for highly qualified teachers, organizational and professional commitments are important areas of interest related to alternatively certified teachers. Committed individuals are more likely to remain with the organization, work toward the organizational goals, and invest more effort in their jobs (Somech & Bogler, 2002). The study of commitment is necessary given the importance of retaining teachers in the workplace and building a strong teaching force. For alternatively certified teachers, it is necessary to distinguish between commitment to the profession of teaching and commitment to an employing school. Research into the organizational and professional commitment of alternatively certified teachers provides a

valuable contribution to the area of alternative certification and teacher retention (Billingsley & Cross, 1992).

Recruiting candidates into alternative preparation programs is only the first step toward addressing the need for more qualified teachers. Retaining teachers prepared through alternative certification programs is critical, because if these teachers do not remain committed to the profession and to their organizations, the investment in these programs is futile. In addition, if alternatively certified teachers do not remain in education, the teacher shortage will continue to grow. By better understanding the experiences and views of alternatively certified teachers, policymakers may be better equipped to design working and learning environments that encourage the teachers' organizational and professional commitment (Jorissen, 2002a).

The study of Georgia Teacher Alternative Preparation Program candidates who received training through the Northwest Georgia Regional Educational Service Agency will use the constructs of organizational and professional commitment and be guided by the theoretical frameworks of both. Each construct will be examined distinctly. Although the relationship between organizational and professional commitment is not the main emphasis of the study, a correlation analysis was conducted to discover if there was a relationship between the two variables following the individual analysis of each.

Summary

Public schools throughout the United States are facing a widely publicized shortage of qualified teachers. In the next decade, more than 2 million new teachers will be needed (The White House, 2002). In addition, these teachers need to meet the *high standards of quality* as dictated by the No Child Left Behind Act (United States General Accounting Office, 2003). In response to the anticipated shortage, 48 states have alternative certification programs (National

Center for Alternative Certification, 2010). Recruiting candidates into alternative preparation programs is only the first step toward addressing the need for more qualified teachers. The organizational and professional commitment of alternatively prepared teachers is an important consideration for policymakers when deciding whether alternative certification programs are a way to address the teacher shortage and provide a stable workforce (Jorissen, 2002a).

Throughout history, Americans have embraced education as a cornerstone of society. This is witnessed by the long tradition of free public education and the active involvement of citizens in the governance of schools (NBPTS, 2004). All aspects of education, including teacher preparation, have changed over the past two centuries. From the 1700's and "academies" to train teachers (Parker, 1990) to recent times with the implementation of departments of education at colleges and universities to train traditional teachers, the emphasis on teacher quality through coursework and school-based field experiences has increased (Hofer, 1997). In addition, in the 1980's and 1990's, several landmark reports also shed light on the need for improved teacher preparation programs (Hurst et al., 2003). In a response to these federal reform efforts, development of teacher education programs measured by national standards for effective teaching has been a focus (Cochran-Smith, 2005).

As the looming shortage of teachers in the United States became more evident in the 1980's, alternative teacher certification routes began to emerge as a means of both increasing the supply of teachers and addressing teacher quality (Feistritzer, 2004). Although numerous states have instituted alternative certification models, there is no real consensus on what "alternative certification" means. "Alternative certification" and "alternative licensure" are used interchangeably and include any routes to teacher certification other than the pre-service four-year baccalaureate approach (Ruhland & Bremer, 2003). Alternate route programs are broadly

defined as a method of entry into the profession of teaching that does not require completion of a traditional teacher education program (Bradshaw, 1998). The standards vary significantly from state to state on the entry and exit requirements for teacher preparation programs, tests required for licensure, and licensure maintenance requirements (Hofer, 1997; Hurst et al., 2003).

The state of Georgia began identifying critical shortage areas in 1998-1999 and has since established eight different alternative certification routes to help alleviate the teacher shortage (Feistritzer, 2004; Georgia Department of Education, n.d.). The Georgia Teacher Alternative Preparation Program is one specific program, instituted in 2000 in an effort to help teachers in a variety of certification areas. The Georgia TAPP program allows candidates to attain the pedagogical knowledge and skills necessary for successful entry into teaching (Georgia Professional Standards Commission, 2008). Since its inception in 2000, the program has certified over 2,900 teachers in more than 80 areas (Georgia Professional Standards Commission, n.d.).

The decision for alternate route teachers to remain in teaching is a factor of preparation. Retaining teachers prepared through alternative certification programs is critical, because if these teachers do not remain committed to the profession and to their organizations, the investment in these programs is futile (Darling-Hammond, 1992). In addition, if alternatively certified teachers do not remain in education, the teacher shortage will continue to grow. Policymakers may be better equipped to design working and learning environments that encourage teachers' organizational and professional commitment if they have a better understanding of Georgia TAPP certified teachers' experiences and views (Jorissen, 2002b).

In order to help measure the preparation of Georgia teachers, the *Georgia Framework for Teaching* was adopted by the Georgia Department of Education (DOE), the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (PSC), and the University System of Georgia Board of Regents (BOR) to

represent the state definition of quality teaching (Georgia Systematic Teacher Education Program, 2005). The *Framework* describes the knowledge, skills and dispositions identified by research that effective teachers display when they have a positive impact on student learning (Overview of the Integrated Standards, 2006).

Organizational and professional commitment are important areas of interest related to alternatively certified teachers. Due to the teacher shortage, schools will need teachers who are organizationally and professionally committed to school goals and values. Committed individuals are more likely to remain with the organization, work toward the organizational goals, and invest more effort in their jobs (Somech & Bogler, 2002). By understanding the commitment of alternatively certified teachers, policymakers will be able to make informed decisions about continuing such programs.

Organizational and professional commitments are related concepts; however, the division between the two is important. Organizational commitment focuses on commitment to a single organization such as a school or business. The definition typically used for organizational commitment was created by Mowday et al. (1982), “the relative strength of an individual’s identification with and involvement in a particular organization” (p. 27). Numerous studies have found that organizational commitment is a strong predictor of employee turnover and turnover intentions (Allen & Meyer, 1996; Lee et al., 2000; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Meyer et al., 1993; Mowday et al., 1979; Tett & Meyer, 1993).

Mowday et al. (1979) created the Occupational Commitment Questionnaire instrument as a means of tapping into the three aspects of the definition of commitment. The OCQ has been established as a measure for the study of organizational commitment (Kadyschuk, 1997). Numerous studies on nonprofessional and professional groups, including educators, have used

the OCQ to measure organizational commitment (Buchanan, 1974; Mowday et al., 1979, 1982; Steers, 1977).

Professional commitment is a behavioral view of commitment (Reichers, 1985). The definition is “one’s attitude towards one’s vocation, including a profession” (Blau, 1988, p.29). Professional commitment of teachers reflects the teachers’ attitude toward their vocation and profession and is crucial to achieving good instruction. It is a key factor when determining the organizational commitment of teachers (Somech & Bogler, 2002).

Blau (1988) created the Career Commitment Scale that has been extensively used to determine the extent to which an individual identifies with and values his or her profession and the level of effort expended toward acquiring relevant knowledge. Studies have found professional commitment to be a predictor of occupation and job withdrawal intentions (Blau, 1985, 1988, 1989; Blau et al, 2003; Carson et al., 1996; Cohen 1996).

Organizational and professional commitments are important areas related to alternatively certified teachers (Somech & Bogler, 2002). Due to the teacher shortage, schools need teachers who are committed to local goals and values. Committed individuals are more likely to remain with the organization, work toward organizational goals, and invest greater effort in their jobs (Somech & Bogler, 2002). Further research into the organizational and professional commitment of Georgia TAPP teachers, based on age, gender, years of work experience before entering Georgia TAPP, and grade(s) taught provided a valuable contribution to the area of alternative certification and teacher retention.

Chapter 3

Method

The purpose of this descriptive survey study was to examine Georgia Teacher Alternative Preparation Program certified educators in terms of their organizational commitment, professional commitment, and perceptions of adequate preparation. Several independent variables were collected for use in the statistical analyses and others were collected to help explain the demographics of the sample population. Independent variables including age (Angle & Perry, 1981; Dornstein & Matalon, 1989; Hrebiniak, 1974; Hrebiniak & Alutto, 1972; Mowday et al., 1982; Parasuraman & Nachman, 1987; Welsch & Lavan, 1981), gender (Adam & Baer, 1984; Angle & Perry, 1981; Dinham, 1994; Epstein, 1981; Hrebiniak & Alutto, 1972; Reyes 1989; 1990), years of teaching experience (Grusky, 1966; Hrebiniak & Alutto, 1972; Mowday et al., 1982; Steers, 1977; Welsch & Lavan, 1981), years of work experience before entering Georgia TAPP (Angle & Perry, 1981; Betancourt-Smith et al., 1994; Dornstein & Matalon, 1989; Hrebiniak, 1974; Mowday et al., 1982; Wallace, 1993), certification content area (Dvorak, 1993; Kirby & Grissmer, 1993), and grade(s) taught (Konanc, 1996) were used as a means of composing groups for comparison.

According to Mowday et al. (1982), organizational commitment is “the relative strength of an individual’s identification with and involvement in a particular organization” (p. 27). Professional commitment was defined as “one’s attitude towards one’s vocation, including a profession” (Blau, 1988, p. 89). For this study, organizational commitment was measured based on the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCS; Mowday et al., 1979), and professional commitment was measured using Blau’s Career Commitment Scale (Blau, 1988).

The results of this study contribute to the existing body of literature on teacher commitment and alternative certification. The requirements in No Child Left Behind have put pressure on states, districts, and schools to find teachers that are *highly qualified* and committed to remain in the classroom (Humphrey, Wechsler, Bosetti, Wayne, & Adelman, 2002). By understanding the commitment of alternatively certified teachers, policymakers will be able to make informed decisions about the delivery and continuation of such programs.

Furthermore, the results of this study help to fill the deficiency of information that was available about the Georgia Teacher Alternative Preparation Program (Georgia TAPP). According to the Georgia Professional Standards Commission in Georgia (2001), “Georgia TAPP seeks to equip teacher-candidates with the skills to endure a reasonable expectation of initial success in their classrooms and to put in place supervised internship/induction program that will help them move toward subsequent mastery of teaching”. However, little research is available related to the preparation or commitment of these teachers. This study led to increased knowledge about the outcomes and commitment of teachers certified through Georgia TAPP, which could lead to changes or improvements that may be necessary to strengthen the program. The specific research objectives addressed in this study were:

1. Provide a descriptive profile of teachers certified through the Georgia Teacher Alternative Preparation Program (Georgia TAPP) who received training from Northwest Georgia RESA since 2001.
2. Compare the organizational commitment of Georgia TAPP teachers who received training through NW Georgia RESA since 2001 by age, gender, years of work experience before entering Georgia TAPP, and grade(s) taught.

3. Compare the professional commitment of Georgia TAPP teachers who received training through NW Georgia RESA since 2001 by age, gender, years of work experience before entering Georgia TAPP, and grade(s) taught.
4. Compare the perceptions of adequate preparation of Georgia TAPP teachers who received training through NW Georgia RESA since 2001 by age, gender, years of work experience before entering Georgia TAPP, and grade(s) taught.
5. Determine the relationship between perceptions of adequate preparation, organizational commitment, and professional commitment of Georgia TAPP teachers who received training through NW Georgia RESA since 2001.

Design

The research design for this study was a descriptive survey. Survey research is typically used to collect data from a sample and generalize to a population in order to make inferences about the attitudes and characteristics of the population. Survey studies are often used because of their economical value. They are typically inexpensive to conduct and provide a rapid turn around for data collection. Also, the advantage of being able to identify attributes of a large population from a small sample of individuals is beneficial (Creswell, 2003).

This study examined Georgia Teacher Alternative Preparation Program certified educators using age, gender, years of previous work experience before entering Georgia TAPP, and grade(s) taught as independent variables. A descriptive cross-sectional survey was used for this study because only one group was being studied and respondents were only asked to respond once to the survey. The group of participants could not be randomly selected and the data for the study was collected after teachers had received training and became certified. This was the best approach because it allowed for the exploration the perceptions of adequate preparation,

organizational commitment and professional commitment of Georgia TAPP certified teachers based on the independent variables (Schenker & Rumrill, 2004).

Participants

The population for this study was all teachers who received initial teaching certification through the Georgia Teacher Alternative Preparation Program since 2001. However, due to geographical limits, information constraints, research interests, and time concerns, an accessible group of Georgia TAPP teachers certified through the Northwest Georgia Regional Educational Service Agency from 2001-2007 was used as a convenience sample.

Although convenience sampling allowed for participants who met specific criteria to be identified and included in the study, the constraint of a convenience sample is that the generalizability of results is limited. Bias often occurs in non-random sampling. Undercoverage, where some members of the population are inadequately represented, and nonresponse bias, where individuals chosen for the sample are unwilling or unable to participate, are two common types of selection bias that occur in a convenience sample (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2003).

Northwest Georgia RESA serves 16 Georgia city and county school systems: (a) Bartow County, (b) Bremen City, (c) Calhoun City, (d) Cartersville City, (e) Catoosa County, (f) Chattooga County, (g) Chickamauga City, (h) Dade County, (i) Floyd County, (j) Gordon County, (k) Haralson County, (l) Paulding County, (m) Polk County, (n) Rome City, (o) Trion City, and (p) Walker County. However, Chickamauga City and Trion City have not hired any Georgia TAPP certified teachers. Data provided by participants and used to describe the sample included age, gender, race/ethnicity, years in current position, years of work experience before entering Georgia TAPP, content area certification, grade(s) taught, and perceptions of adequate preparation.

Available data from Northwest Georgia RESA indicated that the program had 233 Georgia TAPP completers from 2001-2007. However, 33 of the completers could not be located in order for the survey to be e-mailed. Of these, three left Georgia to teach out-of-state, four left teaching to stay home with children, two left to teach in private schools, one was in a doctoral program, one left to pursue full-time mission work, and two left teaching to return to their former careers due to financial reasons. The whereabouts of the other 20 were unknown (B. Dellenback, personal communication, November 7, 2008). Therefore, the e-mail request for participants to complete the survey was sent to 200 individuals. Initially, 146 participants submitted the survey electronically. This is a response rate of 73%. However, only 116 surveys were completed and usable. Therefore, the amended response rate was 58%, which is acceptable for an Internet survey (Dillman, 2000).

Total non-response refers to individuals failing to return the survey at all. Non-response bias exists when survey respondents are different from those who did not respond, demographically or attitudinally (Sax, Gilmartin, & Bryant, 2003). Non-response bias is a potentially serious problem when data is gathered, using either mail or Internet procedures. In order to assess the presence of non-response bias, Whipple and Muffo (1982) suggested comparing late-responders to early responders. They found that late-responders are often similar to non-responders, thus if early and late responders do not differ on the dependent variables measured that would indicate that non-response bias is not a factor. A comparison of independent variable measures in this study for participants responding in weeks 1 through 6 versus those responding from week 7 through 12, showed no significant differences in organizational commitment ($F(1,114) = 1.307, p = .255$), professional commitment

($F(1,114) = .224, p = .637$), or perceptions of adequate preparation ($F(1,114) = .612, p = .436$).

These results suggested that non-response bias did not significantly affect the results of this study.

Instrumentation

Three different questionnaire instruments were used in this study, including a researcher-developed demographic data questionnaire (see Appendix A), the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (see Appendix B) (Mowday et al., 1979), and a Career/Professional Commitment Scale (see Appendix C) (Blau, 1988). The demographic data questionnaire gathered descriptive data on participating teachers, including six questions to gather their perceptions of the adequacy of their preparation through the Georgia TAPP. Mowday et al. (1979) developed the 15-item Organizational Commitment Questionnaire as a measure of three defined aspects of commitment. Blau's Career Commitment Scale contains eight items and is used to measure career commitment with a likert-type response scale (Blau, 1988).

A demographic data questionnaire created by the researcher was used to collect basic demographic information and identify the sample population. Age, years of teaching, years of work experience before entering Georgia TAPP, and content area certification were all collected by asking for continuous data, but were categorized after collection. Other variables, including gender, race/ethnicity, and grade(s) taught, were collected and reported using categorical response options. Participants' views toward adequate preparation were also collected using categorical response choices. Age, gender, years of work experience before entering Georgia TAPP, and grade(s) taught were analyzed using the same categories as those used by the Georgia Professional Standards Commissions to report the demography of teachers in Georgia Public Schools (Georgia Professional Standards Commission, 2006). Race was consolidated to

categories of white, black, and other, because of the low population of minorities involved in teaching. Years of teaching experience was categorized into two ranges, 0 to 4 years and 5 years or longer, based on the demographic breakdown of experience used by the GAPSC and the number of years that the Georgia TAPP program has been in existence (Georgia Professional Standards Commission, 2006).

Content area of initial certification available for candidates was collected and reported categorically. Initially, categories were developed based on the teaching field options available through Georgia TAPP (Georgia Professional Standards Commission, 2001). However, due to small numbers in several categories, some categories were combined to represent how most schools departmentalize subjects. The categories for content area of teaching included academic areas (early childhood education, middle grades education, English, mathematics, science, social studies), special education, and electives (fine arts, physical education, foreign language, and career and technical education). Table 3.1 provides a breakdown of the categories that were used to organize participant demographic information.

Perceptions of adequate preparation was collected using researcher modified questions based on information from the content domains of the *Georgia Framework for Teaching* as part of the demographic data questionnaire. The *Framework* identifies knowledge, skills, dispositions, understandings, and other attributes of accomplished teaching. The six domains and associated indicators provide common language and terms for all stakeholders who are interested in quality teaching. The statements used for the instrument were modified to reflect personal statements of the participants, using the word “me” in order to measure perceptions of adequate preparation. Gilbert and Cramer (2008) studied the development and use of the Framework.

They found that alpha coefficients for each domain category ranged from 0.80 to 0.89, indicating that the instrument had sufficient reliability.

Symanoskie et al. (2006) assessed student teachers' preparation to teach using the complete *Georgia Framework for Teaching* standards, with 41 total indicator statements, grouped by the six domains of effective teaching. Initially, a five-point Likert-type scale, defined as 5= Always, 4= Most of the time, 3= Sometimes, 2= On occasion, 1= Never was used. For this study, response choices were changed to reflect the same, even 6-point Likert scale used for the Organizational Commitment and Professional Commitment questionnaires. An odd number of response choices tends to result in neutral answers (Choi & Pak, 2005). According to Frary (1996), researchers should avoid responses at the mid-point of the scale and neutral responses. With mid-point or neutral responses, there is no assurance that a participant choosing the middle scale position harbors a neutral opinion. The selection of the scale midpoint may result from ignorance, uncooperativeness, reading difficulty, reluctance to answer, or inapplicability (Choi & Pak, 2005).

Results from this portion of the demographic data questionnaire were summed for each individual, generating a perceptions of adequate preparation score between 6 and 36. Lower scores indicated stronger feelings of dissatisfaction related to adequate preparation, while higher scores indicated stronger feelings of satisfaction related to adequate preparation. The mean score for participants on perceptions of adequate preparation was 30.56, with a standard deviation of 7.14. The minimum score was a six and the maximum score was a 36. The reliability of the survey questions regarding perceptions of adequate preparation in this study yielded a Cronbach alpha of .951, suggesting that the reliability of the scale was acceptable for this sample.

*Table 3.1**Georgia Teacher Demography*

Variable	Response categories
Age	20-29
	30-39
	40 or older
Gender	Female
	Male
Race	White
	Black
	Other
Years of teaching experience	0-4 Years
	5 Years or More
Years of work experience (prior to entering Georgia TAPP)	0-4 Years
	5-9 Years
	10-14 Years
	15-19 Years
	20-24 Years
	25-29 Years
Grade(s) taught	30 Years or More
	P-5
	6-8
Content area of initial certification	9-12
	Academic
	Special Education
	Electives

The Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) was used to measure organizational commitment and modified for use in school situations (Mowday et al., 1979). The

OCQ is a well-known instrument that has been used in numerous studies and is recognized as one of the best indicators of organizational commitment. Studies by Steers (1977), Morris et al. (n.d), Mowday et al. (1974), Stone and Porter (1975), Steers and Spencer (1977), Huang (2001) successfully used the OCQ to measure the organizational commitment of employees in numerous areas. Other studies have used the OCQ to measure the organizational commitment of teachers specifically (Billingsley & Cross, 1992; Bogler & Somech, 2004; Moran, 2005; Reames & Spencer, 1998).

The OCQ instrument is in the public domain and the authors have granted blanket permission for its use. The original OCQ includes 15 items with a 7-point Likert scale for measurement. Response anchors for the questionnaire include, 7 = Strongly agree; 6 = Moderately agree; 5 = Slightly agree; 4 = Neither agree or disagree; 3 = Slightly disagree; 2 = Moderately disagree and 1 = Strongly disagree. Some items were negatively phrased and reverse scored to reduce response bias (Mowday et al., 1979). For this study, the instrument was revised to use the same 6-point scoring responses as was used in the personal data and Career Commitment instruments (Moran, 2005). This provided some consistency between the three instruments (Cohen, 2003).

A total organizational commitment score was computed by summing the scores for the 15 items, providing a possible overall commitment score between 15 and 90. Lower scores indicated stronger feelings of disagreement with the statements related to organizational commitment statements, while higher scores indicated stronger feelings of agreement related to statements of organizational commitment. Descriptive data for overall organizational commitment yielded a mean score of 73.17, with a standard deviation was 12.62. The minimum score for any participant was 24 and the maximum score was 90.

Internal consistency coefficients for the instrument ranged from .82 to .93, with a median of .90. Test-retest reliabilities for the OCQ were computed to range from .53 to .75. In addition, evidence of convergent validity, discriminant validity, and predictive validity was determined for the instrument (Mowday et al., 1979). The reliability of the OCQ in this study (Cronbach alpha=.914) was in line with previously reported reliability measures for this instrument.

Blau's (1985) Career Commitment Scale (CCS) was used to measure professional commitment. The CCS has been used in various studies to measure professional commitment. Studies by Aryee and Tan (1992), Moran (2005), Blau (1985), Blau (1988), Blau (1989) used Blau's Career Commitment Scale to measure professional commitment. According to Morrow (1993), the CCS should be used in studies that explore career commitment "because it appears to be the cleanest conceptualization with the best psychometric properties" (p. 31).

Blau's CCS instrument includes eight items with a 7-point Likert scale. Response anchors for the questionnaire include, 7 = Strongly agree; 6 = Moderately agree; 5 = Slightly agree; 4 = Neither agree nor disagree; 3 = Slightly disagree; 2 = Moderately disagree and 1 = Strongly disagree. Negatively phrased and reverse scored items were included in order to reduce response bias. For this study, permission was requested (see Appendix D) and granted (See Appendix E) from the author to revise the instrument to use the same 6-point scoring responses as are used in the OCQ. This provided some consistency between the three instruments (Cohen, 2003).

A total professional commitment score was computed by summing the scores for the 8 items, providing a possible overall commitment score between 8 and 48 (Cohen, 2003). Lower scores indicated stronger feelings of participants towards disagreement with professional commitment statements, while higher scores indicated stronger feelings of agreement related to statements of professional commitment. Descriptive data for professional commitment produced

a mean score of 36.87, with a standard deviation of 5.42. The minimum score was a 13 and the maximum score was a 43.

Previous studies conducted using Blau's Career Commitment Scale yielded internal consistency coefficients ranging from .82 to .92 (Aryee & Tan, 1992; Blau, 1988, 1989; Goulet & Singh, 2002). Discriminant and convergent validity for the Career Commitment Scale was found to range across occupations (Blau, 1988, 1989). Blau's CCS produced a Cronbach alpha of .875 in this study, suggesting that reliability of the scale is acceptable for this sample.

Procedures

Prior to data collection, the University of Georgia Institutional Review Board (UGA IRB) granted permission to conduct research with human participants. Copies of the IRB approval request and the IRB approval notification are provided in Appendix F. This research study involved items and individuals that categorize it as an administrative review study.

The questionnaires in the study were administered using web based procedures. Web questionnaires have advantages over conventional questionnaires including reduced postal costs, elimination of missing data within the questionnaire, and no need to transfer data from written to electronic format. Web questionnaires can be designed to be interactive, tailored to individual responses, or provide feedback. Although Web questionnaires can be powerful research tools, there are limitations and costs. A researcher must have access to a Web server and the ability to use specialized software to design the questionnaire, process data, safeguard against security breaches, and protect the data from multiple submissions. Web questionnaires also require that participants have access to, and the ability to use an Internet browser (Gall et al., 2003). In 2003, nearly all schools, 93%, had Internet access available to teachers and students; therefore, most participants should have Internet access to complete the online surveys (Snyder & Tan, 2005).

To ensure participant anonymity, the questionnaire did not ask for any personally identifiable information such as a name or social security number. All participation in the research study was voluntary and posed no risks to those involved. No participant names were included in the questionnaires and data was reported in aggregate form. The purpose of the study was fully disclosed in an Internet-based consent document which served as a cover letter prior to participation in the Web-based survey (Dillman, 2000).

Mail and Internet survey procedures and timing recommended by Dillman (2000) were used to maximize the response rate of the survey. Georgia TAPP certified teachers were contacted anonymously by NW GA RESA, acting as a third party. Using a third party to collect data is one method to ensure the anonymity of participants. Georgia TAPP teachers included in the study were contacted by an e-mail from NW GA RESA, initially written by the researcher (see Appendix G). For the survey, the e-mail referred readers to a secure web site and provided them with username and password to log into the questionnaire. The original response rate was not high enough, so a secondary e-mail was sent to participants requesting their participation in the study (see Appendix H). Finally, a third follow-up e-mail was sent asking for participation in the study by any participants who had not already completed it, in an attempt to increase the response rate (see Appendix I).

The survey was completed online using clear navigational directions and radio buttons for selection of responses. An alternate means of completing the survey was provided in the cover letter for participants not wishing to complete the questionnaire on the Internet; however, no one requested this option. With online questionnaires, it is possible to construct the survey so that all questions must be answered. However, items in the study were formatted to allow participants to skip questions they did not want to answer. This was helpful in the event that a

participant did not understand what a question was asking or did not feel comfortable answering a question. All collected data was reported in aggregate form with no individual data cited (Dillman, 2000).

Although 146 individuals submitted surveys, only 116 were usable due to missing data. Rubin (1976) outlined three assumptions to explain the conditions under which missing data should be categorized. Missing not at random (MNAR) is one assumption and results when the likelihood of missing values of the variable X is directly related to the value of X . Missing completely at random (MCAR) is the second assumption. This means that the probability that an observation (X_i) is missing is unrelated to the value of (X_i) or to the value of other variables. Missing at random (MAR) is the third mechanism for defining missing values. MAR assumes that missing values on a variable X can be related to other variables measured in the survey, but must be unrelated to the underlying X values (Howell, 2009). It was determined that missing data for this study was missing at random. Data could be missing for several reasons, such as equipment malfunction, illness of participant, or even as a result of the data collection procedure (Peugh & Enders, 2004).

Due to data missing at random, listwise deletion was used to omit or discard all cases with missing values on one or more variables (Peugh & Enders, 2004). Listwise deletion is the most common approach to handling missing data. Although this resulted in a substantial decrease in the sample size (16.44%) available for analysis, it does have advantages. Specifically, under the assumption that data was missing at random, listwise deletion results in unbiased parameter estimates. However, the disadvantage of listwise deletion is that the smaller sample size results in lower power (Peugh & Enders, 2004).

Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) PASW Statistics GradPack version 17. The analysis of data began with descriptive statistics of responding Georgia Teacher Alternative Preparation Program certified teachers who received training through Northwest Georgia RESA since 2001. Descriptive data included information on age, gender, race, years in teaching, years of work experience before entering Georgia TAPP, content area certification, and grades taught. Table 3.2 overviews the statistical analysis strategy for each question.

Table 3.2

Analysis Strategy

Research objective	Independent variable	Dependent variable	Statistical analysis
Provide a descriptive profile of teachers certified through the Georgia Teacher Alternative Preparation Program (Georgia TAPP) who received training from Northwest Georgia RESA since 2001.	Age 1= 20-29 2=30-39 3=40 and older		Descriptive Profile Frequency (for all variables)
	Gender 1=Male 2=Female		Mean Median Mode Range
	Race 1=White 2=Black 3=Other		Standard deviation (for age, years in teaching, years of experience before entering Georgia TAPP)
	Years in teaching 1=1 to 4 Years 2=5 Years or More		

Compare the organizational commitment of Georgia TAPP teachers who received training through NW Georgia RESA since 2001 by age, gender, years of work experience before entering Georgia TAPP, and grade(s) taught.	Years of work experience before entering Georgia TAPP 1=0-4 2=5-9 3=10-14 4=15-19 5=20-24 6=25-29 7=30 or more	Organizational commitment ▪ General satisfaction raw scores from Organizational Commitment Questionnaire	Four 1-way ANOVAs
	Content Area Certification 1=Academic 2=Special Education 3=Elective		
	Grade(s) Taught 1= P-5 2= 6-8 3= 9-12		
	Age 1=20-29 2=30-39 3=40 and older		
	Gender 1=Male 2=Female		
	Years of work experience before entering Georgia TAPP 1=0-4 2=5-9 3=10-14 4=15-19 5=20-24 6=25-29 7=30 or more		
	Grade(s) Taught 1=P-5 2=6-8 3=9-12		

Compare the professional commitment of Georgia TAPP teachers who received training through NW Georgia RESA since 2001 by age, gender, years of work experience before entering Georgia TAPP, and grade(s) taught.

Age
1=20-29
2=30-39
3=40 and older

Gender
1=Male
2=Female

Years of work experience before entering Georgia TAPP
1=0-4
2=5-9
3=10-14
4=15-19
5=20-24
6=25-29
7=30 or more

Grade(s) Taught
1=P-5
2=6-8
3=9-12

Professional commitment

Four 1-way ANOVAs

- General satisfaction raw scores from Professional Commitment Scale

Compare the perceptions of adequate preparation of Georgia TAPP teachers who received training through NW Georgia RESA since 2001 by age, gender, years of work experience before entering Georgia TAPP, and grade(s) taught.

Age
1=20-29
2=30-39
3=40 and older

Gender
1=Male
2=Female

Years of work experience before entering Georgia TAPP
1=0-4
2=5-9
3=10-14
4=15-19
5=20-24
6=25-29
7=30 or more

Grade(s) Taught
1=P-5
2=6-8
3=9-12

Perceptions of adequate preparation

Four 1-way ANOVAs

- General satisfaction raw scores Personal Data Questionnaire

Determine the relationship between perceptions of adequate preparation, organizational commitment, and professional commitment of Georgia TAPP teachers who received training through NW Georgia RESA since 2001.

Organizational commitment

- General satisfaction raw scores from Organizational Commitment Questionnaire

Professional commitment

- General satisfaction raw scores from Career Commitment Scale

Perceptions of Adequate Preparation

- General satisfaction raw scores from Personal Data Questionnaire

Three *Pearson r* correlations

Research objective one provided descriptive data about participants. Descriptive statistics present quantitative data in a manageable form or simplify large amounts of data in a sensible way. For the descriptive information collected, measures of central tendency and dispersion are provided. Measures of central tendency provide another set of statistical descriptions of data. Mean, median, and mode are the three central tendency measures. Mean or the average is typically the most commonly used method of describing central tendency. Median is the score or value found at the exact middle of the set of values. Mode provides the most frequently occurring value in a set of scores (Trochim, 2006).

Dispersion was measured in the study. Dispersion is the spread of the values around the central tendency (Trochim, 2006). Range and standard deviation are two common measures of dispersion. Range is the highest value minus the lowest value. Standard deviation illustrates the

relationship that a set of scores has to the mean of the sample. Standard deviation is a more accurate and detailed estimate of dispersion because an outlier can greatly exaggerate the range (Trochim, 2006).

For research objectives two through four, four separate one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) were used. An ANOVA is a parametric procedure that assumes multivariate normality, meaning that samples are drawn from a population that is normally distributed (Kerlinger & Lee, 2000). In an ANOVA, a ratio of observed differences is used to test hypotheses. The *F-ratio* uses the variance of group means as a measure of observed differences among groups. An advantage of using an ANOVA is that it reduces Type 1 error; however, sphericity may be lost (Ary, Jacobs, & Razavieh, 1972).

The basic assumptions of ANOVA are that groups formed by the independent variable are relatively equal in size and have similar variances on the dependent variable. Homogeneity of variance assumes that variances within groups are statistically the same. Variances are assumed to be homogeneous from group to group, within the limits of random variation (Kerlinger & Lee, 2000).

In this study, objectives two through four had four different grouping (independent) variables and one dependent variable, requiring four separate ANOVA tests. Each ANOVA produced an *F-ratio* (Garson, 2009). In an ANOVA, a significant *F* statistic ($p < .05$) indicates that the null hypotheses was rejected and there are differences somewhere in the data. An inspection of the means can tell which differences are important (Gall et al., 2003). In order to test the differences, more specific planned comparisons are needed when there are three or more groups. The research problem or theory should determine the appropriate statistical test (Kerlinger & Lee, 2000).

Tukey's Honestly Significant Difference (HSD) was the post hoc test that was run when statistically significant results were found. Tukey's HSD is a moderately conservative post hoc test. It calculated a new critical value that was used to evaluate the difference between any two pairs of means to determine if the difference was statistically significant (DeCoster, 2006). Tukey's HSD is the most widely used post hoc test in Psychology and behavioral sciences because it is a versatile, easily-calculated technique that simplifies and allows answers to ANOVA follow-up questions (Keppel & Wickens, 2004).

Tests of statistical significance are inappropriate for making inferences about practical significance of research results. Effect size is one useful technique for assessing the magnitude or practical significance of a difference between the means of two groups (Fraenkel & Wallen, 1996). The effect size was calculated when statistically significant results were found in order to help judge the practical significance of the study and interpret results. Effect size, the proportion of the variance in the dependent variable explained by the grouping or independent variable, was calculated for each comparative analysis that showed initial significance. Effect size is one determinant of statistical power, along with sample size, level of significance, and directionality. It is an estimate of the magnitude of a difference, relationship, or meaningfulness of the effect of each independent variable on each dependent variable. The measures used, absolute difference among group means, the shape of the score distribution, the participants included in the sample, and other possible factors could affect effect size (Gall et al., 2003).

Effect size takes into account the size of the difference between the means obtained, regardless of statistical significance (Frankel & Wallace, 1996). With effect size statistics, the higher the effect size, the greater the difference between two groups (Gall et al., 2003). When several populations are being compared with the omnibus F test, eta-squared or omega-squared

is the most common measure of effect size. With this, values range between zero and one, to reflect the proportion of variation in the response variable that is explained by the independent variable (Stevens, 1990). Other times, researchers prefer to use an index of effect that reports findings that can be translated in terms of measures taken, such as standardized mean difference. With this index, when two populations are compared, the difference between the sample means is divided by the pooled standard deviation. The observed difference between group means is expressed in units of standard deviation. Cohen's d is an appropriate effect size measure to use and is defined as the difference between two means divided by the pooled standard deviation of those means. Although not absolute, Cohen gives the following guidelines for measuring effect size: 0.2 is indicative of a small effect, 0.5 demonstrates a moderate effect size, and 0.8 is a large effect size (Olejnik & Hess, 2001).

For research objective five, correlations were conducted to discover the relationships between three variables, including perceptions of adequate preparation, organizational commitment, and professional commitment. Correlational research identifies traits, abilities, or conditions that covary, or correlate, with each other. Conducting a correlation analysis can help researchers understand certain related variables, conditions, or behaviors, predict future conditions or behaviors in one variable, based on what is currently known about another variable. In addition, correlational research can provide strong suggestions that one variable influences another; however, correlational research does not indicate cause and effect (Gall et al., 2003).

The *Pearson r* , or Pearson product-moment correlation, was used to explore the relationship between variables expressed in continuous interval data. Correlations are tested for significance in order to determine if the correlation is statistically significant. The highest possible coefficient of correlation is 1.0, either positive or negative. Correlations are considered

high if they are at $\pm .70$, moderate between $\pm .40$ and $\pm .60$, and low if they are between $\pm .20$.

The closer the 1.0, the more perfect the correlation between the variables. Calculating the standard error of estimate determines the degree of predictive accuracy, indicating the range of likely error inherent in predicting one variable from another. If a positive correlation is found to exist between variables, this indicates that as one variable increases, the other will also increase. A negative correlation indicates an inverse relationship among variables, where as one variable decreases the other increases or vice versa (Gall et al., 2003).

Chapter 4

Data Analysis

The purpose of this study was to examine Georgia Teacher Alternative Preparation Program certified educators in terms of their organizational commitment, professional commitment, and perceptions of adequate preparation. Several independent variables, including age, gender, years of teaching experience, years of work experience before entering Georgia TAPP, certification content area, and grade(s) taught were used to describe the sample population demographically. Specifically, the study addressed five major objectives:

1. Provide a descriptive profile of teachers certified through the Georgia Teacher Alternative Preparation Program (Georgia TAPP) who received training from Northwest Georgia RESA since 2001.
2. Compare the organizational commitment of Georgia TAPP teachers who received training through NW Georgia RESA since 2001 by age, gender, years of work experience before entering Georgia TAPP, and grade(s) taught.
3. Compare the professional commitment of Georgia TAPP teachers who received training through NW Georgia RESA since 2001 by age, gender, years of work experience before entering Georgia TAPP, and grade(s) taught.
4. Compare the perceptions of adequate preparation of Georgia TAPP teachers who received training through NW Georgia RESA since 2001 by age, gender, years of work experience before entering Georgia TAPP, and grade(s) taught.

5. Determine the relationship between perceptions of adequate preparation, organizational commitment, and professional commitment of Georgia TAPP teachers who received training through NW Georgia RESA since 2001.

This chapter presents the findings related to these five research objectives. Study analysis included descriptive statistics, analyses of variance, and correlations. Separate comparative analyses were conducted assessing the effect of each independent variable on each dependent variable.

Research Objectives

Research objective one.

Provide a descriptive profile of teachers certified through the Georgia Teacher Alternative Preparation Program who received training from Northwest Georgia RESA since 2001.

A single sample of 116 individuals who received initial teaching certification through the Georgia TAPP provided through NW GA RESA were studied. This sample participated in the online survey using the log in information provided in an e-mail sent by NW GA RESA serving as a third party.

The first demographic variable gathered on the alternatively certified teachers was age. The mean age of participants was 37.74 years, the median age was 37 years, and the mode was 29 years. The range of ages was 42 years, with the youngest participant being 23 and the oldest at age 65. The standard deviation was 8.65 years. As for the distribution of age groups, 26 (22.41%) participants were in the 20 to 29 age group, 48 (41.38%) were in the 30 to 39 age group, and 42 (36.21%) were in the 40 and older group.

With regard to gender, 78 (67.24%) participants were female and 38 (32.76%) were male. As for race, 102 (87.93%) respondents were White, 12 (10.34%) were Black, and 2 (1.72%) respondents described themselves as Other.

The mean number of years spent teaching for participants was 5.36 years, the median number of years spent teaching was 5 years, and the mode was 4 years. The range for total years teaching was 13 years and the standard deviation was 2.14 years. Regarding the distribution, 53 (45.69%) of participants had been teaching from one to four years while 63 (54.31%) had been teaching five or more years.

The mean number of years employed prior to teaching for participants was 9.53. The median number of years spent working prior to beginning teaching was 6.5 years and the mode was 0 years. The range of work experience before Georgia TAPP was 36 years, with the lowest number of years spent working before teaching being 0 and the maximum being 36. The standard deviation of years spent in working before teaching was 9.27 years. For the distribution, 49 (42.24%) of participants had worked between 0 and 4 years, 20 (17.24%) had worked between 5 and 9 years, 13 (11.21%) had worked 10 to 14 years, 13 (11.21%) had worked 15 to 19 years, 7 (6.03%) had worked 20 to 24 years, 10 (8.62%) had worked 25 to 29 years, and 4 (3.45%) had worked 30 or more years.

Respondents were asked what grade level they taught. Of respondents, 13 (11.21%) reported working with grades Pre-K through fifth, 42 (36.21%) taught in 6 through 8, and 61 (52.59%) taught in grades 9-12.

The GA TAPP participants were asked to identify the content area of certification they initially received through Georgia TAPP. Sixty (51.72%) participants taught academic content areas (elementary education, middle grades education, English, mathematics, science, and social

studies). Of the remaining participants, 42 (36.21%) taught special education and 14 (12.07%) taught elective content areas (fine arts, physical education, foreign language, and career and technical education).

Descriptive statistics, including the mean, standard deviation, minimum and maximum for all three instruments used in the study are shown in Table 4.1. Tables 4.2 and 4.3 provide the mean, standard deviation, and distributions for the statistically significant independent variables used to analyze organizational commitment, professional commitment, and perceptions of adequate preparation.

Table 4.1

Descriptive Statistics- Organizational Commitment, Professional Commitment, Perceptions of Adequate Preparation Instruments

Variable	Mean	SD	Minimum	Maximum
Organizational commitment	73.17	12.62	24	90
Professional commitment	36.87	5.42	13	43
Perceptions of adequate preparation	30.56	7.14	6	36

Table 4.2

Mean, Standard Deviation, and Distributions for Age

Variable	Total GA TAPP participants	%	Mean	SD
Age			37.74	8.642
<u>Distribution</u>				
20-29	26	22.41	27.62	1.53
30-39	48	41.38	34.83	3.06
40 or older	42	36.21	46.44	5.69

Table 4.3

Mean, Standard Deviation, and Distributions for Years of Work Experience before entering GA TAPP

Variable	Total GA TAPP participants	%	Mean	SD
Years of work experience before entering GA TAPP <u>Distribution</u>				
0 to 4 years	49	42.24	1.61	1.40
5 to 9 years	20	17.24	6.85	1.27
10 to 14 years	13	11.21	10.14	1.26
15 to 19 years	13	11.21	15.85	1.28
20 to 24 years	7	6.03	21.14	1.35
25 to 29 years	10	8.62	26.10	1.29
30 or more years	4	3.45	32.75	3.20

Research objective two.

Compare the organizational commitment of Georgia TAPP teachers who received training through NW Georgia RESA since 2001 by age, gender, years of work experience before entering Georgia TAPP, and grade(s) taught.

ANOVA results of organizational commitment by age are shown in Table 4.4. Results showed that a statistically significant difference did exist in relation to participant age. Using the results from the Tukey HSD post hoc test, the difference was found to be between participants in the 20 to 29 and 40 or older age groups. Specifically, participants in the 40 or older range had a

higher mean score than participants in the 20 to 29 range. The effect size for these groups was 0.461; indicating a moderate effect size and moderate practical significance.

Table 4.4

ANOVA- Organizational Commitment by Age

Source	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.
Between Groups	269.843	2	134.922	4.318	.016
Within Groups	3530.941	113	31.247		
Total	3800.784	115			

Other results for organizational commitment are shown in Tables 4.5 through 4.7.

These results showed that levels of organizational commitment did not differ significantly as a function of the participant's gender, years of work experience before entering Georgia TAPP, or grades taught.

Table 4.5

ANOVA- Organizational Commitment by Gender

Source	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.
Between Groups	7.279	1	7.279	.219	.641
Within Groups	3793.505	114	33.276		
Total	3800.784	115			

Table 4.6

ANOVA- Organizational Commitment by Years of Work Experience before entering Georgia TAPP

Source	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.
Between Groups	144.293	6	24.049	.717	.637
Within Groups	2656.492	109	33.546		
Total	3800.784	115			

Table 4.7

ANOVA- Organizational Commitment by Grades Taught

Source	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.
Between Groups	10.045	2	5.023	.150	.861
Within Groups	3790.739	113	33.546		
Total	3800.784	115			

Research objective three.

Compare the professional commitment of Georgia TAPP teachers who received training through NW Georgia RESA since 2001 by age, gender, years of work experience before entering Georgia TAPP, and grade(s) taught.

ANOVA results of professional commitment by age are shown in Table 4.8. Results showed that a statistically significant difference did exist for professional commitment in relation to participant age. Using the results from the Tukey HSD post hoc test, the significance was found to be between participants in the 30 to 39 and 40 or older age groups. Specifically, participants in the 40 or older range had a higher mean score than participants in the 30 to 39

range. The effect size for these groups was 0.258; therefore, this indicated there was a small effect size and small practical significance.

In addition to age, Table 4.9 shows a statistically significant result for professional commitment by years of work experience before entering Georgia TAPP was also found. The post hoc test, Tukey HSD, further shows that the statistical significance exists between participants in the 0 to 4 years of work experience prior to Georgia TAPP and participants in the 15 to 19 range for years of work experience before Georgia TAPP range. Specifically, participants with 15 to 19 years of work experience had higher a higher mean score than participants with 0 to 4 years of work experience. The effect size for these groups was 0.371; therefore, this indicated there was a small to moderate effect size and small to moderate practical significance.

Other results for professional commitment are shown in Tables 4.10 through 4.11. Results showed that levels of professional commitment did not differ significantly as a function of the participant's gender or grades taught.

Table 4.8

ANOVA- Professional Commitment by Age

Source	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.
Between Groups	115.222	2	57.611	4.570	.012
Within Groups	1424.666	113	12.608		
Total	1539.888	115			

*Table 4.9**ANOVA- Professional Commitment by Years of Work Experience before entering Georgia TAPP*

Source	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.
Between Groups	168.133	6	28.022	2.227	.046
Within Groups	1371.755	109	12.585		
Total	1539.888	115			

*Table 4.10**ANOVA- Professional Commitment by Gender*

Source	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1.797	1	1.797	.133	.716
Within Groups	1538.091	114	13.492		
Total	1539.888	115			

*Table 4.11**ANOVA- Professional Commitment by Grades Taught*

Source	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.
Between Groups	3.316	2	1.658	.122	.885
Within Groups	1536.572	113	13.598		
Total	1539.888	115			

Research objective four.

Compare the perceptions of adequate preparation of Georgia TAPP teachers who received training through NW Georgia RESA since 2001 by age, gender, years of work experience before entering Georgia TAPP, and grade(s) taught.

ANOVA results for perceptions of adequate preparation by age are shown in Table 4.12. Results showed statistically significant differences existed in relation to participant age. Using the results from the Tukey HSD post hoc test, a significant difference was found between participants in the 30 to 39 age range and the 40 and older age range. The 40 and older age group had a higher mean score than participants in the 30 to 39 group. The effect size for these groups was 0.431; therefore, this indicated there was a moderate effect size and moderate practical significance.

Other results for perceptions of adequate preparation are shown in Tables 4.13 through 4.15. These results show that levels of perceptions of adequate preparation did not differ significantly as a function of the participant's gender, years of work experience before entering Georgia TAPP, or grades taught.

Table 4.12

ANOVA- Perceptions of Adequate Preparation by Age

Source	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.
Between Groups	406.722	2	203.361	4.059	.020
Within Groups	5662.106	113	50.107		
Total	6068.828	115			

*Table 4.13**ANOVA- Perceptions of Adequate Preparation by Gender*

Source	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.
Between Groups	102.621	1	102.621	1.961	.164
Within Groups	5966.206	114	52.335		
Total	6068.828	115			

*Table 4.14**ANOVA- Perceptions of Adequate Preparation by Years of Work Experience before entering GA ia TAPP*

Source	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.
Between Groups	259.796	6	43.299	.812	.562
Within Groups	5809.031	109	53.294		
Total	6068.828	115			

*Table 4.15**ANOVA- Perceptions of Adequate Preparation by Grades Taught*

Source	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.
Between Groups	45.923	2	22.961	.431	.651
Within Groups	6022.905	113	53.300		
Total	6068.828	115			

Research objective five.

Determine the relationship between perceptions of adequate preparation, organizational commitment, and professional commitment of Georgia TAPP teachers who received training through NW Georgia RESA since 2001.

The correlation matrix shown in Table 4.16 displays the results for objective five. An examination of the perceptions of adequate preparation of Georgia TAPP teachers and organizational commitment revealed a low, positive, significant correlation. As adequate preparation increases or decreases, so does the teachers' organizational commitment. By squaring the correlation, $r^2 = .035$. Therefore, organizational commitment shared 3.5% of its variability with perceptions of adequate preparation.

An examination of the perceptions of adequate preparation of Georgia TAPP teachers and professional commitment also revealed a low, positive, significant correlation. As adequate preparation increases or decreases, so does the teachers' professional commitment. By squaring the correlation, $r^2 = .054$. Therefore, professional commitment shared 5.4% of its variability with perceptions of adequate preparation.

The correlation between organizational commitment and professional commitment found a low, positive, significant correlation. As organizational commitment increases or decreases, so does the teachers' professional commitment. By squaring the correlation, $r^2 = .095$. Therefore, organizational commitment shared 9.6% of its variability with perceptions of adequate preparation.

Table 4.16

Correlation Matrix for Organizational Commitment, Professional Commitment, and Perceptions of Adequate Preparation

		Organizational commitment	Professional commitment	Perceptions of adequate preparation
Organizational commitment	Pearson correlation	1		
	Sig. (2- tailed)			
	N	116		
Professional commitment	Pearson correlation	.309	1	
	Sig. (2- tailed)	.001*		
	N	116	116	
Perceptions of adequate preparation	Pearson correlation	.187	.232	1
	Sig. (2- tailed)	.044**	.012**	
	N	116	116	116

*Correlation is significant at the .01 level. ** Correlation is significant at the .05 level.

Additional Data

The original response rate for the surveys was 146, but the usable sample size was 116 after listwise deletion was performed. It was determined that missing data should be considered missing at random, meaning that the probability that an observation (X_i) is missing could be related to other variables, but is unrelated to the underlying value of (X_i). Data could be missing for several reasons, such as equipment malfunction, illness of a participant, or even as a result of the data collection procedure (Howell, 2009).

There were a total of 36 questions in the instruments used. Tables 4.17 through 4.20 show a summary of missing responses. Question five is the only question that had more than five respondents leave it unanswered. Nine participants left this question unanswered or wrote responses other than what the question asked. Question five asked, “How many years were you employed prior to beginning teaching through Georgia TAPP?” The most likely reason that individuals left this question unanswered was that they were unclear of what the question was asking. Participants may have been unsure if the question referred to only counting the years of employment after college, or included employment that occurred prior to attainment of a bachelor’s degree. Specifically, one participant answered the question by saying, “was not a teacher before starting TAPP” and another typed “Don't understand the question.” Both of these surveys were discarded using the listwise deletion process. This question could have been written more clearly to explain exactly what information the researcher wanted.

Table 4.17

Summary of Missing Responses from Personal Data Questionnaire (Questions 1-7)

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7
Number of missing responses	3	0	2	0	9	1	1

Table 4.18

Summary of Missing Responses from Personal Data Questionnaire- Perceptions of Adequate Preparation (Questions 8-13)

	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11	Q12	Q13
Number of missing responses	2	1	1	1	2	0

*Table 4.19**Summary of Missing Responses from Organizational Commitment Scale (Questions 14-28)*

	Q	Q	Q	Q	Q	Q	Q	Q	Q	Q	Q	Q	Q	Q	Q
	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
Number of missing responses	2	2	2	3	4	2	3	2	2	5	4	3	3	3	3

*Table 4.20**Summary of Missing Responses from Professional Commitment Scale (Questions 29-36)*

	Q29	Q30	Q31	Q32	Q33	Q34	Q35	Q36
Number of missing responses	2	2	2	2	3	2	2	2

Chapter 5

Conclusions and Recommendations

It is projected that in the next few years, 2.2 million new teachers will need to be hired (The White House, 2002). However, not only do greater numbers of teachers need to be hired, but educators who meet *high standards of quality* as dictated by the No Child Left Behind Act must be selected (United States General Accounting Office, 2003). In response to the need for quality teachers, district and state lawmakers have implemented policies to encourage new candidates, other than those from traditional educator certification programs, to enter the teaching profession through accelerated programs (Feistritzer, 1994; Hawley, 1990).

In order to accomplish the goals of No Child Left Behind and meet the demands of the teacher shortage, quality alternatives to traditional educator certification programs have been made available (United States General Accounting Office, 2003). The federal government has instituted initiatives to address the teacher shortage. Beginning in 2003, the federal government provided \$41.65 million in budget allocations to support programs that allow candidates to transition into teaching positions via alternative certification programs (Blair, 2003; Feistritzer, 2004). Alternative certification has evolved as a respectable concept and generated numerous new programs that provided preparation and training for a career in teaching (Ruffin, 2003). By 2010, 48 states and the District of Columbia reported having alternative certification programs. In total, states reported having more than, different programs being implemented by 600 different providers throughout the nation (National Center for Alternative Certification, 2010).

The perceptions of adequate preparation of candidates certified through these programs can help determine the level of their commitment to the profession. Although a great deal of

research has been compiled on alternative certification programs, additional research on the professional and organizational commitment of alternatively certified teacher is necessary because recruiting candidates into alternative preparation programs is only the first step toward addressing the needs of the teacher shortage. Preparation and commitment must be addressed because these are important considerations that must be considered with the continuation of alternative preparation programs and strengthening the teaching workforce (Jorissen, 2002a).

According to Darling-Hammond (1992), the decision for alternate route teachers to remain in teaching is a factor of preparation. Retaining teachers prepared through alternative certification programs is critical, because if these teachers do not remain committed to the profession and to their organizations, the investment in these programs is futile (Darling-Hammond, 1992). In addition, if alternatively certified teachers do not remain in education, the teacher shortage will continue to grow. Policymakers may be better equipped to design working and learning environments that encourage teachers' organizational and professional commitment if they have a better understanding of Georgia TAPP certified teachers' experiences and views (Jorissen, 2002a).

Recruiting candidates into alternative preparation programs is only the first step toward addressing the need for more qualified teachers. The preparation of and commitment of alternatively prepared teachers is an important consideration for policymakers when deciding whether alternative certification programs are a way to address the teacher shortage and provide a stable workforce (Jorissen, 2002a). Previous studies by Arranya et al. (1986), Reyes (1989), and Zumwalt (1996) regarding the preparation of alternatively certified teachers, organizational, and professional commitment have found that there are numerous factors that influence the levels of commitment. Age (Angle & Perry, 1981; Hrebiniak, 1974; Hrebiniak & Alutto, 1972;

Mowday et al., 1982; Welsch & Lavan, 1981), gender (Angle & Perry, 1981; Dinham, 1994; Hrebiniak & Alutto, 1972; Reyes 1989, 1990), years of work experience prior to teaching (Grusky, 1966; Hrebiniak & Alutto, 1972; Mowday et al., 1982; Steers, 1977), and grade level(s) taught (Jorissen, 2002a) are four specific factors that have been found to have an affect on the commitment of educators.

Georgia first began identifying critical shortage areas in the 1998-1999 school year (Georgia Department of Education, n.d.). The Georgia Teacher Alternative Preparation Program was instituted in 2000 in an effort to help teachers in a variety of certification areas. The Georgia TAPP is an alternative preparation option for potential post-baccalaureate teacher candidates. The two-phase program, consisting of a brief introduction to teaching through a four to six week intensive introductory program and then a two-year classroom based internship/induction training period, allows candidates to attain the pedagogical knowledge and skills necessary for successful entry into teaching (Georgia Professional Standards Commission, 2008). Since its inception, the program has certified over 2,900 teachers in more than 80 areas (Georgia Professional Standards Commission, n.d.).

The goal of the Georgia Teacher Alternative Preparation Program is to recruit, train, and retain highly qualified teachers in Georgia classrooms (Georgia Professional Standards Commission, 2001). However, if candidates are not adequately prepared when entering the program or do not continue teaching long-term once the initial certification is obtained; the program may not be sufficiently addressing the teacher shortage.

The concept of commitment has been a phenomenon of ongoing interest to researchers (Morris & Sherman, 1981; Stevens et al., 1978). However, there has been a “general lack of agreement concerning how best to conceptualize and measure” commitment (Mowday et al.,

1979, p. 255). Stevens et al. (1978) noted that there is overlap and ambiguity with regard to competing concepts of commitment (p. 393). Morris and Sherman (1981) concurred that a common theoretical framework was lacking throughout research. Morrow (1983) identified commitment as a multidimensional concept.

Organizational and professional commitment are important areas of interest related to alternatively certified teachers. Due to the teacher shortage, school districts will need teachers who are organizationally and professionally committed to teaching and to school goals and values. Committed individuals are more likely to remain with the organization, work toward the organizational goals, and invest more effort in their jobs (Somech & Bogler, 2002).

Organizational and professional commitment have been studied together and separately in relation to various occupations. Studies (Avery, 1960; Berger & Grimes, 1973; Blau & Scott, 1962; Flango & Brumbaugh, 1974; Friedlander, 1971; Grimes & Berger, 1970; Goldberg et al., 1965) have found that organizational and professional commitment may be independent of each other. Individuals could be high on organizational commitment and professional commitment (Filley & Grimes, 1968; Wallace, 1993), low on both (Abrahamson, 1956; House & Wigdor, 1968), or high on one and low on the other (Gouldner, 1957, 1958; Kornhauser, 1962; Sorenson & Sorenson, 1974; Wilensky, 1964).

According to Meyer and Allen (1997), most literature on organizational commitment reflects the definition created by Mowday et al. (1982). They defined organizational commitment as “the relative strength of an individual’s identification with and involvement in a particular organization” (p. 27). Organizational commitment in the workplace is directed toward the employing organization. Therefore, teachers’ organizational commitment is directed to a school, including its goals, and the individuals associated with the school, employees and students

(Tyree, 2001). This is demonstrated through extra investment of personal resources like time, money, and effort (Becker, 1960). Numerous studies have found that organizational commitment is a strong predictor of employee turnover and turnover intentions (Allen & Meyer, 1996; Lee et al., 2000; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Meyer et al., 1993; Mowday et al., 1979; Tett & Meyer, 1993).

Professional commitment is often used interchangeably with career commitment and should be distinguished from organizational commitment (Blau, 1985). Blau (1988) defined professional commitment as “one’s attitude towards one’s vocation, including a profession” (p. 89). The terms profession and vocation are necessary in order to anchor the concept of career or professional commitment in a concrete way, and not overlap professional commitment with other work attitude referents (Blau, 1989). Therefore, professional commitment of teachers is the teachers’ attitude toward their vocation and profession and is crucial to achieving good instruction. It is a key factor when determining the organizational commitment of teachers (Somech & Bogler, 2002). Blau (1988) created the Career Commitment Scale that has been extensively used to determine the extent to which an individual identifies with and values his or her profession and the level of effort expended toward acquiring relevant knowledge. Numerous studies have found professional commitment to be a predictor of occupation and job withdrawal intentions (Blau, 1985, 1988, 1989; Blau et al., 2003; Carson et al., 1996; Cohen 1996).

The majority of research studies that have been conducted on commitment have dealt with technical and professional employees in occupational settings other than education, including lawyers, auditors, and other professionals (Huang, 2001; Wallace, 1993, 1995). It is important to examine commitment related to educators, where the distinction between the two dimensions of commitment, organizational and professional commitment, are particularly

important, because of individual relationships with teacher decision-making and attitudes (Somech & Bogler, 2002). Shedd and Bachrach (1991) examined the tangled hierarchies that define the working life of teachers and found that professional and bureaucratic (organizational) roles of teachers are often competing concepts. Hoy and Miskel (1991) also investigated the conflicting interaction between the two commitment types.

This study used the constructs of organizational and professional commitment and was guided by the theoretical frameworks of both. Organizational and professional commitment are related concepts; however, the division between the two is important. Organizational commitment focuses on commitment to a single organization such as a school or business. Organizational commitment can be defined as having three components: (a) a strong belief in and acceptance of the organization's goals and values, (b) a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization, and (c) a strong desire to continue membership within the organization (Mowday et al., 1982). Contrastly, professional commitment is a behavioral view of commitment, which finds that professional commitment is a function of the costs and rewards of being associated a member of a profession (Reichers, 1985).

According to the Humphrey et al. (2000), the projected shortage of *highly qualified* teachers that is expected over the next several years could have an enormous impact on the United States. In addition, the requirements in No Child Left Behind have put additional pressure on states, districts, and schools to find teachers that are *highly qualified* and prepared to remain in the classroom (The Southeast Center for Teaching Quality). It is important to not only know if alternative certification programs are recruiting and preparing new teachers, but also if these teachers are staying in the profession (Birkeland & Peske, 2004). By understanding the commitment of alternatively certified teachers, as well as their perceptions of adequate

preparation through alternative means, policymakers will be able to make informed decisions about continuing such programs.

In addition to the theoretical frameworks of organizational and professional commitment, this study also used perceptions of adequate preparation as a guide. According to the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (2001), “Georgia TAPP seeks to equip teacher-candidates with the skills to endure a reasonable expectation of initial success in their classrooms, and to put in place supervised internship/induction program, that will help them move toward subsequent mastery of teaching”. However, little research is available related to the preparation or commitment of these teachers. By assessing the commitment of teachers certified through the Georgia TAPP and their perceptions of adequate preparation, it is possible to increase the knowledge about the outcomes and commitment of teachers certified through Georgia TAPP, which could lead to changes or improvements that may be necessary to strengthen the program.

Teacher turnover and other problems confronting new teachers are of great interest in current education (Ingersoll, 2001). These factors have helped to cause a tremendous shortage of qualified educators, forcing many states, including Georgia, to turn to alternative certification programs to recruit *highly qualified* educators (McCabe, 2004). According to the National Center for Education Statistics (1997), although there are many factors that affect teacher turnover, commitment is one of the most important aspects related to teacher behavior, quality, and performance. The organizational and professional commitment of alternatively certified new teachers will play a large part in teacher retention, thus determining the future of education in the nation (Somech & Bogler, 2002).

This study examined the organizational commitment, professional commitment, and perceptions of adequate preparation of Georgia TAPP certified teachers who received training

from the Northwest Georgia Regional Educational Service Agency (NW GA RESA) since 2001. The findings of this study add to the existing body of research about alternative certification, as well as teacher organizational and professional commitment. Specifically, the study addressed five major objectives:

1. Provide a descriptive profile of teachers certified through the Georgia Teacher Alternative Preparation Program (Georgia TAPP) who received training from Northwest Georgia RESA since 2001.
2. Compare the organizational commitment of Georgia TAPP teachers who received training through NW Georgia RESA since 2001 by age, gender, years of work experience before entering Georgia TAPP, and grade(s) taught.
3. Compare the professional commitment of Georgia TAPP teachers who received training through NW Georgia RESA since 2001 by age, gender, years of work experience before entering Georgia TAPP, and grade(s) taught.
4. Compare the perceptions of adequate preparation of Georgia TAPP teachers who received training through NW Georgia RESA since 2001 by age, gender, years of work experience before entering Georgia TAPP, and grade(s) taught.
5. Determine the relationship between perceptions of adequate preparation, organizational commitment, and professional commitment of Georgia TAPP teachers who received training through NW Georgia RESA since 2001.

The sample for this study was 116 teachers Georgia TAPP teachers certified through the Northwest Georgia Regional Educational Service Agency from 2001-2007. For research objective one, descriptive data, including age, gender, race, years in teaching, years of work experience before entering Georgia TAPP, content area certification, and grade(s) taught, were

collected. For research objectives two, three, and four a series of one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) procedures were used to see how the independent variables affected the dependent variables. For research objective five, a series of correlations were conducted to discover if there were relationships between perceptions of adequate preparation and organizational commitment, perceptions of adequate preparation and professional commitment, and to see if a relationship existed between organizational and professional commitment.

Findings

The average age for participants in this study was 37.74 years, but there was a broad range of ages from 23 to 65. There were twice as many female participants (67.24%) as male participants (32.76%) in the study. Also, the majority of study participants were White (87.93%). For total years teaching, the mean number of years spent teaching was 5.36, with a minimum of 3 and a maximum of 16.

Many study participants had substantial work experience in the years before becoming a teacher. The average number of years spent in previous employment other than teaching was 9.53, with a range from 0 years up to 36 years. The majority of participants (51.72%) in the study indicated that their initial certification was in an academic content area, while the others received certification in either special education (36.21%) or an elective field (12.07%). In addition, a majority of participants (52.59%) taught at the 9-12 grade level, with remaining participants teaching at either the sixth through eighth grade level (36.21%) or the Pre-K through fifth level (11.21%).

For organizational commitment, there were no significant differences based upon participants' gender, years of work experience before entering Georgia TAPP, or grades taught. The only independent variable that did have an impact on organizational commitment was age,

with a statistical significance of .016. Specifically, the significant difference of .013 was found between participants in the 20 to 29 range and in the 40 or older range. The effect size for these groups was 0.461, which is considered a moderate effect size according to Cohen's *d*. This indicates that individuals in the 40 and older group had moderately higher levels of organizational commitment compared to the participants in the 20 to 29 range.

For professional commitment, age and years of work experience before entering Georgia TAPP were both statistically significant. Age had a significance level of .012. For age, the significant difference of 0.09 was found between participants in the 30 to 39 range and in the 40 or older range. The effect size for these groups was 0.258, which is considered a small effect size according to Cohen's *d*. This indicates that individuals in the 40 and older group had slightly higher levels of professional commitment compared to the participants in the 30 to 39 range.

For years of work experience before entering Georgia TAPP, a significance level of .046 was found. More specifically, a significance of .047 was found between participants in the 0 to 4 years of experience range and participants in the 15 to 19 years of experience range. The effect size for these groups was 0.371, which is considered a small to moderate effect size according to Cohen's *d*. This indicates that individuals in the 15 to 19 years of experience range had moderately higher levels of professional commitment compared to the participants in the 0 to 4 years of experience range. Other than age and years of work experience before entering Georgia TAPP, there were no significant differences for professional commitment based upon participants' gender or grades taught.

For perceptions of adequate preparation, there were no significant differences based upon participants' gender, years of work experience before entering Georgia TAPP, or grades taught. Again, age was the only independent variable that did have an impact on perceptions of adequate

preparation with a significance level of .020 identified. Specifically, a significant difference of 0.039 was found between participants in the 40 and older group and individuals in the 30 to 39 age range. The effect size for these groups was 0.431, which is a moderate effect size. This indicates that individuals in the 40 and older group have moderately higher levels of perceptions of adequate preparation compared to the participants in the 30 to 39 range.

Correlation results for perceptions of adequate preparation and organizational commitment found that $r(116) = .187$, $p = .044$, $r^2 = .035$. This indicates that 3.5% of participants' organizational commitment score is attributable to their perceptions of adequate preparation of the Georgia TAPP program. Although small, the significance level does indicate that the correlation was unlikely to have occurred by chance.

Similarly, the correlation results for perceptions of adequate preparation of Georgia TAPP teachers and professional commitment found that $r(116) = .232$, $p = .012$, $r^2 = .054$. This indicates that 5.4% of participants' professional commitment score is attributable to their perceptions of adequate preparation of the Georgia TAPP program.

The correlation between organizational commitment and professional commitment found $r(116) = .309$, $p = .001$, $r^2 = .095$. This indicates a low, but positive correlation. This means that 9.5% of a participant's professional commitment score is attributable to organizational commitment. Therefore, this indicates that as organizational commitment increases for a participant, professional commitment also increases slightly.

Conclusions

Quality teaching in the 21 century means bringing distinctive life experiences and perspective into the classroom, providing effective role models for all students, strengthening connections with parents and the community, and creating an engaging classroom that enhances

the curriculum, assessment, and school climate. The purpose of this study was to examine the organizational and professional commitment, as well as the perceptions of adequate preparation, of Georgia TAPP certified teachers who received training from the Northwest Georgia Regional Educational Service Agency (NW GA RESA) since 2001. Specific indicators included age, gender, years of work experience before entering Georgia TAPP, and grade(s) taught.

Alternative teacher certification programs tend to attract persons from various educational, occupational, and life experiences to become teachers, thus increasing the quantity and diversity of applicants to the profession (Feistritzer, 1993, 1998; McKibbin & Ray, 1994; Stoddart, 1993; Wise, 1994). Advocates of alternative certification suggest that alternative certification programs help broaden the pool of new teachers, attracting more men, minorities, and mature or experienced individuals, than those in traditional teacher preparation programs (Humphrey et al., 2002).

In the study, 30 responses were listwise deleted due to data missing at random. One possible cause for missing at random responses could have been survey design. Color choice, response design, or fonts, could have made it difficult for participants to read or follow the survey, thus causing some individuals to skip one or multiple questions. For the future, more research into online survey design and aesthetics would be helpful to increase participation. In addition, participation in the current study was voluntary, thus, participants were not required to answer every question, and were not warned when a question was skipped. For future research, warnings would be used on each page asking participants to review the item numbers for any questions skipped or missing. In addition, before the final survey submission, a pop-up warning would ask participants to review and answer any missing items.

The resulting demographics from the current study validate much of the prior research. It appears that alternative certification programs are attracting individuals needed in public education to meet the demand for additional teachers in regard to age, experience, subject areas, and grade levels. A demographic summary of the Georgia teaching workforce shows that in 2008, 80.7% of the teaching workforce was female and only 19.3% were male (Afolabi & Eads, 2009). The research of the current study shows that the rate of male educators certified through Georgia TAPP was 32.76%, while the rate for female educators was 67.24%. These rates demonstrate the Georgia TAPP alternative program was successful at recruiting more male educators. This is a positive statistic as it helps increase the number of male role models available to young people.

Participants also represented the group of mature or experienced individuals that previous research suggests. Of the participants in the current research study, 77.59% were in the age groups of 30 to 39 or 40 and older. This is typical and representative of career switchers. However, it was unusual that the mode for the number of years of employment prior to beginning teaching through Georgia TAPP was zero. Fifteen (12.9%) participants responded that they had zero years of work experience prior to entering Georgia TAPP, demonstrating that many individuals received baccalaureate degrees in areas other than education and quickly decided to enter education. For most, this could mean that they could not find employment in their degree area, so they turned to education, where there was a shortage of qualified individuals. For the long-term, this could affect the commitment and retention of these individuals in education.

The current study does not show that Georgia TAPP participants involved in the study were representative of the Georgia population of teachers by race. The present study found that 87.93% of participants were white, 10.34% were black, and 1.72% were other. This is in contrast

to the demographic summary of Georgia educators which showed that in 2008, 74.6% of Georgia teachers were white, 22.9% were black, and 1.69% were categorized as other (Afolabi & Eads, 2009). However, nationally, only 10% of the nation's current teaching force is minority (Glass, 2008). Therefore, although Georgia TAPP was not successful at recruiting more minorities than the traditional Georgia workforce of educators, the program has been successful at recruiting more minorities than the nation's minority teaching force average. This discrepancy could be explained because of the racial composition of the Northwest Georgia area of the state, from which participants were drawn. Results also suggest a need for heavier recruitment of minorities to help increase the minority teaching force.

It is important to distinguish between commitment to the profession of teaching and commitment to an employing school (Billingsley & Cross, 1992). Previous research studies such as Reyes (1992) found that organizational commitment decreased with experience. The present study, however, confirmed the conclusions of Angle and Perry (1981) and Dornstein and Matalon (1989), finding that age is positively related to commitment. As individuals get older and accumulate life experience, commitment increases (Parasuraman & Nachman, 1987). In the present study, teachers in the age group of 40 and older had higher levels of organizational commitment and professional commitment than teachers in younger groups. This is the same group that would fit into the 15 to 19 years of work experience prior to entering Georgia TAPP, who demonstrated more professional commitment than participants in the 0 to 4 year of work experience prior to Georgia TAPP. This reiterates that age and experience can imply the accrual of investments and friends within an organization and increases commitment. School systems should take advantage of the age and experience of older teachers, administrators, and mentors by providing more relational support and feedback for younger, more inexperienced teachers.

Kadyschuk (1997) found that grade levels taught had a negative impact on teacher commitment. Specifically, teachers in grades seven through twelve had lower organizational commitment than Kindergarten through eighth grade teachers. Results from the current study did not support this, finding no significant differences for organizational commitment based on grade level taught. Therefore, for the Georgia TAPP educators, grade level taught does not affect their feelings about the organization in which they work. In addition, there were no significant findings in relation to grade level taught and professional commitment. This could imply that the career changing teachers received training through Georgia TAPP and began teaching in the grade levels of their choice, so their feelings neither positively nor negatively impacted commitment.

Results from the present study also do not support Angle and Perry (1981), Mathieu and Zajac (1990), or Reyes' (1990) findings that women have higher organizational and professional commitment than men. Instead, current research found there to be no significant differences between organizational commitment or professional commitment levels of men and women (Bruning & Snyder, 1983; Mottaz, 1988). This could be because both the men and women who entered the Georgia TAPP program did so consciously and are perhaps fulfilling their ultimate career goals.

Adequate teacher preparation is essential to teacher success. According to Darling-Hammond (1992), the decision for alternate route teachers to remain in teaching is a factor of preparation. The better prepared a teacher is the more satisfied the teacher will be; therefore, the likelihood of the teacher having organizational and professional commitment will increase. In addition, Darling-Hammond (1992) found that alternative preparation programs, such as Georgia

TAPP, that combine pedagogical training with supervised field experience are more likely to produce teachers who are committed to remaining in education.

From the personal data instrument, less than 10% of respondents answered that they disagreed at any level with five of the six statements that represented perceptions of adequate preparation. This means that more than 90% of respondents agreed at some level that they were adequately prepared through the Georgia TAPP regarding: (a) knowledge of students & their learning, (b) learning environments, (c) assessment, (d) planning & instruction, and (e) professionalism. The only area where respondents disagreed about perceptions of adequate preparation was content & curriculum. However, content area preparation was not the focus of Georgia TAPP certification preparation, but should have been addressed by the participants' undergraduate studies.

Age was the only independent variable that was found to be significant in relation to perceptions of adequate preparation. Kadyschuk (1997) had similar results, finding that older teachers (40 and older) exhibited the strongest relationship between the variables of preparation and commitment, followed closely by younger teachers in the 20 to 29 age group. As is the case with the current study, individuals in the 40 and older groups had the highest levels on perceptions of adequate preparation. This could be explained because many of the Georgia TAPP candidates in the 40 and above group have reevaluated their lives and have been led to change occupations. Therefore, along with the experience they bring from their previous occupations, and the training of the Georgia TAPP, these individuals feel prepared for their new teaching challenges and new careers. This type of information is of practical benefit to Georgia TAPP administrators in dealing effectively with the different needs of older, more experienced participants and younger, less experienced participants.

The results of the present study indicate that participants' levels of organizational and professional commitment slightly changed for the positive based upon their perceptions of adequate preparation. So, as a participant's level of perceptions of adequate preparation increased, so did their levels of organizational and professional commitment. These results demonstrate that the Georgia TAPP program is doing an adequate job of preparing individuals for teaching who feel equipped to enter the teaching profession and will remain committed to a specific school and the career of education.

The results of the study also affirm Porter et al.'s (1974) seminal view of organizational commitment finding that organizational and professional commitment are distinct elements of overall commitment with only a low, positive correlation to one another. This is contrary to early researchers such as Gouldner (1957) and Flango and Brumbaugh (1974) and who assumed an inherent conflict between organizational and professional commitment. Instead, the results support researchers who assumed no inherent conflict between the dimensions of commitment (Angle & Perry, 1986).

Wallace (1993) found that organizational commitment was significantly correlated with professional commitment. Kadyschuk (1997) affirmed that teacher commitment is a multi-dimensional construct and that teachers are able to express simultaneous commitment towards various combinations of the dimensions of commitment. The findings of the present study indicate that as the level of organizational commitment increased, thus did the level of professional commitment slightly. The significance level of the correlation showed that this correlation was unlikely to have happened by chance.

Although a small, positive correlation was found, this did not match the expected finding of a high, positive correlation between organizational and professional commitments for Georgia

TAPP educators. This demonstrates that individuals can feel commitment to an organization without feeling professional commitment and vice versa. Organizationally committed employees expend efforts on behalf of the company, which results in the internalization of the organization's success or failure as personal success or failure. Professionally committed employees expend efforts on behalf of the professional, which results in the internalization of the profession's success or failure as personal success or failure (Giffords, 2003).

The results of the present study indicate that participants did not feel compelled to make a choice between the organizational and professional dimensions of commitment, but that one type of commitment was not the cause of the other type of commitment. School officials who are aware of the factors that contribute to organizational and professional commitment may be able to create an environment that increases the commitment of employees; therefore, improving the overall quality of the services provided by the organization (Giffords, 2003).

Committed employees are more stable, productive, and more likely to accomplish the goals of the organization and profession (Larkey, Larkey, & Morril, 1995). This knowledge helps assert that Georgia TAPP and other alternative preparation programs should continually address the goals, ideals and expectations of individuals within the organization if they want harmony between the dimensions of commitment (Aryee & Tan, 1992). An awareness of the multi-dimensional quality of commitment in teachers, as well as the practical need to nurture both organizational and professional commitment, could be beneficial as schools, school boards, administrators, parents, communities, and teachers engage in education-related activities and attempt to recruit and prepare committed teachers.

Recommendations for Further Research

Based on the findings of this study, the current United States economic situation, and the continued necessity of alternative certification programs, additional investigations into alternative teacher organizational and professional commitment are recommended. Growing school enrollments, increasing numbers of teachers retiring or leaving the profession, and legislated class size limits are key factors to why finding qualified educators is a continual challenge. It is for these main reasons that 62,000 individuals were issued alternative route certificates in 2007-2008, nearly double the number from five years earlier (Garcia & Huseman, 2009).

Due to the economic recession, the number of teachers nationwide has dropped significantly. In fall 2009, Georgia had 117,560 certified employed teachers; however, for fall 2010, that number has been cut by 8,000 (Kanell, 2010). Despite the recent cuts nationwide, the U.S. Department of Education still projects that up to one million new teaching positions will need to be filled in the next five years. Additionally, the Obama Administration has highlighted teacher recruitment as a top priority for improving education at the K-12 level (DeWitt, 2010).

Garcia and Huseman (2009) suggest that alternative certification programs are continually necessary to offset the high turnover rate and need for highly qualified, adequately prepared, and committed teachers. Many alternatively certified teachers make the move to teaching because of a drive and desire to help young people. The retention of these individuals in classrooms is influenced by their perceptions of adequate preparation, organizational commitment, and the professional commitment they feel towards their schools and the career. Therefore, alternative certification programs should be expanded and embraced by states and school systems as a necessary means of meeting the goal of preparing all students for success.

The desire of all teachers and schools is to prepare students with the skills and aptitudes they will need to be successful in today's global economy. The goal of the Georgia Teacher Alternative Preparation Program is to recruit, train, and retain highly qualified teachers in Georgia classrooms (2001). Alternative certification programs attract individuals who are committed to teaching and whose non-teaching experiences add value to classroom instruction.

The present study was delimited by the researcher to maintain focus on the dimensions of teacher commitment and perceptions of adequate preparation, with a number of variables examined as predictors. The following recommendations for practice and further research are made based upon the findings and conclusions of this study:

1. A replication of the present study using all Georgia TAPP alternatively certified teachers as the population. With the current study sample being limited to Georgia TAPP certified teachers from only one regional area, the results are restricted in their generalizability. By including all Georgia TAPP certified teachers from the entire state of Georgia it would help to determine if the findings of the present study are generalizable beyond the limitations of the present sample. In addition to perceptions of adequate preparation, organizational commitment, and professional commitment, retention would also be an appropriate variable to examine.
2. A replication of the present study using a larger random sample of alternatively certified teachers who received certification from Georgia TAPP, as well as other alternative certification programs. With the current study sample being limited to Georgia TAPP certified teachers from only one regional area, the results are restricted in their generalizability. By including a sample of Georgia TAPP certified teachers from around the state, as well as including teachers certified through other alternative certification

measures, such as the Professional Academy for Career and Technical Educators (*PACTE*) or Post-Baccalaureate Non-Degree Preparation Programs, it would help to determine if the findings of the present study are generalizable beyond the limitations of the present sample. In addition to perceptions of adequate preparation, organizational commitment, and professional commitment, retention would also be an appropriate variable to examine.

3. A comparison study of Georgia TAPP alternatively certified teachers to traditionally certified teachers. In order to maintain focus on the dimensions of teacher commitment and perceptions of adequate preparation of only Georgia TAPP alternatively certified educators, the present study is limited by the researcher. An expanded study that compares traditionally and alternatively certified teachers on their perceptions of adequate preparation, organizational commitment, and professional commitment might provide useful information regarding the success of each type of certification program and the retention of individuals who obtain certification through each method.

Summary

The United States is in the midst of what amounts to a national experiment in how best to attract, prepare, and retain teachers who are committed to helping students meet the challenging requirements of adequate yearly progress and No Child Left Behind. The Georgia Alternative Preparation Program is one popular route of alternative teacher certification in Georgia. The present study sought to explore the perceptions of adequate preparation of candidates certified through this program, as well as factors that might influence their organizational and professional commitment. Georgia TAPP participants consisted of a diverse group of young and older adults, with more males involved than the traditional Georgia educator workforce. In addition, the racial

composition of the group studied was representative of the local labor market. Of the Georgia TAPP teachers, many had vast work experiences before entering the educational field, while many others entered the program directly after college. Also, grade level taught was not significant on any of the variables tested, including influential on any variable explored, perceptions of adequate preparation, organizational commitment, or professional commitment.

The significant results of the study found that age was the only independent variable that significantly influenced perceptions of adequate preparation, organizational commitment, and professional commitment. In addition, years of previous work experience before entering Georgia TAPP was significant in relation to professional commitment. Also, correlational research showed that there were low, positive correlations were found between each of the dependent variables. This study provides some information about the perceptions of adequate preparation for Georgia TAPP educators. In addition, it adds to the existing literature on organizational commitment and professional commitment of alternatively certified teachers and provides a better understanding of how the two are related. Although the two concepts are independent, they are positively correlated. This affirms that an awareness of the multi-dimensional quality of commitment in teachers, as well as the practical need to nurture it, could be beneficial as schools, school boards, administrators, parents, and communities engage in education-related activities and attempt to recruit and prepare committed teachers.

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Appendix A

Personal Data Questionnaire

Personal Data Questionnaire

Instructions: Please supply information requested. This information will be used for statistically purposes in analyzing data collected.

1. What is your age (as of your last birthday)? _____
2. What is your gender? _____ Female _____ Male
3. What is your race? _____ Black _____ White _____ Other
4. What is your total years of teaching (include current year)? _____
5. How many years were you employed prior to beginning teaching through Georgia TAPP?

6. What is your Content Area Certification received originally through Georgia TAPP?

7. What grade level(s) do you teach? _____ K – 5 _____ 6 - 8 _____ 9 – 12

Teacher Perceptions of Adequate Preparation related to Georgia TAPP. Please rate each statement.

	Strongly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Moderately Agree	Strongly Agree
8.The Georgia TAPP program adequately prepared me to demonstrate strong knowledge of content area(s) appropriate for my certification level.						
9.The Georgia TAPP program adequately prepared me to support the intellectual, social, physical, and personal development of all students?						
10.The Georgia TAPP program adequately prepared me to create learning environments that encourage positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation of students?						
11.The Georgia TAPP program adequately prepared me to understand and use a range of formal and informal assessment strategies to evaluate and ensure the continuous development of all learners?						
12.The Georgia TAPP program adequately prepared me to design and create instructional experiences based on knowledge of content and curriculum, students, learning environments, and assessment?						
13.The Georgia TAPP program adequately prepared me to recognize, participate in, and contribute to teaching as a profession?						

Appendix B
Organizational Commitment Questionnaire

Organizational Commitment Questionnaire

Listed below are a series of statements that represent possible feelings that individuals might have about the school for which they work. With respect to your own feelings about the particular school for which you are now working please indicate the degree of your agreement or disagreement with each statement by checking one of the six alternatives beside each statement.

	Strongly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Moderately Agree	Strongly Agree
14. I am willing to put a great deal of effort beyond that normally expected in order to help this school be successful.						
15. I talk up this school to my friends as a great organization to work for.						
16. I feel very little loyalty to this school.						
17. I would accept almost any type of job assignment in order to keep working for this school.						
18. I find that my values and this school's values are very similar.						
19. I am proud to tell others that I am part of this school.						
20. I could just as well be working for a different school as long as the type of work were similar.						
21. This school really inspires the very best in me in the way of job performance.						
22. It would take very little change in my present circumstances to cause me to leave this school.						
23. I am extremely glad that I chose this school to work for over others I was considering at the time I joined.						
24. There's not too much to be gained by sticking with this school indefinitely.						
25. Often, I find it difficult to agree with this school's policies on important matters relating to its employees.						

26.I really care about the fate of this school.						
27. For me this is the best of all possible schools for which to work.						
28.Deciding to work for this school was a definite mistake on my part.						

Mowday, E., Steers, R., & Porter, L. (1979). The measurement of organizational commitment. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 14*, 224-247.

Appendix C

Professional Commitment Scale

Professional Commitment Scale

Listed below are a series of statements that represent possible feelings that individuals might have about their profession. With respect to your own feelings about the teaching profession, please indicate the degree of your agreement or disagreement with each statement by checking one of the six alternatives beside each statement.

	Strongly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Moderately Agree	Strongly Agree
29. If I could get another job different from being a teacher, I would probably take it.						
30. I definitely want a career for myself in teaching.						
31. If I could do it all over again, I would not choose to work in the teaching profession.						
32. If I had all the money I need without working, I would probably still continue to work in the teaching profession.						
33. I like this vocation too well to give it up.						
34. This is the ideal vocation for a life work.						
35. I am disappointed that I ever entered the teaching profession.						
36. I spend a significant amount of time reading teaching-related journals or books.						

Blau, G. L. (1985). The measurement and prediction of career commitment. *Journal of Occupational Psychology*, 58, 277-288. Reproduced with permission from G.L. Blau.

Appendix D

Request for Approval to Use Blau Career Commitment Scale

Request for Approval to Use Blau Career Commitment Scale

Brandi Hayes
 Doctoral Student
 The University of Georgia
 1181 Boone Ford Road SE
 Calhoun, Georgia 30701
 (706)629-0019
 bhayes@gcbe.org

June 4, 2008

Dr. Gary Blau
 Temple University
 Fox School of Business and Management
 359 Speakman Hall
 Philadelphia, PA 19122

Dear Dr. Blau:

The purpose of this letter is to request your permission to use the 1985 version of your occupational commitment questionnaire in my doctoral research. A summary of my proposed dissertation study, "Organizational and Professional Commitment of Alternatively Certified Teachers" is attached, as well as a copy of my resume. This causal comparative study will be conducted using web-based research procedures by publishing questions online using a paid subscription to the Survey Monkey website. The research will include two published instruments, including the 1985 version of your occupational commitment scale and the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire developed by Mowday, Steers, and Porter (1979). Appropriate citations for these instruments will also be published online. The survey will also include a researcher created demographic data questionnaire that will address demographic variables such as age, gender, years teaching, years of work experience before entering GATAPP, certification content area, grade(s) taught, and attitudes toward the teacher preparation program.

I would like permission to reproduce your 1985 instrument as a part of the online survey instrument that will be created using surveymonkey.com. Study participants will be asked by letter to go online and submit responses to the questionnaire. I anticipate having up to 400 participants answer the questions. For purposes of this study the eight items will be worded as follows:

1	If I could get another job different from being a teacher, I would probably take it.
2	I definitely want a career for myself in teaching.
3	If I could do it all over again, I would not choose to work in the teaching profession.
4	If I had all the money I need without working, I would probably still continue to work in the teaching profession.
5	I like this vocation too well to give it up.
6	This is the ideal vocation for a life work.

7	I am disappointed that I ever entered the teaching profession.
8	I spend a significant amount of time reading teaching-related journals or books.

I would also like your permission to make a modification in the response scale of your 1985 instrument. I would like to use a six point agree – disagree scale with no mid-point like that of the 1967 version response scale (1 = strongly disagree; 2 = moderately disagree; 3 = slightly disagree; 4 = slightly agree; 5 = moderately agree; 6 = strongly agree). This is the same instrument and response scale revisions used by Gwen Moran, a University of Georgia Student, who completed a similar study in 2005. This response scale will also be used for the Occupational Commitment Questionnaire for this study.

Your response to this request may be mailed or e-mailed to me using the contact information above. If you have questions, please do not hesitate to call or e-mail me. I hope to begin data collection on my study at the end of July 2008. I appreciate your assistance and look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Brandi Hayes
 Ed.D. Candidate
 Department of Workforce Education, Leadership, and Social Foundations
 University of Georgia
 1181 Boone Ford Road SE
 Calhoun, Georgia 30701
 bhayes@gcbe.org
 (706)629-0019

Appendix E

E-Mail Granting Approval to use Modified

Blau Career Commitment Scale

E-Mail Granting Approval to use Modified Blau Career Commitment Scale

Hi Brandi - first, you have my permission to use whatever research instrument best suits your purpose.

I would like to suggest that you consider using more current measures of org & prof (occup) commitment though, in the hope that you will be able to publish your dissertation after you finish. Attached please find the Meyer et al, 93 article which lays out a 3-dimension version of organization & occup commit. I realize this adds to your survey length but if you have affective, normative and continuance dimensions of org & occup commit, it should increase your chances of getting stronger results to eventually publish.

I have also attached some post-1985 work that I have done. I believe that continuance commitment can be meaningfully split into 2 sub-dimensions, accumulated costs and limited alternatives, but I realize this further adds to the survey length.

Wishing you the best in your research, :)

gary b.

Appendix F

Request for Approval of Research and Approval Letter

Request for Approval of Research and Approval Letter

Check OneNew Application: ☐Resubmission*: ☐ Revision ☒ (All changes must be highlighted)

Human Subjects Office
University of Georgia
612 Boyd GSRC
Athens, GA 30602-7411
(706) 542-3199

*NOTE: A new application is required every five years.

IRB Application

MAIL 2 COPIES OF APPLICATION TO ABOVE ADDRESS

(Check One) Dr. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mr. <input type="checkbox"/> Ms. <input type="checkbox"/>	(Check One) Dr. <input type="checkbox"/> Mr. <input type="checkbox"/> Ms. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
(Check One) Faculty <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate <input type="checkbox"/> Graduate <input type="checkbox"/>	(Check One) Faculty <input type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate <input type="checkbox"/> Graduate <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Elaine Adams	Brandilyn Hayes 8101165190
Principal Investigator UGA ID – last 10 digits only	Co-Investigator UGA ID – last 10 digits
Department Of Workforce Education, Leadership, And Social Foundations, River's Crossing	Department Of Workforce Education, Leadership, And Social Foundations, River's Crossing
Department, Building and + Four (Include department even if living off campus or out of town)	Department, Building and + Four
850 College Station Road, 206 River's Crossing Athens, Ga 30602-4809	
Mailing Address (if you prefer not to receive mail in dept.)	Mailing Address (if you prefer not to receive mail in dept.)
706.542.4204 adamsje@uga.edu	(706)629-0019 bhayes@gcbe.org
Phone Number (s) E-Mail (REQUIRED)	Phone Number (s) E-Mail
<i>Dr. Elaine Adams</i>	<i>Brandi Hayes</i>
**Signature of Principal Investigator	Signature of Co-Investigator (use additional cover sheets for more than one Co-Investigator)
UGA Faculty Advisor: Dr. Elaine Adams	Department Of Workforce Education
Name	Department, Bldg+ Four
	E-Mail (REQUIRED)
	Phone No.
**Signature: _____	UGA ID – last 10 digits only
Date: June 3, 2008	810-033-4490
**Your signature indicates that you have read the human subjects guidelines and accept responsibility for the research described in this application.	

If funded: N/A	N/A
***Sponsored Programs Proposal#	Name of Funding Agency
***By listing a proposal number, you agree that this application matches the grant application and that you have disclosed all financial conflicts of interest (see Q6a)	

TITLE OF RESEARCH: Organizational and Professional Commitment of Alternately Certified Teachers

NOTE: SUBMIT 4-6 WEEKS PRIOR TO YOUR START DATE

CHECK ALL THAT APPLY:Investigational New Drug ☐ Exceptions to/waivers of Federal regulations ☐

If yes to the above, provide details:

Data Sets ☒ Existing Bodily Fluids/Tissues ☐ RP Pool ☐ Deception ☐Illegal Activities ☐ Minors ☐ Moderate Exercise ☐ Audio/ Video taping ☐MRI/EEG/ECG/NIRS/Ultrasound/ Blood Draw ☐ X-RAY/DEXA ☐ Pregnant Women/Prisoners ☐

1. PROBLEM ABSTRACT: *State rationale and research question or hypothesis (why is this study important and what do you expect to learn?).*

Due to the teacher shortage, organizational and professional commitments are important areas of interest related to alternatively certified teachers. Committed individuals are more likely to remain with the organization, work toward the organizational goals, and invest more effort in their jobs (Somech & Bogler, 2002). The study of commitment is necessary given the importance of retaining teachers in the workplace and building a strong teaching force. For alternatively certified teachers, it is necessary to distinguish between commitment to the profession of teaching and commitment to an employing school. Further research into the organizational and professional commitment of alternatively certified teachers could prove to be a valuable contribution to the area of alternative certification and teacher retention (Billingsley & Cross, 1992).

Research has supported an association between individuals' occupational concerns and orientations and their intentions and concerns toward their organization (Lachman & Arranya, 1986). It is important to empirically investigate the nature of professional and organizational commitment. Research shows that employees who are highly committed to both their profession and organization may perform better than less committed ones, which results in improved overall effectiveness of an organization (Arranya & Ferris, 1984; Steers, 1977). Professional commitment is considered to be a major determinant of organizational effectiveness (Pfeffer, 1994) and individual motivation (Hackman & Lawler, 1971). Organizational commitment has been found to affect employee identification with the organization, level of effort, and turnover (Stroh & Reilly, 1997). In education, both types of commitment, to the organization and the profession, are necessary for accomplishing school objectives, initiating changes in teachers' practices, and improving teacher professionalism (Bredeson, Fruth, & Kasten, 1983; Firestone & Pennell, 1993; Wallace, 1993).

Arranya, N., & Ferris, K. (1983). Organization-professional conflict among U.S. and Israeli professional accountants. *Journal of Social Psychology*, 119, 153-161.

Billingsley, B. S., & Cross, L. H. (1992). Predictors of commitment, job satisfaction, and intent to stay in teaching: a comparison of general and special educators. *Journal of Special Education*, 25(4), 453.

Bredeson, P. V., Fruth, M. J., & Kasten, K. L. (1983). Organizational incentives and secondary school teaching. *Journal of Research and Development in Education*, 16, 52-58.

Firestone, W. A., & Pennell, J. (1993). Teacher commitment, working conditions, and differential incentive policies. *Review of Educational Research*, 63(4), 489-525.

Georgia Department of Education. (n.d.). Teacher shortage areas for federal loan purposes. Retrieved,

January 16, 2006, from <http://www.doe.k12.ga.us/doe/hr/shortage.asp>

Georgia Professional Standards Commission. (n.d.). Georgia TAPP 2001-2005 program years. Retrieved August 18, 2005, from [http://www.gapsc.com/Georgia TAPP/download/tappall.pdf](http://www.gapsc.com/Georgia%20TAPP/download/tappall.pdf)

Hackman, J. R., & Lawler III, E. E. (1971). Employee reaction to job characteristics. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 55, 259-286.

- Lachman, R., & Arranya, N. (1986). Evaluation of alternative models of commitment and job attitudes of professionals. *Journal of Occupational Behavior*, 7, 227-243.
- Pfeffer, J. (1994). *Competitive advantage through people: Unleashing the power of the work force*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press.
- Somech, A., & Bogler, R. (2002). Antecedents and consequences of teacher organizational and professional commitment. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 38(4), 555.
- Steers, R. M. (1977). Antecedents and outcomes of organizational commitment. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 22, 46-56.
- Stroh, L. K., & Reilly, A. H. (1997). Rekindling organizational loyalty: The role of career mobility. *Journal of Career Development*, 24(1), 39-54.
- Wallace, J.E. (1993). Professional and organization commitment: Compatible or incompatible. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 4(3), 333-349.

2. RESEARCH DESIGN: *Identify specific factors or variables, conditions or groups and any control conditions in your study. Indicate the number of research participants assigned to each condition or group, and describe plans for data analysis.*

Preliminary numbers suggest about 312 participants who have completed the Georgia Teacher Alternative Preparation program through the Northwest Georgia Regional Educational Service Agency from 2001-2007 and these individuals will comprise the convenience sample.

Research Question 1: Provide a descriptive profile of teachers certified through the Georgia Teacher Alternative Preparation Program (Georgia TAPP) who received training from Northwest Georgia RESA.

Independent Variables: Age, 0= 20-29, 1=30-39, 2=40 and older; Gender, 0=Male, 1=Female; Race, 0=American Indian, 1=Asian, 2=Black, 3=Hispanic, 4=Multiracial, 5=White, 6=Other; Years in teaching, 0=1 to 4 Years, 1=5 Years or More; Years of work experience before entering Georgia TAPP, 0=0-4, 1=5-9, 2=10-14, 3=20-24, 4=25-29, 5=30 or more; Content Area Certification, 0=Early Childhood Education, 1=Middle Grades Education, 2=English, 3=Mathematics, 4=Science, 5=Social Science, 6=Special Education, 7=Fine Arts, 8=Physical Education, 9=Foreign Language, 10=Career and Technical Education; Grade(s) Taught, 0 = P – 5, 1 = 6 – 8, 2 = 9 – 12; Perceptions of Adequate Preparation, 0=St. D, 1=MD, 2=Sl. D, 3=Sl. A, 4=MA, 5=St. A

Statistical Procedures: Descriptive Statistics (frequency for all variables; Mean, Median, Mode, Range, and Standard deviation for age, years in teaching, years of experience before entering Georgia TAPP).

Research Question 2: Compare the organizational commitment of Georgia TAPP teachers who received training through NW Georgia RESA by gender, years of work experience before entering Georgia TAPP, content area certification, grade(s) taught, and perceptions of adequate preparation, respectively.

Independent Variables: Gender, Years of work experience before entering Georgia TAPP, Content Area Certification, Grade(s) Taught, Perceptions of Adequate Preparation (same categories as listed for research question 1)

Dependent Variable: Organizational Commitment (General satisfaction raw scores from Organizational Commitment Scale)

Statistical Procedure: 1-way ANOVAs

Research Question 3: Compare the professional commitment of Georgia TAPP teachers who received training through NW Georgia RESA by gender, years of work experience before entering Georgia TAPP, content area certification, grade(s) taught, and perceptions of adequate preparation, respectively.

Independent Variables: Gender, Years of work experience before entering Georgia TAPP, Content Area Certification, Grade(s) Taught, Perceptions of Adequate Preparation (same categories as listed for research question 1)

Dependent Variable: Professional Commitment (General satisfaction raw scores from Organizational Commitment Scale)

Statistical Procedure: 1-way ANOVAs

Research Question 4: To determine the relationship between organizational commitment and professional commitment of Georgia TAPP teachers who received training through NW Georgia RESA since 2001.

Independent Variables: Organizational Commitment

Dependent Variable: Professional Commitment

Statistical Procedure: Pearson r correlation

3. RESEARCH SUBJECTS:

a. List maximum number of subjects 400, targeted age group 20-60 (this must be specified in years) and targeted gender M/F;

The target population for this study will be all teachers who have received initial teaching certification through the Georgia Teacher Alternative Preparation Program (Georgia TAPP).

b. Method of selection and recruitment - list inclusion and exclusion criteria. Describe the recruitment procedures (including all follow-ups).

Due to geographical limits, information constraints, research interests, and time concerns, an accessible population of Georgia TAPP teachers certified through the Northwest Georgia Regional Educational Service Agency (not statewide) from 2001-2007 will be used as a convenience sample. Initial contact will be made through an e-mail sent asking participants to take part in the online survey research. Follow-up e-mails will be used to contact all participants to ask for assistance and participation in the survey research.

c. *The activity described in this application involves another institution (e.g. school, university, hospital, etc.) and/or another country.* Yes ☒ No ☐

If yes, provide the following details:

1) **Name of institution:** Northwest Georgia Regional Educational Service Agency

2) **County and state:** Floyd County, GA

3) **Country:** US

4) **Written letter of authorization (on official letterhead only)/ IRB approval:**

Attached: ☒

Pending: ☐

d. *Is there any working relationship between the researcher and the subjects?*

Yes ☐ No ☒, *If yes, explain.*

e. *Describe any incentives (payment, gifts, extra credit).*

Extra credit cannot be offered unless there are equal non-research options available.

No incentives

4. PROCEDURES: *State in chronological order what a subject is expected to do and what the researcher will do during the interaction. Indicate time commitment for each research activity. And detail any follow-up.*

A causal comparative research design will be used to obtain explore the organizational commitment and professional commitment of Georgia TAPP certified teachers based on several independent variables.

For the survey, participants will receive an e-mial from a third party source, the Northwest Georgia Regional Educational Services Agency, with instructions for accessing a Web site address and a password to log into the questionnaire. The survey will be completed online using clear navigational directions and radio buttons for selection of responses. The survey should take participants no more than 20 minutes to complete.

Three different questionnaire instruments will be used in this study, including a researcher-developed demographic data questionnaire, the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (Mowday, Steers, & Porter, 1979), and a Career/Professional Commitment Scale (Blau, 1988). The demographic data questionnaire will gather descriptive data on participating teachers, including six questions to gather their perceptions of the adequacy of their preparation through the Georgia TAPP. Mowday et al. (1979) developed the 15-item Organizational Commitment Questionnaire as a measure of three defined aspects of commitment. Blau's Professional Commitment Scale contains seven items and is used to measure career commitment with a likert-type response scale (Blau, 1988).

Blau, G. (1988). Further exploring the meaning and measurement of career commitment. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 32(3), 284-297.

Mowday, R. T., Steers, R., & Porter, L. (1979). The measurement of organizational commitment. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 14(2), 224-247.

Duration of participation in the study: 0 Months

No. of testing/training sessions: 1 Length of each session: 20 minutes

Start Date: Data will be OBTAINED beginning in August 2008.

Only if your procedures include work with blood, bodily fluids or tissues, complete below:

Submit a MUA from Biosafety: Attached ☐ *Pending* ☐

If you are exempted from obtaining a MUA by Biosafety, explain why?

Total amount of blood draw for study: ml Blood draw for each session: ml

5. MATERIALS: *Itemize all questionnaires/instruments/equipment and attach copies with the corresponding numbers written on them.*

1. Demographic Data Questionnaire
2. Organizational Commitment Questionnaire
3. Career/Professional Commitment Scale

The purpose of the study will be fully disclosed in an Internet-based consent document which will serve as a cover letter online prior to participation in the Web-based survey (Dillman, 2000).

Dillman, D.A. (2000). Mail and Internet surveys: the tailored design method (2nd ed.). New York: J. Wiley.

Check all other materials that apply and are attached:

Interview protocol ☐ Debriefing Statement ☐ Recruitment flyers or advertisements ☐
Consent/Assent forms ☐

If no consent documents are attached, justify omission under Q. 8

6. RISK: *Detail risks to a subject as a result of data collection and as a direct result of the research and your plans to minimize them and the availability and limits of treatment for sustained physical or emotional injuries.*

NOTE: REPORT INCIDENTS CAUSING DISCOMFORT, STRESS OR HARM TO THE IRB IMMEDIATELY!

a. **CURRENT RISK:** *Describe any psychological, social, legal, economic or physical discomfort, stress or harm that might occur as a result of participation in research. How will these be held to the absolute minimum?*

There are no anticipated risks or discomforts from participation.

Is there a financial conflict of interest (see UGA COI policy)? Yes ☐ No ☒

If yes, does this pose any risk to the subjects?

b. **FUTURE RISK:** *How are research participants to be protected from potentially harmful future use of the data collected in this project? Describe your plans to maintain confidentiality, including removing identifiers, and state who will have access to the data and in what role. Justify retention of identifying information on any data or forms.*

DO NOT ANSWER THIS QUESTION WITH “NOT APPLICABLE”!

Anonymous ☐ Confidential ☒ Public ☐ Check one only and explain below.

THE STUDY WILL BE Confidential. The web address for the survey monkey site is http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=Jk89p_2bdeaDWVUp_2bKUF6FHw_3d_3d and will be presented through a hyperlink called *Organizational and Professional Commitment Survey*. The survey monkey account is set up to not allow the collection of IP addresses of participants or e-mail addresses. Participants will be provided the web site for the online survey monkey account through a third party, the Northwest Georgia Regional Educational Services Agency; however, the organization will not be provided with any results of information resulting from participant responses to the survey.

Audio-taping ☐ Video-taping ☐

If taping, how will tapes be securely stored, who will have access to the tapes, will they be publicly disseminated and when will they be erased or destroyed? Justify retention.

7. BENEFIT: *State the benefits to individuals and humankind. Potential benefits of the research should outweigh risks associated with research participation.*

a. *Identify benefits of the research for participants, e.g. educational benefits:*

THERE WILL BE NO DIRECT BENEFIT TO PARTICIPANTS IN THIS STUDY.

b. *Identify any potential benefits of this research for humankind in general, e.g. advance our knowledge of some phenomenon or help solve a practical problem.*

Significance of Study:

This study will contribute to the existing body of literature on teacher commitment and alternative certification. According to the Southeast Center for Teaching Quality (2000), the projected shortage of highly qualified teachers that is expected over the next several years could have an enormous impact on the United States. In addition, the requirements in No Child Left Behind have put additional pressure on states, districts, and schools to find teachers that are highly qualified and prepared to remain in the classroom (The Southeast Center for Teaching Quality). It is important to not only know if alternative certification programs are recruiting and preparing new teachers, but also if these teachers are staying in the profession (Birkeland & Peske, 2004). By understanding the commitment of alternatively certified teachers, policymakers will be able to make informed decisions about continuing such programs.

Furthermore, the results of this study could help to fill the deficiency of information that is currently available about the Georgia Teacher Alternative Preparation Program (Georgia TAPP). According to the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (2001), “Georgia TAPP seeks to equip teacher-candidates with the skills to endure a reasonable expectation of initial success in their classrooms, and to put in place supervised internship/induction program, that will help them move toward subsequent mastery of teaching”. However, little research is available related to the preparation or commitment of these teachers. This study could lead to increased knowledge about the outcomes and commitment of teachers certified through Georgia TAPP, which could lead to changes or improvements that may be necessary to strengthen the program.

Determining the professional and organizational commitment of Georgia TAPP educators, based on gender, years of previous work experience, subject taught, and grade level taught, could provide insight into how to recruit and retain similar candidates. With the passing of the No Child Left Behind bill, recruiting and training prepared teachers who will remain committed to the education profession and their organizations is critical.

Birkeland, S. E., & Peske, H. G. (2004, October 15). Literature review of research on alternative certification. Retrieved August 24, 2005, from <http://www.teach-now.org/NEAFullText.pdf>

Georgia Professional Standards Commission. (2001). Georgia TAPP: Description of teaching field options. Retrieved April 23, 2006, from http://www.gapsc.com/GATAPP/teaching/teach_home.asp

The Southeast Center for Teaching Quality. (2000). Alternative certification: A national study.

Retrieved August 28, 2005, from www.teachingquality.org/research/SRI-altcert.htm.

8. CONSENT PROCESS:

a. *Detail how legally effective informed consent will be obtained from all research participants and, when applicable, from parent(s) or guardian(s).*

To ensure the anonymity of participants, the questionnaire will not ask for any personally identifiable information such as a name or social security number. All participation in the research study will be voluntary and pose no risks to those involved. No participant names will be included in the questionnaires and data will be reported in aggregate form.

Will subjects sign a consent form? Yes ☐ No ☒

If No, request for waiver of signed consent – Yes ☐

Justify the request, including an assurance that risk to the participant will be minimal. Also submit the consent script or cover letter that will be used in lieu of a form.

The purpose of the study will be fully disclosed in an Internet-based consent document which will serve as an online cover letter prior to participation in the Web-based survey (Dillman, 2000).

Dillman, D.A. (2000). Mail and Internet surveys: the tailored design method (2nd ed.). New York: J.

Wiley.

b. **Deception Yes ☐ No ☒**

If yes, describe the deception, why it is necessary, and how you will debrief them. The consent form should include the following statement: "In order to make this study a valid one, some information about my participation will be withheld until completion of the study."

9. VULNERABLE PARTICIPANTS: Yes ☐ No ☒

Minors ☐ Prisoners ☐ Pregnant women/fetuses ☐ Elderly ☐
 Immigrants/non-English speakers ☐ Mentally/Physically incapacitated ☐ Others ☐ *List below.*

Outline procedures to obtain their consent/assent to participate. Describe the procedures to be used to minimize risk to these vulnerable subjects.

10. ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES: Yes ☐ No ☒

If yes, explain how subjects will be protected.

NOTE: Some ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES must be reported, e.g. child abuse.

11. STUDENTS

This application is being submitted for :

Undergraduate Honors Thesis ☐

Masters Applied Project, Thesis or Exit Exam Research ☐

Doctoral Dissertation Research ☒

Has the student's thesis/dissertation committee approved this research? Yes ☒ No ☐

The IRB recommends submission for IRB review only after the appropriate committees have conducted the necessary scientific review and approved the research proposal.

Approval of Research Request



Office of The Vice President for Research
DHHS Assurance ID No. : FWA00003901

Institutional Review Board
Human Subjects Office
612 Boyd GSRC
Athens, Georgia 30602-7411
(706) 542-3199
Fax: (706) 542-3360
www.ovpr.uga.edu/hso

APPROVAL FORM

Date Proposal Received: 2008-07-03

Project Number: 2009-10008-0

Name	Title	Dept/Phone	Address	Email
Dr. Joyce Elaine Adams	PI	Workforce Education, Leadership, and Social Foundations River's Crossing +4809 542-4204		adamsje@uga.edu
Ms. Brandilyn Hayes	CO	Workforce Education, Leadership, and Social Foundations River's Crossing 4809 706-629-0019		bhayes@gcbe.org

Title of Study: Organizational and Professional Commitment of Alternately Certified Teachers

45 CFR 46 Category: Administrative 2

Parameters:

None;

Change(s) Required for Approval:

Receipt of Letter of Authorization from NWGA RESA;

Revised Application;

Revised Consent Document(s);

Approved : 2008-07-25 **Begin date :** 2008-07-25 **Expiration date :** 2013-07-24

NOTE: Any research conducted before the approval date or after the end date collection date shown above is not covered by IRB approval, and cannot be retroactively approved.

Number Assigned by Sponsored Programs:

Funding Agency:

Your human subjects study has been approved.

Please be aware that it is your responsibility to inform the IRB:

- ... of any adverse events or unanticipated risks to the subjects or others within 24 to 72 hours;
- ... of any significant changes or additions to your study and obtain approval of them before they are put into effect;
- ... that you need to extend the approval period beyond the expiration date shown above;
- ... that you have completed your data collection as approved, within the approval period shown above, so that your file may be closed.

For additional information regarding your responsibilities as an investigator refer to the IRB Guidelines.

Use the attached Researcher Request Form for requesting renewals, changes, or closures.

Keep this original approval form for your records.

Chairperson or Designee,
Institutional Review Board

Appendix G

Initial E-Mail Sent to Participants from Third Party

Initial E-Mail Sent to Participants from Third Party

Dear Colleague:

Due to restrictions on distributing data, the Northwest Georgia Regional Educational Service Agency (NW GA RESA) is acting as a third party and sending the following on behalf of Brandi Hayes.

My name is Brandi Hayes and I am a doctoral student in Workforce Education at the University of Georgia. I am conducting a research study titled "Organizational and Professional Commitment of Alternatively Certified Teachers" for my dissertation. This study will examine the feelings of teachers certified through the Georgia Teacher Alternative Preparation Program (TAPP) certified teachers about their organizational and professional commitment.

Due to the fact that you completed the Georgia TAPP program to receive your initial teaching certification, your insight and opinions are very valuable. Participation in this study will take approximately 10 minutes and could prove to be a valuable contribution to the area of alternative certification and teacher retention. **Please click the following link Organizational and Professional Commitment Survey and enter the password Education to complete and submit your responses by September 26, 2008.**

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You may refuse to participate or discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. However, since only a small number of Georgia TAPP certified teachers are being asked to participate, it is important that each person in the study complete the questionnaire.

Internet communications are insecure and there is a limit to the confidentiality that can be guaranteed due to the technology itself. However, once the materials are received by the researcher, standard confidentiality procedures will be employed. Your responses will be kept confidential and will not be released in any individual identifiable form unless required by law. All data will be reported aggregately, not individually. The aggregated results of this research will be submitted to the University of Georgia.

There are no anticipated risks or discomforts from participation in this study. There are also no direct benefits to participants. However, the study will contribute to literature on teacher commitment and alternative certification. By better understanding the commitment of alternatively certified teachers, policymakers will be able to make informed decisions about continuing such programs. In addition, the results could help to fill the deficiency of information that is currently available about the Georgia Teacher Alternative Preparation Program (Georgia TAPP).

Thank you for your assistance. If you have any questions about the research, either now or at a later date, please do not hesitate to contact me at (706)629-0019 or bhayes0019@comcast.net. Dr. Elaine Adams, my graduate advisor is serving as principal investigator and overseeing the study. She can be reached at (706)542-4204 or adamsje@uga.edu.

Sincerely,
Brandi Hayes
Ed.D. Candidate
Department of Workforce Education, Leadership, and Social Foundations
University of Georgia
1181 Boone Ford Road SE
Calhoun, Georgia 30701
bhayes0019@comcast.net
(706)629-0019

Faculty Advisor/Principal Investigator
Elaine Adams, Ph.D.
Doctoral Committee Chairperson
Department of Workforce Education, Leadership, and Social Foundations
College of Education
University of Georgia
206 River's Crossing
Athens, Georgia 30602-4809

Additional questions or problems regarding rights as a research participant should be addressed to Larry Nackerud, Human Subjects Office, University of Georgia, 612 Boyd Graduate Studies Research Center, Athens, Georgia 30602-7411; Telephone (706)542-3199; E-mail Address IRB@uga.edu.

Appendix H

First Follow Up E-Mail Sent by Third Party

First Follow Up E-Mail Sent by Third Party

Dear Colleague:

Due to restrictions on distributing data, the Northwest Georgia Regional Educational Service Agency (NW GA RESA) is acting as a third party and sending the following on behalf of Brandi Hayes.

About three weeks ago, an e-mail was sent to you requesting your participation in a study about organizational and professional commitment of alternatively certified teachers. If you have already completed the online questionnaire, thank you for your participation. If you have not, I ask that you log in using the information below and complete the questionnaire.

As a GATAPP certified teacher, I know that your time is very valuable and that you are very busy. However, your responses are extremely important to this research. This study will attempt to describe the organizational and professional commitment of Georgia TAPP certified teachers. Further research into the organizational and professional commitment of Georgia TAPP could prove to be a valuable contribution to the area of alternative certification and teacher retention. Since only a small number of GATAPP certified teachers were asked to participate in this study, it is important that each person in the study complete the questionnaire. **Please click the following link Organizational and Professional Commitment Survey and enter the password Education to complete and submit your responses by October 24, 2008.**

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary and will take approximately 10 minutes. You may refuse to participate or discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. There are no anticipated risks or discomforts from participation in this study. There are also no direct benefits to participants. However, the study will contribute to literature on teacher commitment and alternative certification. By better understanding the commitment of alternatively certified teachers, policymakers will be able to make informed decisions about continuing such programs. In addition, the results could help to fill the deficiency of information that is currently available about the Georgia Teacher Alternative Preparation Program (Georgia TAPP).

Internet communications are insecure and there is a limit to the confidentiality that can be guaranteed due to the technology itself. However, once the materials are received by the researcher, standard confidentiality procedures will be employed. Your responses will be kept confidential and will not be released in any individual identifiable form unless required by law. All data will be reported aggregately, not individually. The aggregated results of this research will be submitted to the University of Georgia.

Thank you for your assistance. If you have any questions about the research, either now or at a later date, please do not hesitate to contact me at (706)629-0019 or bhayes0019@comcast.net. Dr. Elaine Adams, my graduate advisor is serving as principal investigator and overseeing the study. She can be reached at (706)542-4204 or adamsje@uga.edu.

Sincerely,
Brandi Hayes
Ed.D. Candidate
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University of Georgia
1181 Boone Ford Road SE
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bhayes0019@comcast.net
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Faculty Advisor/Principal Investigator
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Appendix I**Second/Final Follow Up E-Mail Sent by Third Party**

Second/Final Follow Up E-Mail Sent by Third Party

Dear Colleague:

Due to restrictions on distributing data, the Northwest Georgia Regional Educational Service Agency (NW GA RESA) is acting as a third party and sending the following on behalf of Brandi Hayes.

About three weeks ago, a follow-up e-mail was sent to you requesting your participation in a study about organizational and professional commitment of alternatively certified teachers. If you have already completed the online questionnaire, thank you for your participation. If you have not, I ask that you log in using the information below and complete the questionnaire.

As a GATAPP certified teacher, I know that your time is very valuable and that you are very busy. However, your responses are extremely important to this research. This study will attempt to describe the organizational and professional commitment of Georgia TAPP certified teachers. Further research into the organizational and professional commitment of Georgia TAPP could prove to be a valuable contribution to the area of alternative certification and teacher retention. Since only a small number of GATAPP certified teachers were asked to participate in this study, it is important that each person in the study complete the questionnaire. **Please click the following link Organizational and Professional Commitment Survey and enter the password Education to complete and submit your responses by November 14, 2008.**

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary and will take approximately 10 minutes. You may refuse to participate or discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. There are no anticipated risks or discomforts from participation in this study. There are also no direct benefits to participants. However, the study will contribute to literature on teacher commitment and alternative certification. By better understanding the commitment of alternatively certified teachers, policymakers will be able to make informed decisions about continuing such programs. In addition, the results could help to fill the deficiency of information that is currently available about the Georgia Teacher Alternative Preparation Program (Georgia TAPP).

Internet communications are insecure and there is a limit to the confidentiality that can be guaranteed due to the technology itself. However, once the materials are received by the researcher, standard confidentiality procedures will be employed. Your responses will be kept confidential and will not be released in any individual identifiable form unless required by law. All data will be reported aggregately, not individually. The aggregated results of this research will be submitted to the University of Georgia.

Thank you for your assistance. If you have any questions about the research, either now or at a later date, please do not hesitate to contact me at (706)629-0019 or bhayes0019@comcast.net. Dr. Elaine Adams, my graduate advisor is serving as principal investigator and overseeing the study. She can be reached at (706)542-4204 or adamsje@uga.edu.

Sincerely,
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