

TEACHER RECRUITMENT, RURAL SCHOOLS AND STUDENT TEACHERS'
PERCEPTIONS OF EFFECTIVE TEACHER RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES IN
NORTH CAROLINA

A Research Study

by

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ABSTRACT

TEACHER RECRUITMENT, RURAL SCHOOLS AND STUDENT TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF EFFECTIVE TEACHER RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES IN NORTH CAROLINA. (May, 2008)

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The goal of this research study was to examine North Carolina student teachers' perceptions of effective teacher recruitment strategies related specifically to rural schools. Presently there are not enough qualified teachers available to teach in classrooms in rural school systems in North Carolina. Rural schools are at a disadvantage to competitively recruit teachers. Effective teacher recruitment is a priority for public schools, but there is limited empirical research about the topic (Young, Rinehart & Heneman, 1993). This study attempted to fill this research void by examining teacher recruitment strategies for rural North Carolina school systems. The perceptions of North Carolina student teachers from 49 institutions of higher education with approved teacher education programs were investigated in the fall semester 2007. Student teachers were surveyed to determine differences in the perceptions of student teachers intending to teach in rural schools versus those intending to teach in urban schools. Survey items included various teacher recruitment strategies in the areas of interpersonal strategies, financial strategies, media strategies and technological strategies. This study examined the importance of financial incentives and the intent of student teachers who attended a university in a rural setting or lived in a rural hometown to teach in a rural school.

The results of this study indicated that student teachers living in rural hometowns and those who attended college in rural settings have a greater intention to teach in rural

schools than those student teachers who live or attend colleges in rural settings.

Recruitment strategies were grouped into the following categories: financial incentives (salaries, housing, loan forgiveness, scholarships, and relocation assistance); media strategies (brochures, newspapers, billboard, radio and TV); interpersonal strategies (job fairs, teacher cadet classes, FTA clubs, Teachers of Tomorrow Programs and face to face recruitment), and technology strategies (websites, PowerPoint, video webcasts, blogs, online job banks). The mean score for financial strategies was higher than the other categories of media, interpersonal and technology. Within financial strategies, rural school salary supplements, scholarship loans and assistance in locating housing were statistical significant recruitment strategies.

This study will inform rural teacher recruitment strategies. With limited time and resources, rural school systems will be able to focus on the recruitment strategies perceived as most effective by student teachers in North Carolina's applicant pool.

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Teacher Recruitment, Rural Schools and Student Teachers' Perceptions of Effective Teacher Recruitment Strategies in North Carolina.

Chapter I: Introduction

From the moment our children step into a classroom, new evidence shows that the single most important factor in determining their achievement today is not the color of their skin or where they come from; it's not who their parents are or how much money they have. It's who their teacher is. It's the person who will brave some of the most difficult schools, the most challenging children, and accept the most meager compensation simply to give someone else the chance to succeed. (Obama, 2005, p. 5)

The nation needs talented, committed, well-prepared new teachers (Berry & Buxton, 2000). The demand for new teachers is estimated between 2 to 2.5 million through 2008, with more than 200,000 teachers needed annually nationwide. The demand for teachers is twofold encompassing not only need but also level of competency. School systems are recruiting teachers who meet the definition of "highly qualified" as defined by No Child Left Behind Legislation (United States Department of Education, 2006). Highly qualified teachers teach core academic subjects and meet the provisions of a bachelor's degree, full state certification (licensure) as defined by the state, and demonstrated competency as defined by the state in each core academic area in which he or she teaches.

Highly qualified teachers are unequally distributed across school systems and disadvantaged students are much more likely to be served by less qualified teachers (Lankford, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2002; Loeb & Page, 2000; Oakes, Gamoran, & Page, 1992). Rural school systems must serve disadvantaged students while contending with significant pressure to raise teacher quality to comply with NCLB and to meet the increasing demand for teachers in the next decade (Lankford, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2002).

The definition of a rural school system is complex. Rural Maine may not be like rural Texas, which in turn may not be like rural Georgia or North Carolina. To define rural education or rural schools, it is necessary to define the term rural (Bosak & Perlman, 1982). The term rural was first used by the United States Bureau of the Census in 1874, to indicate the population of a county exclusive of any cities or towns with 8,000 or more inhabitants (Whitaker, 1992). For the purposes of this study, an operational definition of rural schools is a school or school system in a rural, non-metropolitan area or small town. The school is in a small place with 70% or more of the communities being rural and the school size is less than 600 students (United States Department of Education's Center for Education Statistics, 1987).

Although rural school systems make up two-thirds of the nation's public schools (Robinson-Hornbuckle, 1991), "rural schools and rural education in developed nations are rarely written about or studied, except perhaps as anomalies" (De Young, 1991, p. xv). Rural school systems need to recruit highly qualified teachers for the future (Hartigan, 2002).

Castetter (1996) referred to recruitment as “those activities in personnel administration designed to make available the numbers and quality of personnel needed to carry on the work of the school system” (p. 42).

Many urban and suburban school systems have an aggressive competitive recruitment process, while many rural school systems have a less developed recruitment process. The teacher shortage in school systems is primarily in the areas of mathematics, science and special education (Darling-Hammond, 2001; Fideler, Foster, & Schwartz, 2000; Hartigan, 2002; Neumann, 1994). Schools already unable to compete in the recruitment process are uncertain about how to deal with the crisis situation in mathematics, science and special education (Feistritzer, 1998).

Recruiting teachers for rural settings requires targeting persons with rural backgrounds, attacking negative stereotypes surrounding rural schools and stressing the benefits of teaching in rural schools. Recruitment also requires the coordinated effort of the school and community (Harmon, 2001). A decade of research is correlated to student achievement and highly qualified teachers (Ferguson, 1998; Goldhaber, 2002; Goldhaber, Brewer, & Anderson, 1999; Hanushek, Kain, & Rivkin, 2002) consequently, in order to provide a good school, rural administrators must concentrate on the recruitment of quality teachers (Sergiovanni, 2000). A sound recruitment program will evolve only if there is adequate financial support provided to maintain it (Lowe, 2006). The dual goals of recruiting and retaining effective teachers are difficult to realize because of insufficient and sometimes dwindling resources. Current United States economic conditions are causing many states to roll back their expenditures on public education. “The people who dispense federal, state and local funds to education will be hard-pressed to determine

which programs raise the quality of teaching and assist in recruiting teachers with reliable strategies from informed empirical research” (Guarino, Santibanez, & Daley, 2006, p. 173).

Stakeholder groups comprised of teachers, administrators, students, parents and community and civic members should be involved in the efforts of recruitment planning for a plan to be successful (Webb & Norton, 2003). Stakeholders in rural communities demonstrate support of the recruitment plan through their involvement. The stakeholders should determine the budget, what the community has to offer, the values of the community, the vision for schools in the community, the vision for teaching and learning, new teacher pools of applicants, and strategies to use in the recruitment process. It takes a continuous focused effort in the recruitment of teachers to rural areas (Lowe, 2006; Webb & Norton, 2003). There is limited empirical research about teacher recruitment (Young, Rinehart, & Heneman, 1993) and it is focused primarily on applicant decisions in hiring. Rynes (1991) called for empirical studies about recruitment prior to the interview.

Statement of the Problem

Presently, there are not enough qualified teachers available to fill classrooms in the United States. Rural schools are at a disadvantage in the competitive process to recruit teachers. Effective teacher recruitment is a priority for public schools, but there is still limited empirical research about the topic (Young, Rinehart, & Heneman, 1993). Effective recruitment strategies for rural schools are needed to positively impact teacher recruitment efforts.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to research the perceptions of student teachers with regard to effective teacher recruitment strategies in rural schools. The question, “Will student teachers and interns who plan to work in rural school systems differ from student teachers and interns who plan to work in urban school systems in terms of what they perceive to be effective recruitment strategies?”

Significance of the Study

Given what is at stake with the issues for teacher recruitment in North Carolina and the nation, it is reasonable that evidence concerning teacher recruitment strategies for rural schools and student teachers’ perceptions related to teaching in a rural school should be investigated.

Rural schools are at a disadvantage in the competitive process to recruit teachers. Effective teacher recruitment is a priority for public schools, but there is still limited empirical research about the topic (Young, Rinehart, & Heneman, 1993). Effective recruitment strategies for rural schools are needed to positively impact teacher recruitment efforts. This study attempts to fill a void in the research examining teacher recruitment strategies for rural North Carolina school systems. The perceptions of North Carolina student teachers from 49 institutions of higher education with approved teacher education programs were investigated in the fall semester 2007. Student teachers were surveyed to determine the differences in the perceptions of student teachers intending to teach in rural schools versus those who intend to teach in urban schools with regard to various teacher recruitment strategies in the areas of interpersonal strategies, financial strategies, media strategies and technological strategies. This study

explored the importance of financial incentives and the intent of student teachers who attended a university in a rural setting or lived in rural home town to teach in a rural school.

Chapter II: Results

Results of the study that analyzed the student teachers' perceptions of fall 2007 North Carolina student teachers from approved teacher education programs are presented in this chapter. The study explored the questions of intent to work in rural schools and which category of teacher recruitment strategies was perceived as most effective by the student teachers.

The following tables display participant descriptive demographic data. This data includes participants' hometowns, gender, ethnicity, teaching as a first career, teaching as a second career, rural/urban university attendance, and the percentage of total sample size from each university.

Participant Descriptive Data

Table 1

Participants' Hometown

Hometown	Frequency	Percent
Rural	148	64.6
Urban	81	35.4

Table 2

Gender of Participants

13.5%	Male
83.5%	Female

Table 3

Participants' Ethnicity

Ethnicity	Percentage of Participants
African American	4.3%
Asian American	.9%
Native American	1.3%
Caucasian	89.1%
Hispanic	1.3%

Table 4

Teaching as a First or Second Career Choice

86.5%	First Career
13.0%	Second Career

Table 5

Rural/Urban University Attendance

Rural University	54.0%
Urban University	45.7%
No response	.3%

Table 6

Participants' University

Name of Participants' University	Percentage of Attendance by Participants
Appalachian State	4.3%
Barton	<1%
Campbell	<1%
Catawba	.4%
Chowan	.4%
East Carolina	2.2%
Elon	.4%
Fayetteville State	.4%
Gardner Webb	.4%
J.C. Smith	.9%
Lees McRae	13.5%
Lenior Rhyne	.9%
Montreat	.4%
NC State	11.0%
Queens	.4%
Salem	.4%
UNC-Asheville	.4%
UNC-Chapel Hill	28.7%
UNC-Charlotte	.9%
UNC-Wilmington	8.7%
Western Carolina University	23.0%

Results Related to Hypothesis One

With regard to financial incentives, the hypothesis related to the financial recruitment strategies (salaries, housing, loan forgiveness, scholarships, relocation assistance) was more highly rated than the media strategies (brochures, newspapers, billboards, radio, TV), interpersonal strategies (job fairs, teacher cadet classes, FTA clubs, Teachers of Tomorrow Programs and face to face recruitment), and technology strategies (websites, PowerPoint, video, webcasts, blogs, online job banks).

A t-test was used to determine the difference between media based strategies and financial strategies. The mean score for media based strategies was 2.7; the mean score for financial strategies was 3.4 with a statistical significance of $t = 16.79$ with 228 degrees of freedom and a significance level $p = .009$. There is statistical significance.

Table 7

Correlation of Media Recruitment Strategies

(Spearman's Rho)

	Brochure	Billboard	Newspaper	Mass
			Ad	Media
Correlation Coefficient	.216(**)	.207(**)	.155(**)	.189(**)
Significance (1-tailed)	.001	.001	.010	.002
N	229	229	229	223

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

Table 8

Paired Samples – Media and Financial Recruitment Strategies

	Mean	N	SD	Std. Error Mean
Media	2.7278	229	.69649	.04603
Financial	3.4405	229	.40889	.02702

Table 9

Correlation of Media and Financial Recruitment Strategies

	N	Correlation	Sig.
Media - Financial	229	.420	.000

Table 10

Paired Samples Test – Media and Financial

	Paired Differences		
	Mean	SD	Std. Error Mean
Media - Financial	-.71275	.64258	.04246

	Paired Differences		t	df	Significance (2-tailed)
	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
	Lower	Upper			
Media - Financial	-.79642	-.62908	-16.785	228	.000

The mean score of financial incentives was 3.4; the mean score of interpersonal strategies was 3.2; $t = 8.03$ with 228 degrees of freedom and a significance level of $p = .009$. There was statistical significance.

Table 11

Paired Samples – Financial and Interpersonal Recruitment Strategies

	Mean	N	SD	Std. Error Mean
Financial	3.4405	229	.40889	.2702
Interpersonal	3.2234	229	.45876	.03032

Table 12

Paired Samples Test – Financial and Interpersonal Recruitment Strategies

	Paired Differences		
	Mean	SD	Std. Error Mean
Financial - Interpersonal	.21711	.40894	.02702

	Paired Differences		t	df	Significance (2-tailed)
	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
	Lower	Upper			
Financial – Interpersonal	.16387	.27036	8.034	228	.000

The mean score of financial incentives was 3.4; the mean score of technological strategies was 2.88; $t = 15.29$ with 228 degrees of freedom and a significance level of $p = .009$.

Table 13

Paired Samples – Financial and Technological

	Mean	N	SD	Std. Error Mean
Financial	3.4405	229	.40889	.02702
Technological	2.8821	229	.62140	.04106

Table 14

Correlation of Financial and Technological Recruitment Strategies

	N	Correlation	Sig.
Financial - Technological	229	.488	.000

Table 15

Paired Samples Test – Financial and Technological Recruitment Strategies

	Paired Differences		
	Mean	SD	Std. Error Mean
Financial - Technological	.55845	.55276	.03653

Table 15 Continued

	Paired Differences		t	df	Significance (2-tailed)
	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
	Lower	Upper			
Financial – Technological	.48648	.63043	15.289	228	.000

Results Related to Hypothesis Two

There was a positive relationship between the likelihood of a student teacher's intent to work in a rural school and the degree to which they value financial incentives (a) salary, (b) loan forgiveness, (c) scholarship loans, (d) provision of housing, (e) relocation expenses, (f) salary supplements, and (g) assistance in locating housing.

The degree to which the student teachers expressed interest in working in a rural school and the value they place on the seven financial recruitment strategies A-G was correlated.

Table 16

Correlation of Financial Incentive Recruitment Strategies

(Spearman's Rho)

	Salary	Loan Forgiveness	Scholarship	Provision of Housing
Correlation Coefficient	.052	.061	.155(**)	.085
Significance (1-tailed)	.216	.178	.009	.100
N	229	229	229	229

Table 16 Continued

	Relocation Funds	Salary Supplement	Assistance Locating Housing
Correlation Coefficient	.031	.170(**)	.180(**)
Significance (1-tailed)	.320	.006	.004
N	229	223	223

**Correlation was significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

a. The correlation of the value placed on salary increases and working in rural schools was $R = .052$; $p = .22$. There was no relationship.

b. The correlation of the value of loan forgiveness and interest in working in rural schools was $R = .06$; $p = .18$. There was no relationship.

c. The relationship of working in rural schools and scholarship loans was statistically significant. $R = .155$; $p = .009$.

d. The correlation of interest in working in rural schools and the value placed on the provision of housing was not statistically significant. $R = .085$; $p = .1$.

e. The correlation of working in rural schools and the provision of relocation expenses were not statistically significant. $R = .03$; $p = .32$.

f. The relationship of working in rural schools and salary supplements was statistically significant. $R = .17$; $p = .006$.

g. The relationship of working in rural schools and assistance in locating housing was significant. $R = .18$; $p = .004$.

Results Related to Hypothesis Three

Hypothesis three stated there will be no difference in the gender of the participant and the intent to work in rural schools.

Gender and the intent to work in rural schools average rating for males was 2.77; females 2.95. $t = 1.04$ with 221 degrees of freedom and a significance value of .15 there was no statistical significance.

Table 17

Gender of Participants

Gender	N	Mean	SD	Std. Error Mean
Male	31	2.77	.805	.145
Female	192	2.95	.873	.063

To what extent do you want (intend) to work in a rural school system?

Levene's Test for Equality of Variances	
	Significance
Equal variances assumed	.785
Equal variances not assumed	

Table 17 Continued

	t-test for Equality of Means				
	t	df	Significance (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Standard Error Difference
Equal variances assumed	-1.039	221	.300	-.174	.167
Equal variances not assumed	-1.102	42.242	.277	-.174	.158

	t-test for Equality of Means	
	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	-.503	.156
Equal variances not assumed	-.492	.144

Results Related to Hypothesis Four

Hypothesis four stated students from rural hometowns will have a greater interest in working in rural schools.

Table 18

Hometown

Hometown	N	Mean	SD	Std. Error Mean
Rural	148	3.23	.792	.065
Urban	81	2.31	.736	.082

Table 18 Continued

To what extent do you want (intend) to work in a rural school system?

Levene's Test for Equality of Variances	
	Significance
Equal variances assumed	.946
Equal variances not assumed	

t-test for Equality of Means					
	t	df	Significance (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Standard Error Difference
Equal variances assumed	8.627	227	.000	.921	.107
Equal variances not assumed	8.816	175.302	.000	.921	.104

t-test for Equality of Means		
95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
	Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	.711	1.131
Equal variances not assumed	.715	1.127

The mean score for rural hometowns was 3.2 with a mean score from urban hometowns 2.3; $t = 8.63$ with 227 degrees of freedom and a significance value of $p = .009$. There was statistical significance.

Results Related to Hypothesis Five

Hypothesis five theorized students who have gone to college in rural settings will be more likely to have the intention to work in a rural school.

Table 19

University/College Setting

University/College Setting	N	Mean	SD	Std. Error Mean
Rural	124	3.24	.769	.069
Urban	105	2.50	.856	.084

To what extent do you want (intend) to work in a rural school system?

Levene's Test for Equality of Variances

	F	Significance
Equal variances assumed	4.567	.034
Equal variances not assumed		

t-test for Equality of Means

	t	df	Significance (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Standard Error Difference
Equal variances assumed	6.861	227	.000	.737	.107
Equal variances not assumed	6.800	211.258	.000	.737	.108

Table 19 Continued

	t-test for Equality of Means	
	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	.525	.949
Equal variances not assumed	.523	.951

The mean for students attending college in a rural setting was 3.2 with a mean of 2.5 for those attending college in an urban setting. The t-test reveals $t = 6.86$ with 227 degrees of freedom and a p value of .009. There was statistical significance.

Summary of Results

There was statistical significance in hypothesis one with regard to financial strategies being more highly rated by the student teachers than the strategies involving media, interpersonal contact, and technology. The results of this study allowed for the acceptance of hypothesis one.

Hypothesis two was accepted in part with regard to student teachers intending to teach in rural schools and the value they place on financial recruitment strategies. There was not a statistically significant relationship with the financial strategies involving salary increases, loan forgiveness, provision of housing, or relocation expenses. There was, however a statistically significant relationship of value placed by the student teachers, on scholarship loans, salary supplements at the local school system level, and assistance in locating housing.

The results of this study allowed for the acceptance of hypothesis three stating that there will be no difference in the gender of the participant and the intent to work in rural schools. The gender of the student teacher was not a determinant in the decision to work in a rural school.

Hypothesis four was accepted based on the data analysis of students from rural hometowns having a greater interest in working in rural schools. There was statistical significance in this relationship.

Additionally, hypothesis five was accepted. Student teachers attending universities in rural setting were more likely to have the intention to work in rural schools than those student teachers attending universities in an urban setting.

Chapter III: Discussion

This chapter provides a discussion of the results of this study. Topics include the parameters of the study; significant findings; an interpretation of the findings; potential contributions to the field; recommendations for future research, limitations of the study and a summary of the study.

Parameters of the Study

This study was limited to fall 2007 student teachers enrolled in approved teacher education programs in North Carolina. The focus on student teachers can be considered a strength of the study. There are no studies found from 1970-2007 that researched the perceptions of student teachers regarding teacher recruitment strategies. Specific research within this study focuses on student teachers' perceptions of effective recruitment strategies for rural North Carolina schools.

Conclusions and Significant Findings

Young, Rinehart and Heneman (1993) studied applicants' decisions in hiring and called for empirical studies about teacher recruitment and Rynes (1991) called for research prior to the interview with regard to hiring. The findings from the survey of student teachers' perceptions regarding effective teacher recruitment strategies and intent to teach in rural schools in this study was significant with regard to financial strategies, and the teachers who intend to teach in rural schools.

Research hypothesis one was supported by reports that financial strategies for teacher recruitment were more highly valued by student teachers than were the media strategies, interpersonal strategies or the technological strategies.

Research hypothesis two was substantiated in part with regard to student teachers intending to teach in rural schools and the value they place on financial recruitment strategies. There was not a statistically significant relationship with the financial strategies involving salary increases, loan forgiveness, provision of housing, or relocation expenses. There was, however, a statistically significant relationship of value placed by the student teachers, on scholarship loans, salary supplements at the local school system level, and assistance in locating housing.

Research hypothesis three stated that there will be no difference in the gender of the participant and the intent to work in rural schools is supported fully. The gender of the student teacher was not a determinant in the decision to work in a rural school.

Hypothesis four was based on the data analysis of students from rural hometowns having a greater interest in working in rural schools. There is statistical significance in this relationship. Students from rural hometowns have a greater interest in working in rural schools than student teachers from urban hometowns.

Research hypothesis five was supported with regard to student teachers attending universities in rural settings being more likely to intend to work in rural schools than those student teachers attending universities in an urban setting.

Interpretation

The analysis of the results of this study confirmed the importance of financial strategies in teacher recruitment. Hypothesis two lent some surprising findings with regard to which financial strategies were most highly valued by student teachers intending to teach in rural schools. It is important for rural systems to explore the strategies of scholarship loans, salary supplements and assistance in locating housing.

These recruitment strategies are within a rural school system's locus of control. It is interesting to note that state salaries were not statistically significant with regard to the value placed on financial strategies by the student teachers. This may be explained by the North Carolina state teacher salary system and the minimal control teachers and local school systems have in increasing the *North Carolina State Teacher Salary Schedule*.

It is also motivating for rural school systems to be responsive to the findings that student teachers do not value the provision of relocation expenses and provision of housing; however they do value assistance in locating their own housing. This finding may speak to the personal choice teachers value in locating their own housing as opposed to having housing they did not choose provided for them.

Student teachers from rural hometowns and student teachers who have attended a university in a rural setting are more likely to have the intention to work in a rural school. Possible explanations for these findings were based upon the work of Darling-Hammond and Sclan (1996) and Loeb and Wyckoff (2004). The familiarity with rural settings creates a sense of security within the student teacher that allows for the *known* as opposed to the *unknown* to escort them into a new career. The beginning teachers' careers are supported by the familiarity with a rural school and a rural setting.

Potential Contributions to the Field

The research on teacher recruitment is limited. Researchers have been unable or unwilling to survey large groups of teachers, thus few empirical research studies have been conducted in the area of recruitment strategies and the perceptions of teachers regarding recruitment strategies. The literature revealed surveys requesting information from superintendents and principals, but rarely, if ever are teachers surveyed on the topic

of teacher recruitment. Young, Rinehart and Heneman (1993) studied applicants' decisions in hiring and called for empirical studies about teacher recruitment. Rynes (1991) called for empirical research about teacher recruitment prior to the hiring interview. Given the limitations in empirical research on teacher recruitment strategies, this dissertation has the potential to contribute to the field by surveying student teachers and gleaning their perceptions of effective teacher recruitment strategies for rural schools.

Recommendations for Future Research

The results of this study contributed to the body of research on teacher recruitment strategies and the interpretation of this study's findings have implications for further research. The following are suggestions for future research:

- Replicate the study with student teachers in adjoining states with similar rural to urban ratios.
- Expand the teacher recruitment strategies within the four categories of financial, media, interpersonal and technological and replicate the study in North Carolina.
- Replicate the study longitudinally to investigate changes in the student teachers' perceptions.
- Expand this study to assess additional categories of recruitment strategies: financial, media, interpersonal and technological. Each category could serve as a stand alone empirical study.
- Replicate the study with the support of the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) and the University of North Carolina General Administration (UNC-GA) to increase the return rate and the number of participants.

Limitations of the Study

Limitations were incurred during this study. The fall 2007 student teacher participant sample is significantly smaller than the spring semester student teaching assignment sample in the state of North Carolina. The researcher relied on email, phone and personal contact with field experience directors in the approved teacher education programs in North Carolina to distribute surveys to their fall 2007 student teachers. This system of survey distribution would be enhanced with sponsorship of future research by North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) and University of North Carolina – General Administration (UNC-GA).

Summary

In summary, it can be concluded that the research questions were answered as a result of this study as was expected given the limited literature on teacher recruitment strategies for rural schools. The research undertaken in this study is important because it takes into account teachers' perceptions as evidence informed practice (Learmonth, 2003) to provide the research base for educational decisions. Teachers' perceptions and judgment have rarely informed a body of research. The unanticipated findings related to the financial strategies student teachers intending to teach in rural schools value most will provide guidance for rural school systems' teacher recruitment planning. Scholarship loans, local salary supplements and assistance with the location of housing are all within the control of rural schools working collaboratively with their stakeholders. The literature was mixed in the findings regarding the male and female intentions related to teaching in urban or rural schools. It is important to note that for fall 2007 student teachers in North Carolina gender was not a determinant for the intention to teach in rural

schools. It is vital for rural schools to be aware that students from rural hometowns and students who attended a university located in a rural setting are more likely to have the intention to work in a rural school. This awareness has implications for recruitment travel, planning, and funding for the strategies of financial, media, interpersonal and technological recruitment of student teachers in North Carolina.

Based on this study, rural school systems in North Carolina will be effective in teacher recruitment providing they recruit from pools of teacher candidates who have lived in and/or attended universities in rural settings. Both male and female candidates should be equally targeted with recruitment initiatives. North Carolina rural school systems that provide scholarship loans, local salary supplements, and assistance for locating housing have the potential to more effectively recruit student teachers enrolled in student teaching with approved teacher education programs in the fall of 2007.

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APPENDIX

Informed Consent Form

Survey of Teacher Recruitment Strategies

I. Purpose of this Research/Project

The purpose of this study is to research the perceptions of student teachers in North Carolina with regard to effective teacher recruitment strategies for rural school systems.

II. Procedures

Participants in this study will complete an online survey. The participants will indicate their agreement with teacher recruitment strategies by responding to a four-point scale. Participant will submit their responses to the survey by "clicking" the submit button at the end of the survey questions. Completing the survey is voluntary.

III. Risks

There are no known risks to completing the survey online.

IV. Benefits

The benefits to the participants will be a contribution to the future of teaching in North Carolina, by adding to the literature concerning effective teacher recruitment strategies.

V. Extent of Anonymity and Confidentiality

Anonymity is in the decision-making power of the participants. The participant can choose to submit their email address, so that research findings may be emailed to them or they can choose to leave the email address blank.

VI. Compensation

If participants choose to submit their email address, they will be included in a drawing for two \$100.00 gift cards to Wal-mart. If they are one of the two winners, they will need to provide a mailing address so the gift card can be mailed to them.

VII. Freedom to Withdraw

There is no financial compensation involved in completing the online survey. The participant may discontinue the survey at any time.

VIII. Approval of Research

This research project has been approved, as required, by the Institutional Review Board of Appalachian State University and Western Carolina University.

IX. Participant's Responsibilities

I voluntarily agree to participate in this study. I have the following responsibilities:
I agree to complete the online survey.

*** Having read the material above, please select one of the following:**

I consent to participate in this survey and wish to proceed.

I DO NOT consent to participate and would like to withdraw.

For the purposes of this survey, a rural school is defined as a school or school system in a rural, non-metropolitan area or small town. The school is in a small place with 70% or more of the surrounding communities being rural and the school size is determined to be less than 600 students.

*** To what extent do you want (intend) to work in a rural school system?**













Select









*** Based on the definition above, how would you describe your hometown?**

Rural Urban

The following questions are concerned with your perceptions about the usefulness or effectiveness of various job recruitment strategies for teachers. Please respond as indicated below.

To what extent do you believe each of the following would be an effective recruitment strategy?

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
	salary increases for teachers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	education loan forgiveness plans	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	teacher scholarship loans	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	providing housing for teaching	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	providing relocation expenses and summer employment opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	providing a mentor for teachers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	a school system's web site	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	a video or PowerPoint presentation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	a school system brochure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	middle and high school programs for students focusing on teacher recruitment (examples: teacher cadet, teachers of tomorrow and Future Teachers of America)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	highway billboards	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	strategies to target second career and lateral entry teaching applicant pools	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

 initiatives to target teacher assistants and paraprofessionals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
 partnerships with community colleges and universities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
 job fairs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
 newspaper ads	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
 on-line job banks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
 bonuses, stipends, and salary supplements	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
 mass media (TV and radio ads)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
 assistance locating appropriate housing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

*** What college or university do you currently attend?**

How old are you?

Are you entering the teaching field as your first or second career?

- Teaching will be my first career.
- Teaching will be my second career.

*** Please select your gender.**

Please select one from the following that best describes your ethnic background.

Are you a legal resident of North Carolina?

What is your county of residence in NC?

Two participants will be randomly selected and awarded a \$100 Wal-Mart gift card. Please enter your email address below if you wish to be considered for this random drawing. Please be sure to enter your entire email address. We are not responsible for inaccurate or out-of-date email addresses.