What is this research about?
When new teachers transition from their pre-service training at a Faculty of Education to employment within a public board of education, they continue to need support as they adjust to their new responsibilities as classroom teachers. This study reports on a collaborative teacher induction program between Brock University’s Faculty of Education, the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT), and six school boards within the Golden Horseshoe of southern Ontario. The researchers examined the impact of professional learning processes such as dialogue, inquiry, reflection and collaboration on new teachers’ sense of self-efficacy and their role as teacher-leaders within their schools.

What did the researchers do?
Twelve new teachers and twelve mentor teachers were selected to represent the 6 participating public school boards in a series of workshops developed by Brock and OCT. The new teachers had 1.8 years of teaching experience on average. Mentor teachers had 1.2 years of mentoring experience on average and did not teach in the same school as their new teacher mentee.

New teachers participated in two full days of training while the mentors had one day of training and then joined their mentees for a joint day of training.

Both new and mentor teachers engaged in critical written reflections on issues confronting new teachers and on
providing support for new teachers. Sample topics included: What issues do new teachers/mentors face?, and What benefits resulted from reflecting on your practice as a new/mentor teacher?

During training sessions, participants recorded their thoughts on chart paper to collectively reflect and discuss the impact of important issues. Finally, participants took part in a virtual 50 minute interview where questions were posted on an online site and participants responded with written posts.

These on-line interviews occurred 4 weeks after the last project session and included questions such as: “As a new teacher, what would you identify as your professional development needs?”, and “How enriching were the case study and follow-up activities? How have they informed your practice?”. The online site remained live for 3 days and participants were able to see the comments of other new/mentor teachers and add their own reflections alongside others.

The researchers analyzed the data and created two main categories: ‘new teacher leadership: making meaningful contributions’ and ‘new teacher leadership: reflection and action’.

What did the researchers find?

New teacher leadership: making meaningful contributions
The researchers found that participants’ perspectives were broadened as a result of their participation in the induction program and that the new teachers felt affirmed in their ability to give and receive feedback and advice to colleagues. The program also facilitated new teachers’ connections with peers within their board of education and empowered them to make meaningful contributions to their school and beyond.

New teacher leadership: reflection and action
The researchers found that participants frequently commented on the value of this program in promoting reflection on their teaching and made a connection between professional reflections and student learning. All of the participants in this induction program noted that they would use this reflection as a catalyst to action, or to “exert their leadership influence”.

Participants also commented that the opportunity to reflect and deconstruct their practice left them feeling that they were making a difference.
How can you use this research?
Teachers and administrators may wish to consider:

- Consulting the wider body of literature on induction programs;
- Connecting new teachers with mentor teachers to assist new teachers transition into their new role;
- Survey new teachers on their ongoing professional development needs and interests

Original Article:
To learn more about this study, we invite you to read the original research article:


About the researchers:
Lorenzo Cherubini and Julian Kitchen are Associate Professors in the Faculty of Education at Brock University. Lorenzo.cherubini@brocku.ca Julian.kitchen@brocku.ca

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About this summary
The Ontario Education Research Exchange (OERE) is a project of the Knowledge Network for Applied Education Research, an Ontario network promoting the use of research in education. The OERE’s clear language summaries of academic research aim to support this mandate.

This summary has been adapted from the ResearchSnapshot series developed by York University and ResearchImpact and has been developed according to writing and design principles unique to OERE. For more information about this summary or the OERE network please contact oere.knaer.oise@utoronto.ca.

This summary reflects findings from this study only and is not necessarily representative of the broader body of literature on this subject. Please consult the original document for complete details about this research. In case of any disagreement, the original document should be understood as authoritative.