AASA JOURNAL OF SCHOLARSHIP & PRACTICE

AASA THE SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS ASSOCIATION WWW.AASA.ORG

Research and Evidence-Based Practice Advancing the Profession of Education Administration

Spring 2022, Volume 19 No. 1

Table of Contents

Editorial Review Board

AASA Journal of Scholarship and Practice
2022-2023

Available at www.aasa.org/jsp.aspx
ISSN 1931-6569

Sponsorship and Appreciation

The *AASA Journal of Scholarship and Practice* would like to thank AASA, The School Superintendents Association, and in particular AASA's Leadership Development, for its ongoing sponsorship of the *Journal*.

We also offer special thanks to Kenneth Mitchell, Manhattanville College, for his efforts in selecting the articles that comprise this professional education journal and lending sound editorial comments to each volume.

The unique relationship between research and practice is appreciated, recognizing the mutual benefit to those educators who conduct the research and seek out evidence-based practice and those educators whose responsibility it is to carry out the mission of school districts in the education of children.

Without the support of AASA and Kenneth Mitchell, the *AASA Journal of Scholarship and Practice* would not be possible.

Published by
AASA, The School Superintendents Association
1615 Duke Street
Alexandria, VA 22314

Professional Learning Cultures and Teacher Attrition in Times of Political Conflict

Ken Mitchell, EdD
Editor
AASA Journal of Scholarship and Practice
Spring 2022

As a retired superintendent and now professor of educational leadership, I spend a lot of my professional time with superintendents, assistant superintendents, and building leaders.

The level of stress on leaders has probably never been greater. Their perseverance in the face of unprecedented events has been inspiring.

While trying to manage the vicissitudes of the pandemic, superintendents are being confronted by political reactionaries.

Board meetings have become contested spaces with activist parents often armed with scripts provided by national partisan organizations, challenging curriculum and professional development related to "divisive" topics, such as race, equity, and gender identity. They come seeking to overturn policies and practices designed to protect the most marginalized of students. They come calling for the ban of classroom or library books with content they deem to be "divisive" or morally offensive, in some cases, having never read what they contest.

These requests conflict with the views of those parents and community members who want their children to learn about varying historical perspectives, differing worldviews, and understanding "the other." In the middle of this, superintendents and their building leaders must contend with the consequences of these dualistic pressures:

- How do we provide students with an education that fosters critical and analytical thinking when content restricts or eliminates opposing perspectives?
- What are the moral and ethical dilemmas that they create for teachers and leaders?
- How do these dilemmas affect the culture of the schools?
- How will these pressures affect teacher morale, recruitment, and retention?

In some states teacher job security is threatened by new legislation. An *Education Week* article reported, "Roughly 30 bills in 13 states that aim to censor teaching topics related to race and sexual orientation target funding for

school districts or threaten to extract money from school employees for failing to comply with the policy" (Pendharker & Lieberman, 2022).

> *In Florida "As part of the "stop-woke" agenda of Gov. Ron DeSantis (R), Florida lawmakers are now cconsidering bills that would allow almost anyone to object to any instruction in public school classrooms. DeSantis wants to give people the right to sue schools* ***and teachers*** *over what they teach based on student "discomfort." The proposed legislation is far-reaching and could affect even corporate human resources diversity training" (Craigg & Rozsa, 2022).*

Such legislation will exacerbate the existing problem of high teacher attrition. Teachers are leaving the profession, and there is lower enrollment in teacher education programs. According to a national *EdWeek Research Center* survey in the fall of 2021, "More than three-quarters of district leaders and principals say they're experiencing at least moderate staffing shortages in their school buildings this year" (Lieberman, 2021).

Some of this legislation will eventually be tested in the courts, but not all of it will be overturned. For now, superintendents and their leadership teams, mindful of these changes, must find ways to support their teachers and manage the culture within their organizations to ensure that students are learning in an intellectually open and safe environment.

The researchers in the Spring 2022 issue of the *AASA Journal of Scholarship & Practice* examine a few aspects of these problems, specifically, teacher turnover and the influences of organizational culture and principal leadership.

The issue begins with the problem of teacher attrition: *How do we keep teachers from leaving the profession? What do we know about why they are leaving*?

Kelly Hall, an assistant professor at Texas A & M and Mary Anne Gilles, an English Language Arts Specialist in Cumberland, Maryland, in their article, "Reasons for Teacher Attrition: Experience Matters," write "Notable differences for leaving the teaching profession exist among teachers with varying levels of experience. Differences can be used to implement targeted policies to retain teachers at various levels of decision-making."

Differences reveal that new teachers might stay in the profession if they felt more job security, had more influence, and were not attracted to jobs outside of education. Seasoned teachers might stay in the profession if dynamics between them and administrators were better, salaries were higher, and advancement was available by furthering their coursework in the field of education. *How does their in-service professional learning contribute to their decisions about staying or going? What is the work of the district leader in facilitating an engaging professional culture?*

In the next article, Corinne Brion, an assistant professor of Educational Administration at the University of Dayton, examines the relationship between culture and learning and introduces a model for bridging the connection:

> Culture is a predominant force in people's life that impacts learning, and thus culture influences learning transfer. The culturally proficient

professional learning (CPPL) framework and the Multidimensional Model of learning transfer (MMLT)) are research-based and culturally grounded practical frameworks that superintendents can use prior, during, and after professional learning to maximize learning transfer and get a return on their investments while also improving students learning outcomes and all stakeholders' well-being.

Lee Westberry, an assistant professor, and Tara Hornor, an associate professor at the Zucker Family School of Education at the Citadel in Charleston, South Carolina, studied how principals influence a culture of learning in "Best Practices in Principal Professional Development."

According to Leithwood, et. al (2004), "The principal is second only to the teacher in terms of impact on student learning" (p.5). To that end, principals participate in professional development (Lavigne, et. al, 2016; Taie & Goldring, 2019), most often through district initiatives or conferences (Lewis & Scott, 2020). However, does that professional development create the change needed?

The issue concludes with Art Stellar's review of Soo Hong's book, *Natural Allies: Hope and Possibility in Teacher-Family Partnerships* (Harvard Education Press, 2019).

Perhaps there may be no better time than now to refine and reinforce the work that school leaders have been doing with families from all backgrounds and perspectives.

As the political battles rage within and beyond the schoolhouse gates, successful district leaders must continue to find ways to protect and enhance a culture of learning to support, engage, and retain our teachers and principals. We hope this issue's researchers provide our readers with a few ideas.

References

Craig, T. & Rozsa, L. (2022, February 7) In his fight against 'woke' schools, DeSantis tears at the seams of a diverse Florida Some Republicans want to let parents sue schools and teachers over student 'discomfort.' *Education Week.*

Lavigne, H.J., Shakman, K., Zweig, J., & Greller, S.L. (2016). *Principals' time, tasks, and professional development: An analysis of schools and staffing survey data.* Education Development Center, Inc.

Leithwood, K., Louis, K. S., Anderson, S., & Wahlstrom, K. (2004). *How leadership influences student learning.* New York: The Wallace Foundation.

Lieberman, (2021, October 12) How bad are school staffing shortages? What we learned by asking administrators. *Education Week.*

Pendharkar, E. & Lieberman, M. (2022, February 14) Fines, budget cuts, spending limits: How state lawmakers want to censor instruction. *Education Week.*

Taie, S. & Goldring, R. (2019). Characteristics of public and private elementary and secondary school principals in the United States: Results From the 2017–18 National Teacher and Principal Survey First Look (NCES 2019- 141). U.S. Department of Education. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

Research Article

Reasons for Teacher Attrition: Experience Matters

Kelly S. Hall, PhD
Assistant Professor
Educational Leadership and Counseling,
Texas A & M, Kingsville
Kingsville, TX

Mary Anne Gilles, EdD
English Language Arts Specialist
Washington Middle School
Cumberland, MD

Abstract

Effective teaching contributes to student growth. Quality teaching requires experienced teachers. Yet teachers continue to leave the profession at an increasing rate. This study presents moderate to large differences in 22 reasons for attrition among five levels of teacher experience. Data from the 2011-12 School and Staffing Survey and the 2012-13 Teacher Follow-up Survey were combined. Notable differences for leaving the teaching profession exist among teachers with varying levels of experience. Differences can be used to implement targeted policies to retain teachers at various levels of decision-making.

Keywords

teacher attrition, retention, quality, experience, Teacher Follow-up Study

Effective teaching influences a school's impact on student achievement gains (Allen, 2005; Guarino et al., 2006). Experience in teaching does matter for effectiveness in the teacher role (Ingersoll et al., 2018).

Teachers are leaving the field early or part way through their career causing a "greening" of the teacher profession and decline in the years of experience among teachers (Allen, 2005; Ingersoll et al., 2018).

The average years of experience has consistently declined from 14.2 years in 2003-2004 to 13.8 years in the 2011–12 (Goldring et al., 2013).

The 2012–13 Teacher Follow-up Survey results identified an estimated 99,200, or 38.3%, of former teachers declaring they retired during the time between the SASS and TFS. States encourage early retirements as a cost-saving measure.

Yet, retirements accounted for a small portion of teachers who left (Goldring et al., 2014). Age and experience were noted as stable indicators of the U-shaped curve illustrating attrition of new or young teachers and older or experienced teachers (Guarino et al., 2006).

This brief examines teacher experience and reasons for attrition more closely so policies can be targeted to ensure teachers stay in the field long enough to become proficient and then remain in the profession. Retaining teachers is the most salient means to promote student achievement (Allen, 2005).

Purpose

This study examines differences among five levels of experience ($\leq$ 5, 6 – 15, 16 – 25, 26-35, and $\geq$ 36 years) for 22 factors of teacher attrition rated from 1 (least) to 5 (most).

Data about former public and private school teachers in 50 states and the District of Columbia from the 2011-12 School and Staffing Survey and the 2012-13 Teacher Follow-up Survey were combined. Mann-Whitney *U* procedures calculated mean ranks for two group comparisons. Effect size was calculated as the difference between the mean rank of the group with less and more experience.

Reasons for attrition are ranked by effect size difference in Table 1. The mean and standard deviation for each factor and mean ranks of the two groups are also presented. If (MR_L) is larger than (MR_M), the effect size is positive. If (MR_L) is larger than (MR_S), the effect size is negative. Effect sizes are interpreted as small (S) 0–33.333%, ES_{range} = 0–2,364; moderate (M) 33.334%–66.667%, ES_{range} = 2,365–9,281; and, large (L) 6 6.668%–99.999%, ES_{range} = 9,282–13,835.

Results

Moderate to large differences between groups of teachers with various levels of experience are presented for 22 factors of attrition in Table 1.

Table 1

22 Factors of Teacher Attrition: Means, Standard Deviations, Mean Ranks, and Effect Sizes for Highest Ranked Differences Between Two Years of Experience Groups

Factor of Teacher Attrition	*M* 1-5	*SD*	Years of Experience: Two Groups with Most Difference	*MR* Less Experience	*MR* More Experience	Effect Size (L, large; M, moderate)
Retirement	2.59	1.768	6–15 vs. 26–35	24,278	54,645	-30,367 (L)
Non-K 12 Position	2.20	1.608	6–15 vs. 26–35	45,889	25,720	20,169 (L)
Salary	1.66	1.245	6–15 vs. 26–35	43,180	29,345	13,835 (L)
Relocation	1.51	1.187	≤ 5 vs. 26–35	32,962	22,219	10,743 (L)
No Advancement	1.59	1.146	6–15 vs. 26–35	41,301	31,861	9,440 (L)
Classes Within Education	1.53	1.204	6–15 vs. 26–35	41,218	31,971	9,247 (L)
Dissatisfaction With Career	2.07	1.426	6–15 vs. 26–35	40,641	32,744	7,897 (M)
Classes Outside Education	1.34	0.933	≤ 5 vs. 26–35	31,036	23,496	7,540 (M)
Personal Life	2.53	1.735	6–15 vs. ≥ 36	28,892	21,671	7,221 (M)
Benefits	1.36	0.948	≤ 5 vs. 26–35	30,495	23,855	6,640 (M)
Assessments Impact Teaching	2.19	1.469	≤ 5 vs. 6–15	27,910	33,871	-5,961 (M)
Job Description	1.77	1.211	6–15 vs. ≥ 36	28,548	22,896	5,652 (M)
Influence	1.89	1.268	≤ 5 vs. 6–15	28,206	33,724	-5,518 (M)
Discipline	1.89	1.313	6–15 vs. ≥ 36	28,472	23,170	5,302 (M)
Assessments Impact Benefits	1.58	1.146	6–15 vs. 26–35	39,358	34,462	4,896 (M)
Job Security	1.34	0.881	≤ 5 vs. 26–35	29,196	24,716	4,480 (M)
Support for Assessments	1.66	1.179	6–15 vs. 26–35	39,163	34,723	4,440 (M)
Teach Time	2.16	1.435	≤ 5 vs. 16–25	19,801	24,210	-4,409 (M)
Administrator	2.05	1.449	≤ 5 vs. 6–15	29,025	33,319	-4,294 (M)
Conditions	1.60	1.128	16–25 vs. 26–35	29,876	25,729	4,147 (M)

Class Size	1.70	1.200	6–15 vs. ≥ 36	28,120	24,423	3,697 (M)
Autonomy	1.67	1.208	16–25 vs. ≥ 36	18,706	15,223	3,483 (M)

Source: Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), "Public School District Data File (2011–12);" Teacher Follow-up Survey (TFS), "Former Teacher Data File (2012–13)."

Note: Weighted *N* = 130,680. Weighted sample sizes by experience categories: 5 or fewer years, *n* = 21,134; 6–15 years, *n* = 42,657; 16–25 years, *n* = 23,069; 26–35 years, *n* = 31,870; 36 or more years, *n* = 11,963.

[a]Mean Rank is calculated by ranking teachers' responses from lowest to highest for both groups and then calculating the mean for each group

The two groups with the greatest number of differences in reasons for leaving the profession (12 of 22 factors) are teachers with 6 - 15 and 26 + years of experience. Large differences are noted between these two groups for the following reasons: retirement, a non-K-12 position, salary, no advancement, and classes within education. Moderate differences are noted between seasoned and veteran teachers: dissatisfaction with career, personal life, job description, discipline, assessment impacts benefits, support for assessment, and class size.

Teachers with the fewest number of years in the profession (≤ 5 years) differ from teachers with 25+ years of experience largely for relocation and moderately for classes outside education, and job security. Moderate differences are noted between teachers with ≤ 5 years and 6—15 years of experience. The impact of assessments on teaching, influence, and an administrator are factors which teachers with 6 – 15 years of experience rank more highly than teachers with ≤ 5 years of experience.

Discussion

The large differences between teachers with 6-15 years of experience and 25+ year of experience are most noteworthy. Teachers with six years of experience have enough experience to influence successful student outcomes yet are mobile professionally. Beyond differences due to retirement, leaving for a non-K-12 position because of salary, no advancement, or to take classes within education are telling and support observations of labor market dynamics observed by Guarino et al. (2006).

New teachers relocate, are preparing for jobs outside of education, and leave because they do not feel their jobs are secure, confirming Guarino et al.'s (2006) reporting of the U-shaped curve which illustrates teacher attrition across age and experience.

Relocation is at its highest between ages 20 and 29 according to U.S. Census Bureau (Frey, 2019). That new teachers leave to take classes outside of education indicates their desire to prepare for jobs besides teaching and begs the question if teachers were oriented to the realities of teaching prior to entering the profession.

The common practice of districts signing 3-year probationary contracts with new teachers likely contributes to new teachers feeling insecure.

Differences in reasons for leaving between teachers with ≤ 5 years and 6—15 years of experience are worth further investigation. New teachers are more likely to leave because of the impact of assessments than teachers with 6—15 years of experience. The impact of assessments is a factor of attrition influenced by state and national policy.

State assessments are a greater focus than ever in teaching. The focus on state assessments might contribute to new teachers feeling they do not have influence in their jobs which is another difference between teachers with < 5 years and 6—15 years of experience. Teachers with 6—15 years of experience leave more than new teachers because of dynamics between teachers and administrators, a factor which can be mitigated at the local level. Perhaps new teachers reach a tipping point of disenchantment as they spend time in the profession.

Conclusion

Notable differences for leaving the teaching profession exist among teachers with varying levels of experience. Differences reveal that new teachers might stay in the profession if they felt more job security, had more influence, and were not attracted to jobs outside of education. Seasoned teachers might stay in the profession if dynamics between them and administrators were better, salaries were higher, and advancement was available by furthering their coursework in the field of education. Differences can be used to implement policies to retain education's greatest asset, its teachers.

Author Biographies

Kelly Hall is an assistant professor at Texas A & M in Kingsville, TX. She has taught for nine years, published more than 50 articles or technical reports, and garnered over $10 million in funding for special projects. E-mail: kelly.hall@tamuk.edu

Mary Anne Gilles is a Washington Middle School English Language Arts Specialist in Cumberland, MD with 27 years of experience in both private and public education. She mentors second- and third-year teachers in her district assisting in teacher retention. E-mail: mary.gilles@acpsmd.org

References

Allen, M. B. (2005). Eight questions on teacher recruitment and retention: What does the research say? *Education Commission of the States (NJ3).* http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED489332.pdf

Frey, W. H. (2019). For the first time on record, fewer than 10% of Americans moved in a year. Brookings. https://www.brookings.edu/blog/the-avenue/2019/11/22/for-the-first-time-on-record-fewer-than-10-of-americans-moved-in-a-year/

Goldring, R., Gray, L., & Bitterman, A. (2013). *Characteristics of public and private elementary and secondary school teachers in the United States: Results from the 2011–12 Schools and Staffing Survey* (NCES 2013-314). U.S. Department of Education National Center for Education Statistics. http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2013/2013314.pdf

Goldring, R., Taie, S., & Riddles, M. (2014). *Teacher attrition and mobility: Results from the 2012–13 Teacher Follow-up Survey* (NCES 2014-077). U.S. Department of Education. National Center for Education Statistics. https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2014/2014077.pdf

Guarino, C. M., Santibañez, L., & Daley, G. A. (2006). Teacher recruitment and retention: A review of the recent empirical literature. *Review of Educational Research, 76,* 173–208. https://doi.org/10.3102/00346543076002173

Ingersoll, R., Merrill, L., Stuckey, D., & Collins, G. (2018). *Seven trends: the transformation of the teaching force (Updated October 2018).* University of Pennsylvania, Consortium for Policy Research in Education. https://www.cpre.org/edit-product-seven-trends-transformation-teaching-force-updated-october-2018

Research Article

Culturally Proficient Professional Learning to Enhance Learning Transfer: Guidance for Superintendents

Corinne Brion, PhD
Assistant Professor
Department of Educational Administration
School of Education and Health Sciences
University of Dayton
Dayton, OH

Abstract

Superintendents provide resources so that their district teams, principals, and teachers receive quality and frequent professional learning opportunities. As a result, it is crucial that the money invested in professional learning yields a return on their and their constituents' investments through improved academic achievement, teacher and students well-being, and teacher and leader retention. In other words, it is essential that the knowledge, skills, and abilities learned during professional learning be applied to the classrooms and schools. Culture is a predominant force in people's life that impacts learning and thus culture influences learning transfer. The culturally proficient professional learning (CPPL) framework and the Multidimensional Model of learning transfer (MMLT)) are research-based and culturally grounded practical frameworks that superintendents can use prior, during, and after professional learning to maximize learning transfer and get a return on their investments while also improving students learning outcomes and all stakeholders' well-being.

Keywords

Culturally Proficient Professional Learning, learning transfer, educational leadership, multidimensional model of learning transfer, PK-12, superintendent

Superintendents wear many hats. One of their responsibilities is to provide resources so that their district teams, principals, and teachers receive quality and frequent professional learning (PL) opportunities. PL is at the center of the practice of improvement because it develops teachers and educational leaders' skills and abilities in order to impact student academic achievement. Superintendents spend a large portion of their budget (typically 60-65%) on instruction and instruction-related items such as PL (AASA, Budget 101).

As a result, it is crucial that the money invested in PL yields a return on their and their constituents' investments through improved academic achievement, teacher and students well-being, and teacher and leader retention. In other words, it is essential that the knowledge, skills, and abilities learned during PL be applied to the classrooms and schools. Too often, the knowledge gained during PL does not get implemented. This may be due to the lack of attention paid on learning transfer (Saks & Belcourt, 2006).

The culturally proficient professional learning (CPPL) framework and the Multidimensional model of learning transfer (MMLT) (Brion, 2021) are research-based and culturally grounded practical frameworks that superintendents can use prior, during, and after PL to maximize learning transfer and thus get a return on their investments while also improving students learning outcomes and all stakeholders' well-being.

Professional Learning

While PL requires time, it is crucial that the time be organized, carefully structured, and purposefully led to avoid the waste of human and financial resources. Too often, budgets are spent on PL that yield little results (Hess, 2013). Despite the millions of dollars spent on PL nationally, student learning outcomes continue to stagnate or dwindle, discipline issues continue to skyrocket, and teacher moral plummets (Hess, 2013). This may be due, in part, to leaders paying little attention to culturally proficient PL that accounts for learning transfer (Alfred, 2002).

"Culture is the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from others" (Hofstede, 2011, p. 3). Because learning is a social endeavor and knowledge is contextual, people's cultures impact the way they learn, interact, communicate, and resolve conflicts (Lindsey et al., 2018). Culture also impacts learning transfer because if people do not learn due to language barrier or the non-respect of traditions and preferred learning styles (collectivistic versus individualistic for example), they will not be able to implement the new knowledge to their jobs.

If culture is embedded before, during, and after PL, teachers will understand what they can do in their classes to become culturally competent and equitable. CPPL and MMLT were designed to promote cultural awareness by respecting participants' cultures when planning, organizing, conducting, and evaluating PL events. In CPPL, educational leaders understand the role culture plays in our learning because knowledge is a socially constructed process that cannot be divorced from learners' social contexts.

Superintendents also understand that the ultimate goal of teaching is the implementation of the newly acquired knowledge in order to enhance student learning. The MMLT is an innovative practical model intended to help superintendents and educational leaders organize, deliver, and evaluate their PL while also enhancing learning transfer.

Learning Transfer: The Missing Link to Effective PL

Learning transfer, also referred to as training transfer, is defined as "the effective and continuing application by learners—to their performance of jobs or other individual, organizational, or community responsibilities—of knowledge and skills gained in learning activities" (Broad, 1997, p. 2).

The American Society of Training and Development estimated that the USA alone spent $125.88 billion on employee learning and development in 2009 (American Society of Training and Development, 2010). Yet, only 10% of the money invested in training results in transfer of knowledge, skills, or behaviors in the workplace or at home (Broad & Newstrom, 1992). Although the idea that only 10% of the money spent yields changes in practices has been disputed (Saks & Belcourt, 2006), these researchers agree that the money invested in developing employees' human capital yields low to moderate results at best.

Being able to transfer newly acquired knowledge is the ultimate goal of PL, yet it is the most challenging to achieve (Thomas, 2007). Although scholars have had difficulties measuring learning transfer and its impact, seminal authors have written about what promotes and inhibits the transfer of learning (Baldwin & Ford, 1988; Broad & Newstrom, 1992; Caffarella & Daffron, 2013; Holton et al., 2000; Knowles, 1980).

Baldwin and Ford (1988) were the first to categorize enhancers and inhibitors to learning transfer and organize them into three groupings: (1) the factors related to learners' characteristics; (2) the factors pertaining to the intervention design and delivery; and (3) the factors affected by the work environment.

Broad and Newstrom (1992) identified six key factors that could either hinder or promote learning transfer: 1) program participants, their motivation and dispositions, and previous knowledge; 2) program design and execution including the strategies for learning transfer; 3) program content which is adapted to the needs of the learners; 4) changes required to apply learning within the organization and complexity of change; 5) organizational context such as people, structure, and cultural milieu that can support or prevent transfer of learning including values and Continuing Professional Development [CPD]); and 6) societal and community forces.

Holton et al. (2000) created, piloted, and validated in 24 countries a 16-factor Learning Transfer System Inventory (LTSI) based on 16 constructs (Table 1). The LTSI was designed as a pulse-taking diagnostic tool for training organizers. As with Baldwin and Ford (1988) and Broad and Newstrom (1992), each of these constructs can hinder or promote learning transfer.

Table 1

Learning Transfer System Inventory (LTSI) (Holton et al., 2000)

Capability	Motivation	Work Environment
Content validity	Transfer effort: Performance expectations	Supervisor support
Transfer design	Transfer performance: Outcome expectations	Supervisor sanctions
Opportunity to use	Learner readiness	Peer support
Personal capacity	Motivation to transfer	Performance coaching
	Performance, self-efficacy	Personal outcomes: Positive
		Personal outcomes: Negative
		Resistance to change

Despite the considerable amount of literature on the factors influencing learning transfer, there are a limited number of research studies that examine the relationship between culture and the transfer of learning (Caffarella & Daffron, 2013; Closson, 2013; Rahyuda et al., 2014; Silver, 2000). Yang et al., (2009) asserted that the fundamental reason why culture impacts training is that learning is not only an individual intellectual activity but also a social process that takes place in certain cultural contexts.

These authors posited that cultural factors affect training events via the content and methods chosen, the selection of facilitators, and the trainee characteristics because each national culture has its learning style. Similarly, the trainers' expertise in the subject, credibility, and training style influence the trainees' motivation and learning efficiency (Hofstede et al., 2002).

Closson (2013), Caffarella and Daffron (2013), and Rahyuda et al. (2014) are among the few authors affirming a relationship between cultural factors and learning transfer. Closson (2013) posited that racial and/or cultural differences do not only impact learning (Raver & Van Dyne, 2017) and the training process (Yang et al., 2009), but that cultural differences also influence learning transfer.

Beyond an awareness of who is represented in the room socially and ethnically, Caffarella and Daffron (2013) suggested that the content of the materials should reflect the cultural differences to enable transfer. These authors asserted that learning transfer should be discussed within contexts because context affects the way we teach, what we teach, and how we teach. Moreover, Caffarella (2002) affirmed the necessity for trainers and facilitators to be culturally sensitive and understand norms, traditions, and cultures to facilitate the transfer of learning.

According to Caffarella (2002), the planning phase of a training is when facilitators can deliberately include culturally responsive approaches and determine how prominent his or her own cultural identity is in the training.

On the basis of the literature on culture's role in transfer, some authors argue that there is a need for a comprehensive, multidimensional, and unifying model of learning transfer that considers culture as a key factor (Raver & Van Dyne, 2017).

Therefore, I merged and extended existing models of learning transfer by proposing the MMLT. This new model is intended to help school leaders organize, deliver, and evaluate their PL while also enhancing learning transfer and leaders' cultural proficiency.

Based on the MMLT, I provide practical rubrics that will assist superintendents and their teams as they hire PL consultants and organizers. This model is salient for all schools and districts as diversity is expressed through race, ethnicity, ability, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, creed, as well as additional elements that constitute culture.

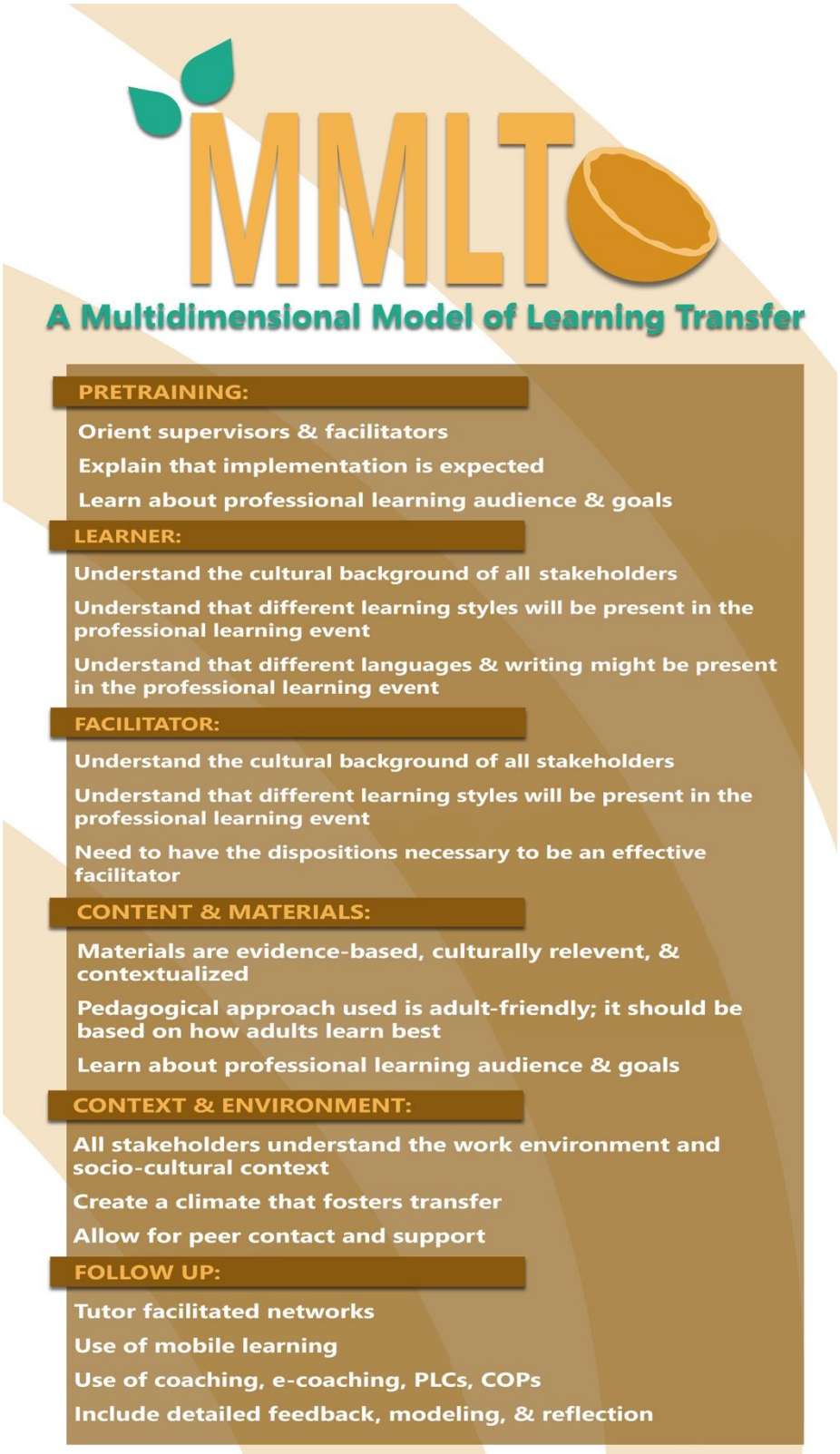
Culturally Proficient Professional Learning and Multidimensional Model of Learning Transfer

The MMLT is based on data collected, analyzed, and synthetized over six years in educational institutions in five African nations. The MMLT adds to the seminal work of Broad and Newstrom (1992). For the MMLT I refer to Culture with a capital letter as it includes individual, sectional, departmental, organizational, regional, and national cultures as well as cultures related to a continent. I assert that Culture is the predominant enhancer and inhibitor to transfer and that Culture affects the entire learning transfer phenomenon (Author, 2021).

MMLT is composed of seven dimensions: Culture, Pretraining, Learner, Facilitator, Material and Content, Context and Environment, and Post-Training (Figure 1).

Figure 1

The Multidimensional Model of Learning Transfer


MMLT
A Multidimensional Model of Learning Transfer
PRETRAINING:
Orient supervisors & facilitators
Explain that implementation is expected
Learn about professional learning audience & goals
LEARNER:
Understand the cultural background of all stakeholders
Understand that different learning styles will be present in the professional learning event
Understand that different languages & writing might be present in the professional learning event
FACILITATOR:
Understand the cultural background of all stakeholders
Understand that different learning styles will be present in the professional learning event
Need to have the dispositions necessary to be an effective facilitator
CONTENT & MATERIALS:
Materials are evidence-based, culturally relevent, & contextualized
Pedagogical approach used is adult-friendly; it should be based on how adults learn best
Learn about professional learning audience & goals
CONTEXT & ENVIRONMENT:
All stakeholders understand the work environment and socio-cultural context
Create a climate that fosters transfer
Allow for peer contact and support
FOLLOW UP:
Tutor facilitated networks
Use of mobile learning
Use of coaching, e-coaching, PLCs, COPs
Include detailed feedback, modeling, & reflection

In the MMLT, I propose that culture is the overarching factor that affects all other dimensions of learning transfer. I refer to culture as the individual, sectional, departmental, organizational, classroom culture, regional, and national cultures as well as cultures related to a continent. Ignoring cultural issues in schools present numerous risks including reinforcing stereotypes, increasing intolerance among groups, raising potential misunderstandings, escalating frustrations and defensiveness, as well as learners and facilitators withdrawals. I also believe that pretraining and post-training play a key role in promoting the implementation of knowledge. A description of the MMLT elements is provided below.

Culture

Culture incorporates the differential effects of age, gender, race, ethnicity, social class, religion, sexual orientation, and abilities. Superintendents and their teams need to become culturally proficient so that they can model for other stakeholders how to create cultures that are inclusive, equitable, and respectful of all cultures represented in their communities (Lindsey et al., 2018).

Pre-training

As Figure 1 indicates, pretraining includes the orientation of facilitators and other key stakeholders so that they can support the PL once it has begun. Pretraining also includes communicating expectations to facilitators and learners explaining who will benefit from training, stating that participants are accountable to implement new knowledge and sharing the schedule, goals, and information that is perceived as mandatory. For example, I found that in some African cultures, pretraining plays a key role in the learning transfer process because people in these particular societies prefer knowing in advance and in writing what will happen during the training, how it will be led, and by whom. With these details in mind, leaders and PL organizers can adapt accordingly and enhance the learning transfer process.

Learner

Learners are the participants in the PL events. This dimension refers to understanding the learners' motivation, the cultural background of the facilitators and participants, and how history and social events affect stakeholders, including self, facilitator, peers, and colleagues. The learner category also includes understanding cultural differences in learning styles as well as language and writing differences. Learner is also comprised of the participants' beliefs and attitude toward their job, whether or not they have the freedom to act, and the positive consequences of that application. Finally, it involves the participants' belief of the efficacy of the knowledge and skills learned. In this dimension, leaders and PL organizers would seek to know how the learners learn best, learn about the participants' experiences, and how they intend to use the new information in their context.

Facilitator

Effective facilitators must understand the cultural background of the participants and oneself. It also includes how history and social events affect stakeholders (including self, students, peers, and colleagues). Facilitator also refers to the understanding of language and writing differences, setting goals, and the selection of participants. Superintendents and their leaders and facilitators should examine the biases they may have towards certain groups of people before teaching and gathering materials.

Content and materials

The PL content uses evidence based, culturally relevant, and contextualized materials. It also uses a pedagogical approach based on andragogy, or how adults learn best (Mezirow,

2000). Material and Content also involves using symbols and meaningful artifacts to cue and help recall. In this dimension, culturally proficient leaders would ensure that the content reflects the participants needs and cultural backgrounds. For example, if the PL event is about communicating with parents and families at school, the leaders and facilitators would ensure that participants from different cultural backgrounds share what is or is not appropriate in their cultures and contexts.

Context and environment

This element comprises the training environment and the work environment (micro and macro cultures within context), sociocultural context, transfer climate, peer contact, and the presence of social networks. It also refers to having enough time to transfer knowledge, the support for action, the resources, the freedom to act, and peer support. Finally, Context and Environment refers to the training incentives: intrinsic incentives such as providing educators with growth opportunities, and extrinsic incentives, such as reward or promotion. For this dimension, leaders and facilitators would consider the organizational culture. Is the school culture conducive to transferring new knowledge?

Follow-up

Post-PL is often overlooked and is necessary to avoid skill decay and relapse. Examples of follow up include tutor-facilitated networks via mobile technology (Author, 2018), micro-learning using mobile technology, coaching, testimonials, Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) or Community of Practice (COPs), apprenticeships, coaching, and E-coaching. Trainees' reports and assessing transfer also help to create a culture where learning and its application is valued. For example, follow-up can be done during teacher-based meetings or PLCs. It should take into consideration the participants' preferred styles of learning and communicating.

Understanding how the various cultures of PL participants practically impact the dimensions of the MMLT could help leaders and teachers implement new knowledge, improve student learning outcomes and well-being while also supporting a better return on districts' and schools' investments. In addition to the return on investment, if superintendents were to utilize the MMLT as a framework for their districts' professional learning, they could enhance the implementation of the knowledge and skills gained during these events while also developing the cultural proficiency of district and school teams.

Implications for Practice

I have two recommendations for superintendents to increase the skills and abilities of adult learners, enhance learning transfer post PL, and get a return on investment that would in turn positively affect students' outcomes.

First, to provide PL that accounts for culture before, during, and after PL events, superintendents and educational leaders should consider using the MMLT and its rubric to organize, prepare, and evaluate their PL offering (see Appendix A). This rubric is designed to help practitioners think through the seven dimensions of the MMLT before, during, and after the training. Within each of these dimensions, there are several items practitioners can self-assess.

For example, during the pretraining phase, school leaders and PL organizers should reflect on the culture of their participants and how they learn best. This is important because this step affects the content and the delivery of the materials. Leaders should also conduct a needs assessment and offer culturally proficient

PL that is relevant and individualized to each teacher's needs. Because learning is a social endeavor, the MMLT and its rubric enable leaders to take culture into consideration for each of the MMLT dimension for maximum learning transfer and impact on student learning.

Second, it is necessary for facilitators to remain flexible and open to learning about different cultures and adjust their practices accordingly without judgment. It is also key that facilitators reflect on the impact their culture has on participants and colleagues in terms of language, history, and traditions. When organizing PL, superintendents and their teams should carefully select the facilitators, brief them on team members, and provide them with the MMLT.

Conclusion

Culture plays a key role in students' and adults' ability to learn and implement new knowledge because learning is a social endeavor. Current PL offerings seldom consider the culture in the learning transfer process. Because of the lack of attention placed on learning transfer, PL does not often yield changes in practice. By forgetting to account for learning transfer in the organization, delivery, and follow- up of PL events, teachers and leaders often become frustrated and lose interest in the PL. PL offerings would be most impactful and yield a return on investment if all dimensions of the PL took culture into consideration. CPPL is a framework grounded in culture. CCPL aims to enhance the learning transfer by using the MMLT. The MMLT can serve as an innovative lens to prepare, organize, and evaluate the trainings in order to promote learning transfer. The rubric deriving from the model could also assist superintendents and training organizers in enhancing learning transfer before, during, and post-training.

Understanding the role culture plays in PL and in the learning transfer process would promote the transfer of learning in schools and would contribute to better academic outcomes and well-being outcomes for all students, teachers and leaders regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, religion, sexual orientation, language, abilities, and cultural backgrounds. In this way, MMLT would help superintendents promote equity and create socially just educational systems.

Author Biographies

Corinne Brion is an assistant professor at the University of Dayton. She earned her PhD in educational leadership at the University of San Diego. Her research interests include investigating the process of learning transfer among adult learners so to understand what enhances and hinders the transfer of knowledge in different contexts. E-mail: cbrion1@udayton.edu

References

Alfred, M. V. (2002). Linking the personal and the social for a more critical democratic adult education. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education*, *2002*(96), 89-96.

Author (2021). Title and journal omitted to maintain anonymity.

Author. (2018). [name deleted to maintain the integrity of the review process]. Keeping the learning going: using mobile technology to enhance learning transfer. *Educational Research for Policy and Practice*, 1-16.

American Society of Training and Development (2010). 2010 State of the Industry Report [PDF file]. Retrieved from https://www.td.org/research-reports/astd-research-2010-state-of-the-industry-report

Baldwin, T. T., & Ford, J. K. (1988). Transfer of training: A review and directions for future research. *Personnel Psychology, 41*(1), 63-105.

Broad, M. L. (1997). *Transferring learning to the workplace: Seventeen case studies from the real world of training* (Vol. 5). American Society for Training and Development.

Broad, M. L., & Newstrom, J. W. (1992). *Transfer of training: Action-packed strategies to ensure high payoff from training investments*. Boston, MA: Da Capo Press.

Caffarella, R. S., & Daffron, S. R. (2013). *Planning programs for adult learners: A practical guide*. John Wiley & Sons.

Caffarella, R. S. (2002). *Planning programs for adult learners: A practical guide for educators, trainers, and staff developers*. The Jossey-Bass Higher and Adult Education Series. Indianapolis, IN: Jossey-Bass.

Closson, R. B. (2013). Racial and cultural factors and learning transfer. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education, 137*, 61-69.

Hess, F. M. (2013). *Cage-busting leadership*. Harvard Education Press.

Hofstede, G. (2011). Dimensionalizing cultures: The Hofstede Model in context. *Online Readings in Psychology and Culture, 2*(1), 1–26. https://doi.org/10.9707/2307-0919.1014

Holton III, E. F., Bates, R. A., & Ruona, W. E. (2000). Development of a generalized learning transfer system inventory. *Human Resource Development Quarterly*, *11*(4), 333-360. *Journal of Lifelong Education*, *28*(2), 137-148.

Knowles, M. (1980). My farewell address … Andragogy no panacea, no ideology. *Training and Development Journal*, *34*(8), 48-50.

Lindsey, Randall B., Nuri Robins, K., Terrell, R.D., and Lindsey, D.B. (2018). *Cultural Proficiency: A Manual for School Leaders*, 4th Ed., Thousand Oaks, CA.: Corwin.

Mezirow, J. (2000). *Learning as transformation: Critical perspectives on a theory in progress.* The Jossey-Bass Higher and Adult Education Series. Indianapolis, IN: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Rahyuda, A., Syed, J., & Soltani, E. (2014). The role of relapse prevention and goal setting in training transfer enhancement. *Human Resource Development Review, 13*(4), 413-436.

Raver, J., & Van Dyne, L. (2017). Developing cultural intelligence. In K. Brown (Ed.), *The Cambridge handbook of workplace training and employee development* (pp. 407-440). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Saks, A. M., & Belcourt, M. (2006). An investigation of training activities and transfer of training in organizations. *Human Resource Management: Published in Cooperation with the School of Business Administration, the University of Michigan and in Alliance with the Society of Human Resources Management, 45*(4), 629-648.

Silver, D. (2000). Songs and storytelling: Bringing health messages to life in Uganda. *Education for Health, 14*(1), 51-60.

Thomas, E. (2007). Thoughtful planning fosters learning transfer. *Adult Learning, 18*(3-4), 4–9.

Yang, B., Wang, Y., & Drewry, A. W. (2009). Does it matter where to conduct training? Accounting for cultural factors. *Human Resource Management Review, 19*(4), 324-333.

Appendix A

Sample Rubric for Practitioners

Appendix A shows one page of the pretraining rubric only and provides an example on how to score the first element on the aforementioned pretraining rubric.

Purpose

The purpose of the MMLT's rubrics is to help practitioners enhance the transfer of knowledge and skills to the workplace while promoting cultural proficiency.

Who can use these rubrics?
All stakeholders, PL organizers and facilitators are encouraged to use these rubrics before, during and after PL events.

How does it work?
These rubrics are designed to help practitioners think through 7 dimensions before, during and after PL events. These dimensions are culture, learner, facilitator, content and materials, context and environment, and follow-up. Within each of these dimensions, there are several items practitioners can check before, during, and after the PL session. One orange slice represents a 1 on Likert scale, 1 being the lowest score and 4 the highest. The half orange is a 2, the 3 quarters is a 3, and the full orange is a 4. For example, when looking at the sample pretraining rubric below, a full orange signifies that the leader organized a meeting with the facilitator(s) to review the content of the materials and ensure that the materials are culturally relevant for the audience. For the same item, a 2 may mean that the leader and facilitator(s) met but the leader did not go over the PL materials with the facilitator(s) (Example or pretraining rubric below).

MMLT A Multidimensional Model of Learning Transfer	SLICE	HALF	THREE QUARTERS	WHOLE
				
Pretraining: During the pretraining phase, I do the following:				
Facilitator meeting:				
I organize(d) a facilitators' meeting to review the PD materials.				
Summarize(d) an overview of the participants.				
Orient(ed) supervisors & facilitators to discuss goals, approach, and follow up.				
Communicate(d) expectations to all stakeholders: provide(d) hooks to motivate participants to attend and transfer knowledge.				
Explain(d) the benefit of PD, who is it going to benefit, culturally relevant content, and make sure the PD meets the participant's needs and organization's needs.				
Identify (ied) which employees will attend the PD?				

Research Article

Best Practices in Principal Professional Development

Lee Westberry, EdD
Assistant Professor
Zucker Family School of Education
The Citadel
Charleston, SC

Tara Hornor, PhD
Associate Professor
Zucker Family School of Education
The Citadel
Charleston, SC

Abstract

This qualitative study examines principals' perceptions of effective principal professional development programs and needs. Results from this research study are valuable because they can provide impactful insights for state departments of education, district leadership, and principals in the planning, development, and administration of principal professional development programs. Specifically, the research study focuses upon two overarching research questions. First, how do principals and district instructional leaders describe effective principal professional development? Second, how do principals and district instructional leaders describe current and future principal professional development needs? Findings support a community of practice as a vital tool for principal development.

Keywords

principal professional development, communities of practice, principal learning, systems approach, applied learning, principal coaching

Introduction

A great deal of research on K-12 teacher professional development, and research exists on the need for principal professional development (Zepeda, Parylo & Bengston, 2014). However, little research exists on the most effective methods of principal professional development. Effective principals are important because they set the tone for the school and school community (Green, 2016), impact teacher morale and self-efficacy (Fiaz, et. al, 2017; Francis, 2017; Ma & Marion, 2019)) and teacher turnover (Boyd, et. al, 2011; Grissom, 2011), as well as impact student achievement results (Soehner & Ryan, 2011; Terziu, Hasani & Osmani, 2016).

According to Leithwood, et. al (2004), "The principal is second only to the teacher in terms of impact on student learning" (p.5). To that end, principals participate in professional development (Lavigne, et. al, 2016; Taie & Goldring, 2019), most often through district initiatives or conferences (Lewis & Scott, 2020). However, does that professional development create the change needed?

Consequently, this study serves to examine effective principal professional development practices, particularly through Wenger's theoretical framework of Communities of Practice (Wenger, 2010). The framework of Communities of Practice (CoP) has been widely used in the field of business (Borges, et. al, 2017; Hernaez & Campos, 2011 as well in teacher professional development (Tribona, et. al, 2019). However, this theoretical framework is not widely used in principal professional development.

Literature Review

The principalship

The principalship has evolved in the last two decades, in so much that principals must fulfill multiple roles: building manager, instructional leader and change agent (Hallinger, 2010; Kowalski, 2010; Mirfani, A.M., 2019; and Naidoo, 2019). The role of the change agent was most recently highlighted in the 2001 legislation *No Child Left Behind (NCLB),* which required each student subgroup of students to meet federally set learning targets called Adequately Yearly Progress (AYP). With this requirement, schools suffered consequences if every subgroup did not meet that learning target, such as a being labeled a "School in Need of Improvement" (Whitney & Candelaria, 2017).

The problem with this legislation is that the learning targets were moving targets. Each year, the target changed, and more schools were labeled as needing improvement. One of the impacts of this legislation was increased scrutiny of school leaders and teachers and increased levels of anxiety among school-aged children over standardized testing (Segool et al, 2013; Wolf & Smith, 1995).

NCLB was most recently replaced with the 2015 legislation *Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).* Both pieces of legislation require high-stakes, mandatory testing, which increases pressure on school systems, principals and teachers. Despite the fact that *ESSA* gives states more flexibility in selecting another measure of school quality, the federal government still had to approve of the evaluation plans. Therefore, increased pressure to perform coupled with public scrutiny created the nucleus of needed change in schools. However, one must ask if principals are equipped to handle the three roles of building manager, instructional leader and change agent.

Since the 2001 *NCLB* legislation, much research has been done on the lack of preparedness of school principals for the

changing demands of the job (Duncan, Range & Scherz, 2011; Garrison-Wade, Sobel, & Fulmer, 2017; Grissom, Bartanen & Mitani, 2019). In fact, *ESSA* recognizes the importance of school leadership and highlights that leadership is a school improvement strategy to which states and districts can earmark federal funds (Herman et al., 2017).

Professional development for principals

What principals receive in the form of professional development (PD) is not unlike what teachers receive. Wei, et. al. (2009) noted that there is a significant gap between what teachers receive in the form of PD and what they hope to receive. Too often, PD is based on a program or the newest fun technological tool rather than people and practices (Reeves, 2010). Reeves (2010) states that effective teacher PD needs to focus on three things: student learning, evaluation of efforts, and people and practices. Should principal PD be any different?

Adding to the problem, principals do not like to acknowledge deficiencies in skill due to the fear of judgment (Koonce, et. al, 2019; Westberry, 2020). With this fear to acknowledge the need for support and the lack of quality support, effective PD for principals creates a learning chasm that is difficult to fill. This chasm then has a direct impact on the teachers' learning and self-efficacy, student achievement (Fiaz, et. al, 2017; Francis, 2017; Ma & Marion, 2019) as well as principal burnout (Olsen & Sexton, 2009; Riley & Langan-Fox, 2013). Koonce et al. (2019) noted that staff development is the responsibility of school administrators and other district leaders when referring to teachers, so who is responsible for principal professional development?

All too often, critics are quick to blame the principal preparation programs for deficiencies (Bayar, 2016), stating that "Principal training at the majority of university-based programs has long been upbraided for being out of touch with district needs and leaving graduates ill-prepared to lead" (Mendels & Mitgang, 2013, p. 23). District officials and critics must, however, remember the following:

> When a teacher completes a master's program to gain administrative certification, that teacher will statistically remain in the teacher role for an average of five years (U.S. Department of Labor, 2019). Once that teacher gains an assistant principal role, that assistant principal is taught his or her responsibilities. That administrator will become proficient in his or her lane…the average tenure of that assistant principal prior to obtaining a principalship is an estimated additional five years. At this point, the candidate is now ten years or more removed from the certification program. (Westberry, 2020, p. 6)

Augmenting this view, Mendels and Mitgang (2013) continue to say that once districts "hire new principals, districts have a continuing responsibility to promote these principal's growth and success" (p. 24). However, in a 2017 study of public-school principals in the United States, only 50% of principals reported experiencing any type of coaching (Wise & Cavazos, 2017). Furthermore, Johnston et al. (2016), in another national study, reported the following:

> Almost all principals reported having some form of district-provided, on-the-job support available during the past school year, but less than a third indicated their district provided a

> combination of regular supervisory communication, mentoring for principals at varying experience levels, and at least one day of professional development specifically for school leaders over the past year. (p. 1)

The gap in the need and the provision of quality principal professional development places a sizable burden on the principal. As principals are expected to provide a vision, structure, resources, and processes necessary to create an environment for teachers that is conducive to professional learning (Koonce, et al., 2019), principals need to be provided the same. Moreover, the challenge is to provide quality professional development that results in learning transference. A tremendous amount of money is spent each year in the nation on training, but only 10% of learning results in transference to the workplace practice (Foley & Kaiser, 2013; Hung, 2013).

According to Lave and Wenger (1991), learning is "increasing participation in communities of practice" (p. 49), not just the receiving of information. For principals, the need for ongoing professional development is clear, especially with the shift in focus from being a building manager to becoming an effective instructional leader (Boyce & Bowers, 2018; Hallinger, Gumus & Bellibas, 2020; Wilkinson, et. al, 2019) in addition to the ever-increasing demands placed on principals (Beausaert et al., 2016; Westberry, 2020). In essence, principals have too few opportunities to engage in professional learning to hone their skills and focus on improving teaching and learning in their buildings for the benefit of students (Rowland, 2017).

Communities of practice

Communities of Practice, as defined by Wenger (2011) are "groups of people who share a concern or passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly" (p.1). This type of professional learning requires participants to engage with the material and with one another. For teachers, this type of engagement has been found to positively impact the culture and climate of teaching and learning (Hoy et al, 2006; Patton & Parker, 2017). Furthermore, a recent study conducted during the onset of the recent pandemic found that principals who adjusted well to the digital platform relied on a strong community of practice (Sterrett & Richardson, 2020).

To qualify as a community of practice, Wenger (2013) states that three elements must exist: domain, community, and practice. Specifically, the domain is a shared interest with a commitment to collective competence. Meaning, members of this group are committed to growing and learning with and from one another.

The community does not just include members who share the interest, but must include those who engage in joint discussion, collaborative activities, and shared information. Lastly, the practice results in a shared repository of resources, tools, and applications. To create a CoP, time and consistent interaction is necessary (Wenger, 2013).

Some may argue that principals have established CoP's with their cohort peers. For example, a district may have a district meeting or professional development with all elementary principals.

The structure and intent of that meeting as well as planned interactions of the elementary principals determine if that cohort constitutes a CoP. Does that group meet consistently to share information? Do the principals share lessons learned? Do they plan together to solve a problem? Most principal

meetings are "sit and get" pressure cookers that set expectations of outcomes but do not allow for that type of collaboration (Zepeda, Parylo & Bengston, 2013; Midha, 2020).

Furthermore, principal supervisors are now called upon to shift their focus when working with principals from management issues to instructional leadership (Honig & Rainey, 2019; Turnbull, Riley & MacFarlane, 2013). However, those supervisors may not have the skills necessary or may be encumbered by the political and bureaucratic nature of the system (Corcan et al., 2001).

Additionally, these supervisors are often responsible for principal evaluations. Micheaux and Parvin (2018) state, "To use principal evaluation as a tool for growth, they must be able to coach and give powerful feedback, develop and deliver adult learning, facilitate group learning processes, and cultivate a culture of transparency and continuous learning" (p. 53). Consequently, principal supervisors would have to be well versed and trained to fulfill this role.

Additionally, districts must consider the stage of the principalship as different career stages need different professional supports and targeted learning. Weindling (2000) helped to identify the six different career stages of the principalship as thus:

Stage 1 First Months: Entry and developing a cognitive map of the landscape
Stage 2 First Year: Developing a deeper understanding of the key issues
Stage 3 Second Year: Reshaping and implementing change
Stage 4 Years Three to Four: Refinement of changes
Stage 5 Years Five to Seven: Consolidation of all planned changes
Stage 6 Years Eight and beyond: Plateau is reached

Lazenby, McCulla, & Marks (2020) simplify these stages even further to include only three stages:

Stage 1 Preparation and Appointment
Stage 2 Newly Appointed Stage: Early Years (0-4)
Stage 3 Experienced Stage: Mid & Late Career

Though very little research exists to support the needs of the mid and late career-staged principals (Mulford et al., 2008; Oplatka, 2010), the more tenured principals may need just as much if not more assistance. As teachers are expected to provide differentiated instruction for students, principals need that differentiated support based on where they are in their careers (Oplatka, 2004). Principals, therefore, need a network of similarly staged principals to support their efforts to learn and grow in a CoP (Lazenby, McCulla & Marks, 2020). CoP's provide a framework for learning in social and situated contexts such as principal professional development.

Purpose

The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine principals' perceptions of effective principal professional development programs and needs. Results from this research study are valuable because they can provide impactful insights for state departments of education, district leadership, and principals in the planning, development, and administration of principal professional development programs. Specifically, the research study focuses upon two overarching research questions. First, how do principals and district instructional leaders describe effective principal professional

development? Second, how do principals and district instructional leaders describe current and future principal professional development needs?

Methodology

A wide array of research designs, methodologies, and theoretical frameworks have been utilized to investigate the effectiveness of K-12 teacher professional development. However, few research studies have focused on effective principal professional development. Clearly, the complexity of instructional leadership, diverse array of influential factors as well as the multiple variables working in combination mandate thoughtful development of the research strategy and design (Leavy, 2017; Mertens, 2015).

The changing role and expectations of principals necessitates careful consideration in the research design strategy and process. The numerous internal and external influential factors associated with effective instructional leadership and professional development necessitate focused examination. For these reasons, this study employs a qualitative research design with structured interviews.

A basic qualitative research design was utilized in this study because the research questions focused on principals' perceptions of effective professional development programs, principal professional development needs, and learning environment preferences.

Strauss and Corbin (2015) assert that utilizing qualitative research methodology is particularly powerful in describing the meaning research participants associate with their own lived experiences. This research strategy enabled individual principal's rich personal reflection on their own experiences and professional development needs to be collected and compared with other participants in the research study (Creswell, 2018; Strauss & Corbin, 2015; Leavy, 2017; Mertens, 2015; Marshall & Rossman, 2016; Saldana & Omasta, 2018).

Participants were selected using a purposive sampling strategy of principals and district instructional leaders serving within two public K-12 school districts in South Carolina. Fifty-eight principals and district leaders serving within two large school districts were asked if they would be willing to share their perspective in individual research interviews. Nine out of the 58 principals and district leaders elected to participate in this study.

The research participants shared two critical characteristics which met the inclusion criteria for the research study, including holding a role as a principal or district leader at the time of the study and participation in cohort-based professional development within the last year. Percy, Kostere, and Kostere (2015) assert that even a research sample that is small may provide great insight and information on the research topic.

This study utilized nine structured individual interviews with current principals and district instructional leaders in public K-12 educational settings. The study's purpose and two overarching two research questions guided the construction of the interview questions. The interview questions were designed as structured, open-ended questions prompting participants to reflect upon their experiences and to describe their experiences and insights in their own terminology.

The open-ended question design also encouraged research participants to elaborate on their own perceptions of effective principal professional development programs, ongoing

professional development needs, and learning environment preferences. By purposefully constructing the interview questions to be open-ended, drawing upon the research literature, and aligning each interview question with one of the study's research questions, the researchers ensured the interview questions were relevant and appropriate (Strauss & Corbin, 2015).

Throughout each research interview, questions were utilized to gain a better understanding and gain insight regarding the factors influencing perceptions about professional development offerings. The interview questions focused upon four important areas including, characteristics of effective principal professional development programs, influence on instructional leadership practices, learning environment preferences, and top professional development needs that would be helpful in their roles as principals.

In this research study, each interview was recorded on video for transcription to increase data trustworthiness (Creswell, 2018). The interviews were all conducted utilizing video conferencing software over a four-week span of time.

Research participants

The participants in this study included nine principals and district instructional leaders serving within two public K-12 school districts in South Carolina. Each of the participants had recently participated in principal professional development sessions within the preceding 12 months.

The participants in this study were diverse in years of educational leadership experience, race and ethnicity, and gender, increasing the likelihood of the representativeness of the sample to be generalizable to a wider population of K-12 educational leaders. Pseudonyms are used throughout the study for each of the research participants.

Data analysis

Creswell (2018) states, "The process of data analysis involves making sense out of text and image data. It involves preparing the data for analysis, conducting different analyses, moving deeper and deeper into understanding the data, representing the data, and making an interpretation of the larger meaning of the data."

Following the completion of the first research interview, the researchers utilized a thematic, constant-comparison analysis (Merriam & Grenier, 2019). Using a thematic analytic strategy, the researchers engaged in multiple stages of coding, classifying, and clustering words to ensure saturation was reached and to better understand developing themes, categories, and patterns about principals' perceptions about effective principal professional development, ongoing professional development needs, and learning environment preferences (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

The researchers frequently revisited the interview data utilizing the constant comparison analysis. This inductive analysis led to four themes emerging from the data that answered the study's two overarching research questions and provided insight into the professional development perceptions of principals.

While the coding was immensely beneficial during data analysis, an analysis of published research literature was also a valuable component of the analysis process. Previous research literature on instructional leadership and professional development was instrumental in assessing the data collected in

this research study and evaluating the research findings on the context of the current literature on instructional leadership. Research literature assisted in better understanding emerging themes and patterns in the research findings and helped in corroborating the study's findings.

Results

Principals and district instructional leaders who participated in this study answered a variety of interview questions designed to generate great insight regarding the following two overarching research questions: How do principals and district instructional leaders describe effective principal professional development? How do principals and district instructional leaders describe current and future principal professional development needs?

All the participants interviewed in this research study expressed the need for continued instructional leadership professional development. Research participant responses were strikingly similar despite differences in years of experience, gender, and race and ethnicity. Participant pseudonyms and demographics are provided in Table 1 which illustrates the participant pseudonyms, years of principal experience, gender, and race.

Table 1

Participant Demographic Characteristics

Participants (n=9)	Principal Experience	Gender and Race
Robert	2 Years	Male, Caucasian
Scott	3 Years	Male, African American
Janet	30 Years	Female, Caucasian
Phillip	10 Years	Male, Caucasian
Megan	30 Years	Female, Caucasian
Penny	25 Years	Female, African American
Melanie-Lee	9 Years	Female, African American
Lucy	2 Years	Female, Caucasian
Andrea	1 Year	Female, African American

An analysis of the data generated in the individual interviews highlights that participants view four key factors as central to the effectiveness of principal professional development programs: the desire for a focus on practical application of learning, utilization of a systems approach, ability to address knowledge gaps, and the opportunity to participate within a community of practice. The following sections elaborate on the data gained relating to each of the aforementioned factors to provide insight into the details influencing principals' professional development perceptions.

Focus on practical application of learning

During the individual interviews, all nine principals and district instructional leaders communicated the importance and value of focusing on practical applications for the learning generated through principal professional development programs. Therefore, 100% percent of the research participants in this sample viewed practicality and the ability to put their learning directly into practice as paramount in their perception of program effectiveness. The desire for a practical versus theoretical focus is represented by the comments of a current principal highlighted below:

> When asked what made professional development offerings effective and useful, Robert who serves as a middle school principal, stated "useful, real-world experience." He further elaborated: Practicality of answers … we are not just living in a theoretical world. There's a time and place for theory, but that's not helpful to a person who is in the ranks and just needs to get it done. It's a lot of thinking and thinking outside the box, but I need a practical solution to our issues here.
>
> Megan, a district instructional leader, reinforced this sentiment noting "application was the most important thing" and it was valuable to "have a bag of tricks for delivery of curriculum." Phillip, a veteran high school principal, further described the value of participating in "practical hands-on learning," stating: You have to make us do stuff. I think if we sit and get, you lose a little bit. Putting us in clusters, making us do a needs assessment and discussing data with our peers, just give us tasks to do.
>
> Similarly, Lucy who serves as a middle school principal with two years of experience, stated: Here's what you could do right now when you go back to your school. If we are not walking away with something we can use with immediacy, then it feels like as a principal that you may have been able to find the information elsewhere. And what I mean by that is it's really, really important for us to be able to keep all these spinning plates in the air and feel like when we are brought to a session of professional development that the session needs to be what you can literally walk away with.
>
> Likewise, Andrea, a new middle school principal notes the importance of professional development that "models how it could look like in practice."
>
> Janet, a veteran district instructional leader highlights the value of having professional development that is "concrete with tangible things we can do and that we can systemize."

Another veteran district instructional leader, Penny, offers "for me as an adult learner, I want instruction to be applicable to what I'm doing."

Utilization of systems approach

Utilizing a systems approach was a second characteristic of effective principal professional development that emerged as being influential throughout the individual interviews. It is interesting to note that the majority of the research participants, seven out of nine interviewees, identified the importance of having a "framework," or "systems approach" in which to view the professional development learning:

The influence of the desire for a framework to contextualize their learning is evident in the following interview excerpt from Janet, a veteran district instructional leader: If you don't have a system in place, then number one, you are working too hard. Number two, you don't know where you are going, how you are going to get there, and how it's going to be received by who you are working with. A systematic approach to every single part of your job—it can be detrimental if you are not doing it, but if you are it can also be extremely advantageous.

Lucy, a second-year middle school principal, describes instructional leadership as "layered … there are layers that are really important as a leader in conducting holistic review of your school."

Similarly, Melanie-Lee, an experienced high school principal also notes the importance of professional development considering "what systems you have in place."

This sentiment was also expressed by Scott, a third-year high school principal who noted the value of professional development in "providing a model or framework of how to improve."

Robert, a second-year middle school principal, noted the role of professional development in helping to "establish principal leadership protocols."

Ability to address knowledge gaps

A third major characteristic of effective principal professional development programs identified was the ability for the principal professional development to address perceived knowledge gaps. Although, in many cases this category appears similar to the focus on practical application of learning category, all of the principals' statements included in this category focus on perceived gaps from professional practice, their graduate preparation programs, as well as the desire for additional knowledge and skill development. The majority of the interview respondents mentioned a desire for professional development to strengthen their preparation and skills in "teaching teachers" under their supervision:

This sentiment is highlighted in the following statement by Megan, a veteran district instructional leader, who describes principal professional development as an activity that "opens a door for more change." She also notes principals "need better unpacking of the standards and knowing what effective teaching looks like."

Principals elaborated on current and future professional development needs as a means of addressing knowledge gaps in multiple areas, including the use of data to inform instruction, elements of instructional supervision, and progress monitoring:

> For example, Robert, a second-year middle school principal, states one of the keys to all three areas is "knowing what to progress monitor" and further explains the skills principals need to develop in the following excerpt: You have to take your managerial hat off and be an instructional leader. A lot of administrators when they become assistant principals or principals come out of the classroom so early they haven't really mastered pedagogy in their own classrooms. Then they are nine years removed. I'm nine years removed from the classroom and it's very easy to forget. It's easy to become old school because you are not in it anymore. I almost think that I need to teach a class every three or four years just to remember what it's like to be a teacher in the ranks, and what it means to give a learning objective, what it means to refer back to your learning objective and your standard three or four times for the 4.0 rubric, and how to have good classroom management ... forces us to think like a teacher how to use data, how to be a good progress monitor.
>
> Phillip, an experienced high school principal also shares: You have to support your teachers. You have to do everything in your power to help them. If they need help with data … If they need help with resources, you have to be there working shoulder to shoulder with them.
>
> Reflecting on progress monitoring, Phillip also asserts: We need to do a better job as instructional leaders in looking at the observational data as a leadership team and looking at patterns and trends that we see in observations … I'd like to see more technology involved a little bit, creating things more with devices. We have the technology, so our instructional practices are now shifting to the 21st century. Everyone is mostly one-to-one, so we can start shifting instructional practices with professional development.
>
> Similarly, Janet, a veteran district instructional leader describes: [Principals] know it's important to observe and evaluate teachers, but they never really were given specific strategies on how that happens, what do I need to do, what systems do I need to put in place.
>
> Melanie-Lee, an experienced high school principal, reflects: Using data. I think a lot of people are fearful of data. I say fear stands for false evidence of appearing real. Data doesn't lie. So, if it's there, it's there. The problem with some people is they don't know which data to look at and they get overwhelmed with the data instead of looking at the data to drive their decisions.

Participation within a community of practice

Most principals expressed the desire to participate in professional development within a community of practice, noting the effectiveness of district cohort models. Study participants highlighted several advantages afforded by the cohort model, including a shared vested interest in their own schools, common community, and context as a foundation for learning, and the ability to extend the learning gained through continuation of practice and reinforcement in the school environment following professional development sessions. The majority of principals also noted the desire to address these

perceived knowledge gaps through professional development learning pathways rather than additional graduate coursework.

> Robert, a second-year middle school principal, illustrates the effectiveness of professional development within a community of practice through the following statement: Collaboration that I had with my colleagues while doing it at the same time. That was very invaluable. Just being able to talk in the same district, with the same people, all learning at the same time the same things. Being able to see what other schools were doing, how they were doing it, what they weren't doing … realizing I was ok, it was ok, we were going to learn this together. I really appreciated the collaborative piece of it.
>
> Robert also shared: [It] helps to have colleagues doing it together. The cohort model is good because we were all there and experienced the same things. I have a vested interest in my school. For me, this was a personal journey. I wanted to do this for my school.
>
> Similarly, Megan, a veteran district instructional leader, reports: [The] cohort model lent for trust with the principals being together. Principals amongst principals talk differently if there's an AP or someone else in the room.
>
> Phillip, an experienced high school principal also highlighted the value of "sharing ideas" and having "collaborative conversations with other principals and district staff."
>
> Lucy, a second-year middle school principal explains that professional development enables her to "continue to grow as a leader in my building with my needs at the forefront."
>
> Janet, a veteran district instructional leader describes that PD enables one to "capture a larger audience and you can also, if you train people well enough, it can spread throughout the rest of the school district."
>
> Likewise, Andrea, a new middle school principal stated: "Conversations with each other about what is going on. Open dialogue and communication within the school, between schools, and between schools and districts."

When asked about future professional development needs, most of the research participants highlighted the need for on-site coaching and expanding professional development to include an interdisciplinary team within the school environment.

> For example, Robert, a second-year middle school principal, recommended "integrating teachers within some of the professional development sessions with principals" as well as "onsite coaching."
>
> Similarly, Phillip, an experienced high school principal, noted the need to utilize a team-based PD approach that included

Having assistant principals, curriculum and instruction professionals, and coaches involved in the professional development. Doing observations as a team to blend perspectives and come from the same instructional focus by taking learning walks with the principal, assistant principal, and learning coach.

> Illustrating a multidisciplinary team-based approach to coaching and professional development, Scott, a third-year high school principal, stated: A good lesson plan is like a playbook. You want everyone on the same page in regard to the plays. If you know what is going on and they know what's going on then, you can provide quality feedback because everyone is on the same page, but if you are going in blind on the playbook then it's hard to give quality feedback.

Discussion

This research takes an important step to draw attention to the needs of principals. As principals' jobs have evolved and the demands on the principalship have increased, principals need continued support to meet those demands (Rowland, 2017; Zepeda, Parylo & Bengston, 2014). Principal and district participants in a 12-month professional development series found four key factors as central to the effectiveness of principal professional development: the desire for a focus on practical application of learning, utilization of a systems approach, ability to address knowledge gaps, and the opportunity to participate within a community of practice. The study also proved that principals continue to need professional development beyond their principal preparation programs as noted by the desire for extended learning opportunities by all participants.

Furthermore, these findings support Wenger's (2011) CoP theoretical framework for best practice in professional development. In a CoP, participants engage in school improvement together as committed partners who aim to problem solve and address knowledge gaps. In the CoP established in the year-long professional learning program, participants were able to directly apply the learning to specific school settings, and the job-embedded cohort style of CoP provided the time and opportunity for shared learning (Haar, 2004). Another advantage of a district CoP is that schools can work to achieve district goals as one unit rather than leaving each school leader to "figure it out."

As a result of the study, district leaders may want to rethink the purpose of principal meetings or consider creating CoP's to further engage principals in professional learning. Additionally, district leaders need to take note of the learning gaps that exist within their own districts to provide proper support and equip principals with the tools necessary for success.

Future research should focus on principal CoP's as well as the added element of coaching/mentoring. Principal participants expressed the desire for follow up with on-site assistance when working with leadership teams. Hayes (2019) expressed the importance of coaching for novice principals, but this study proves that tenured principals alike need the continued development and support. Coaching along with a CoP may serve to provide wrap-around services and close the knowledge gaps that exist within the various stages of the principalship.

Author Biographies

Lee Westberry is an assistant professor of educational leadership in the Zucker Family School of Education at The Citadel. She also serves as the Ed Leadership Program coordinator and the school's director of program development and enhancement. E-mail: lwestber@citadel.edu

Tara Hornor currently serves as associate professor and coordinator of higher education leadership programs at The Citadel. She holds a PhD in higher education administration and master's degrees in counseling, instructional design, and HR management. E-mail: tara.hornor@citidel.edu

References

Bayar, A. (2016). Challenges facing principals in the first year at their schools. *Universal Journal of Educational Research, 4*(1), 192-199.

Beausaert, S., Froehlich, D.E., Devos, C. & Riley, P. (2016). Effects of support on stress and burnout in school principals. *Educational Research, 58*(4), 347-365.

Borges, J., Cezarino, L., Ferreira, T., Sala, O., Unglaub, D., & Caldana, A. (2017). Student organizations and communities of practice: Actions for the 2030 agenda for sustainable development. *The International Journal of Management Education, 15*(2), p. 172-182.

Boyce, J. & Bowers, A.J. (2018). Toward an evolving conceptualization of instructional leadership as leadership for learning: Meta-narrative review of 109 quantitative studies Across 25 years. *Journal of Educational Administration, 56*(2), 161-182.

Boyd, D., Grossman, P., Ing, M., Lankford, H., Loeb, S., & Wyckoff, J. (2011). The influence of school administrators on teacher retention decisions. *American Educational Research Journal, 48*, 303–333.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, *3*(2), 77-101.

Corcoran, T., Fuhrman, S., & Belcher, C. (2001). The district role in instructional improvement. *Phi Delta Kappan,* September 2001, p. 78-84.

Creswell, J. W. (2018). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods Approaches*, Sage Publications.

Duncan, H., Range, B., & Scherz, S. (2011). From professional preparation to on-the-job development: What do beginning principals need? *International Journal of Educational Leadership Preparation, 6*(3), 1-20.

Fiaz, M., Qin, S., Ikram, A., & Saqib, A. (2017). Leadership styles and employees' motivation: Perspective from an emerging economy. *Journal of Developing Areas, 51*(4), 143-156.

Foley, J. M., & Kaiser, L. M. R. (2013). Learning transfer and its intentionality in adult and continuing education. *New Directions for Adult & Continuing Education, 2013*(137), 5-15.

Francis, C. U. (2017). Transformational and transactional leadership styles among leaders of administrative ministries in Lagos, Nigeria. *IFE Psychologia: An International Journal*, (2), 151-164.

Garrison-Wade, D., Sobel, D. & Fulmer, C. (2017). Inclusive leadership: Preparing principals for the role that awaits them. *Educational Leadership and Administration, 19,* 117- 132.

Grissom, J., Bartanen, B., & Mitani, H. (2019). Principal sorting and the distribution of principal quality. AERA *Open.* April 2019.

Grissom, J. A, & Loeb, S. (2011). Triangulating principal effectiveness: How perspectives of parents, teachers, and assistant principals identify the central importance of managerial skills. *American Educational Research Journal, 48,* 1091–1123.

Green, T.L. (2018). School as community, community as school: Examining principal leadership for urban school reform and community development. *Education and Urban Society*. *50*(2), p. 111-135.

Haar, J., 2004. The role of professional development in the principalship. *Catalyst for change, 33* (2), 20–24.

Hallinger, P. (2010). Developing instructional leadership. In Davies, B. & Brundrett, M. (Eds). *Developing Successful Leadership: Studies in Educational Leadership, 11*. Springer.

Hallinger, P., Gumus, S. & Bellibas, M. (2020). "Are principals instructional leaders yet?' A science map of the knowledge base of instructional leadership, 1940-2018. *Scientometrics, 122,* 1639-1650.

Hayes, S. (2019). Using developmental relationships in mentoring to support novice principals As leaders of learning. *Mentoring and Tutoring: Partnership in Learning, 27*(2), 190-212.

Herman, R., Gates, S. M., Arifkhanova, A., Bega, A., Chavez-Herrerias, E., Han, E., . . . Wrabel, S. (2017). School leadership interventions under the Every Student Succeeds Act: Evidence review (Tech. Rep.). Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation.

Hernaez, O. & Campos, E. (2011). *Handbook of research on communities of practice for organizational management and networking: Methodologies for competitive advantage.* Hershey, PA: IGI Global.

Hoy, W.K., Tarter, C.J., & Woolfolk Hoy, A. (2006). Academic optimism of schools: A force for student achievement. *American Educational Research Journal, 43,* 425-446.

Hung, W. (2013). Problem-based learning: A learning environment for enhancing learning transfer. *New Directions for Adult & Continuing Education, 137*, 27–38.

Johnston, W., Kaufman, J., & Thompson, L. (2016). *Support for instructional leadership: Supervision, mentoring and professional development for U.S. school leaders: Finding From the American School Leader Panel.* Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation.

Koonce, M., Pijanowski, J.C., Bengston, E. & Lasater, K. (2019). Principal engagement in professional development process. *NASSP Bulletin, 103*(3), 229-252.

Kowalski, T. (2010). *The school principal: Visionary leadership and competent management.* New York, New York: Routledge.

Lavigne, H.J., Shakman, K., Zweig, J., & Greller, S.L. (2016). *Principals' time, tasks, and professional development: An analysis of schools and staffing survey data.* Education Development Center, Inc.

Leavy, P. (2017). *Research design: Quantitative, qualitative, mixed methods, arts-based, and community-based participatory research approaches*. New York, NY: Guilford Publications.

Leithwood, K., Louis, K. S., Anderson, S., & Wahlstrom, K. (2004). *How leadership influences student learning.* New York: The Wallace Foundation.

Lewis, L. & Scott, J. (2020). Principal professional development in U.S. public schools in 2017-2018. (NCES 2020-45). U.S. Department of Education. Washington, D.C.

Ma, X. & Marion, R. (2019). Exploring how instructional leadership affects teacher efficacy: A multilevel analysis. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership,* November.

Marshall, C., & Rossman, G. B. (2016). *Designing qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Merriam, S. B., & Grenier, R. S. (2019). *Qualitative research in practice: Examples for discussion and analysis.* Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.

Mertens, D. M. (2015). *Research and evaluation in education and psychology*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Midha, G. (2020). Principal meetings: Pressure mechanisms that shape professional knowledge. *Journal of Higher Education Theory and Practice, 20*(7), 99-110.

Mirfani, A.C. (2019). The challenge of change of the principalship orientation in the era of industrial revolution 4.0. *Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research, 239*, 20-25.

Mulford, B., Kendall, K., Kendall, D., Edmund, B., Ewington, J., & Silins, H. (2008). Successful school principalship and decision making. *Leading and Managing, 14*(1), 60–71.

Naidoo, P. (2019). Perceptions of teachers and school management teams of the leadership roles of public school principals. *South African Journal of Education*, *39*(2), 1-14.

Olsen, B., & D. Sexton. (2009). Threat rigidity, school reform, and how teachers view their work inside current education policy contexts. *American Educational Research Journal 46*(1), 9–44.

Oplatka, I. (2004). The principal's career stage; an absent element in leadership perspectives. *International Journal of Leadership in Education, 7(1*), 43–55.

Oplatka, I. (2010). Principals in late-career: Towards a conceptualization of principals' tasks and experiences in the pre-retirement period. *Education Administration Quarterly, 46(5)*, 776- 815.

Parker, M. (2017). Teacher education communities of practice: More than a culture of collaboration. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 67*, 351-360.

Percy, W., Kostere, K., & Kostere, S. (2015). Generic qualitative research in psychology. *The Qualitative Report*, *20*(2), 76-85.

Reeves, D. (2010). *Transforming professional development into student results.* Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Riley, P., & Langan-Fox, J. (2013). Bullying, stress, and health in school principals and medical professionals: Experiences at the 'front-line'." In *Human Frailties: Wrong Turns on the Road to Success*, edited by Burke, Cooper, and Fox, p. 181–200. London: Gower

Rowland, C. (2017). *Principal professional development: New opportunities for a renewed state focus.* Education Policy Center at American Institute for Research.

Saldaña, J., & Omasta, M. (2018). *Qualitative research: Analyzing life.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Segool, N. K., Carlson, J. S., Goforth, A. N., Von Der Embse, N., & Barterian, J. A. (2013). Heightened test anxiety among young children: Elementary school students' anxious responses to high-stakes testing. *Psychology in the Schools, 50*(5), 489–499. Soehner, D. & Ryan, T. (2011). The interdependence of principal school leadership and Student Achievement, *Scholar-Practitioner, 5*(3). 274-288.

Sterrett, W. & Richardson, J. W. (2020). Supporting professional development through digital principal leadership. *Journal of Organizational & Educational Leadership, 5(2*), 4.

Strauss, A. & Corbin, J. (2015). *Basics of Qualitative Research: Techniques and Procedures for Developing Grounded Theory.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Taie, S. & Goldring, R. (2019). Characteristics of public and private elementary and secondary school principals in the United States: Results From the 2017–18 National Teacher and Principal Survey First Look (NCES 2019- 141). U.S. Department of Education. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

Terziu, L., Hasani, N. & Osmani, O. (2016). The role of the school principal in increasing students' success. *Revista de Stinte Politice. Revue des Sciences Politiques, 50,* 103-113.

Tribona, K., Taylor, M., Klein, E., Munakata, M. & Rahman, Z. (2019). Collaborative professional learning: Cultivating science teacher leaders through vertical communities of practice. *Professional Development in Education, 45*(3), 472-487.

Turnbull, R., Riley, D., & MacFarlane, J. (2013). Cultivating talent through a principal pipeline. *Building a Stronger Principalship, 2*. Policy Studies Associates.

United States Department of Labor, (2019). Elementary, middle and high school principals. *Occupational Outlook Handbook.* Washington, D.C.

Weindling, D. (2000). Stages of headship: A longitudinal study of the principalship. Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association, New Orleans, LA.

Wenger, E. (2011). Communities of practice: A brief introduction. National Science Foundation.

Wenger, E. (2000). Communities of practice and social learning systems. *Organization, 7*(2), 225-246.

Westberry, L. (2020). *Putting the pieces together: A systems approach to school leadership.* Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield.

Wilkinson, J., Edwards-Groves, C., Grootenboer, P. & Kemmis, S. (2019). District offices fostering educational change through instructional leadership practices in Australian Catholic secondary schools. *Journal of Educational Administration, 57*(5), p. 501-518.

Wise, D. & Cavazos, B. (2017). Leadership coaching for principals: A national study. *Mentoring & Tutoring: Partnership in Learning, 35*(2), 223-245.

Wolf, L. F. & Smith, J. K. (1995). The consequence of consequence: Motivation, anxiety, and test performance. *Applied Measurement in Education, 8*(3), 227–242.

Zepeda, S., Parylo, O., & Bengtson, E. (2014). Analyzing principal professional development practices through the lens of adult learning theory. *Professional Development in Education, 40*(2), 295-315.

Book Review

Natural Allies: Hope and Possibility in Teacher-Family Partnerships

Written by Soo Hong, EdD
Reviewed by Art Stellar, PhD

Author Soo Hong is an associate professor and chair of education at Wellesley College. This book is well-written and simple to follow. It is primarily a three-year ethnographic study of five teachers and their interactions with parents in the Boston area within diverse low-income communities. It offers hope that caring, knowledgeable teachers can effectively partner with parents.

The title conveys the basic premise, i.e., that teachers and families are or can be "natural allies." At the same time the author suggests that the present circumstances in education involving race, culture, and family history complicate reaching this ideal. For an historical context of the divide between teachers and educators, she draws heavily from the scholarly works of sociologist Willard Waller, who wrote about their "natural conflicts." Dan Lortie, another iconic education sociologist, who is most known for his work, *Schoolteacher,* is referenced throughout. The third highly recognized educational sociologist to influence this study is Sara Lawrence Lightfoot, who projects a more optimistic view regarding the teacher/parent relationship.

The power dynamic between these two sets of parties is heavily weighted towards teachers and other educators. School hours, curriculum, teaching methods, grading policies, transportation, etc. are usually decided by educators, although in enlightened systems, parents have opportunities for input that is seriously considered and incorporated into final decisions.

While the goal is to generally improve communication and often collaboration, the traditional open houses and parent-teacher conference days, by necessity, are usually tightly scheduled affairs. Parental considerations are often secondary, leaving parents muddled about their role. This book promotes regular ongoing, less structured exchanges between parents and teachers.

There are, of course, many communities where there are excellent relationships between parents and educators. However, as the author points out, diverse disadvantaged communities struggle to achieve a partnership. The ideas presented herein for turning around this situation are effective, if not totally unique.

For instance, teachers in this study who engaged in home visits had positive relationships with parents when they were open and sincerely focused on the children. Title I promoted home visits forty years ago, and they are still effective. A teacher's attitude is a key to creating trusting partnerships with parents.

Readers of *Natural Allies* will appreciate the realistic descriptions of typical interactions and programs and the commonality of communication barriers in most educational settings. Readers who care about advancing this relationship and, thus, advancing everyone's feelings about education will find specific ways to move forward to a state of teachers/parents as *Natural Allies.*

Reviewer Biography

Art Stellar has served as a superintendent for 25 years He may be most known for improving educational excellence for all students and for reducing equity gaps. He has demonstrated that leadership is more important than high funding levels as he works with others to maximize available resources, while securing outside money. His new consulting company is StellarAdvantage.com.
E-mail: artstellar@yahoo.com

Natural Allies: Hope and Possibility in Teacher-Family Partnerships was published in 2019 by Harvard Education Press, Cambridge MA. 220 pp, $33, softcover.

Mission and Scope, Copyright, Privacy, Ethics, Upcoming Themes, Author Guidelines, Submissions, Publication Rates & Publication Timeline

The *AASA Journal of Scholarship and Practice* is a refereed, blind-reviewed, quarterly journal with a focus on research and evidence-based practice that advance the profession of education administration.

Mission and Scope

The **mission** of the Journal is to provide peer-reviewed, user-friendly, and methodologically sound research that practicing school and district administrations can use to take action and that higher education faculty can use to prepare future school and district administrators. The Journal publishes accepted manuscripts in the following categories: (1) Evidence-based Practice, (2) Original Research, (3) Research-informed Commentary, and (4) Book Reviews.

The **scope** for submissions focuses on the intersection of five factors of school and district administration: (a) administrators, (b) teachers, (c) students, (d) subject matter, and (e) settings. The Journal encourages submissions that focus on the intersection of factors a-e. The Journal discourages submissions that focus only on personal reflections and opinions.

Copyright

Authors please note: By submitting a manuscript the author/s acknowledge that the submitted manuscript is not under review by any other publisher or society, and the manuscript represents original work completed by the authors and not previously published as per professional ethics based on APA guidelines, most recent edition. By submitting a manuscript, authors agree to transfer without charge the following rights to AASA, its publications, and especially the *AASA Journal of Scholarship and Practice* upon acceptance of the manuscript. The *AASA Journal of Scholarship and Practice* is indexed by several services and is also a member of the Directory of Open Access Journals. This means there is worldwide access to all content. Authors must agree to first worldwide serial publication rights and the right for the *AASA Journal of Scholarship and Practice* and AASA to grant permissions for use of works as the editors judge appropriate for the redistribution, repackaging, and/or marketing of all works and any metadata associated with the works in professional indexing and reference services. Any revenues received by AASA and the *AASA Journal of Scholarship and Practice* from redistribution are used to support the continued marketing, publication, and distribution of articles.

Privacy

The names and e-mail addresses entered in this journal site will be used exclusively for the stated purposes of this journal and will not be made available for any other purpose or to any other party. Please note that the journal is available, via the Internet at no cost, to audiences around the world. Authors' names and e-mail addresses are posted for each article. Authors who agree to have their manuscripts published in the *AASA Journal of Scholarship and Practice* agree to have their names and e-mail addresses posted on their articles for public viewing.

Ethics

The *AASA Journal of Scholarship and Practice* uses a double-blind peer-review process to maintain scientific integrity of its published materials. Peer-reviewed articles are one hallmark of the scientific method and the *AASA Journal of Scholarship and Practice* believes in the importance of maintaining the integrity of the scientific process in order to bring high quality literature to the education leadership community. We expect our authors to follow the same ethical guidelines. We refer readers to the latest edition of the APA Style Guide to review the ethical expectations for publication in a scholarly journal.

Themes and Topics of Interest

Below are themes and areas of interest for publication cycles.

1. Governance, Funding, and Control of Public Education
2. Federal Education Policy and the Future of Public Education
3. Federal, State, and Local Governmental Relationships
4. Teacher Quality (e.g. hiring, assessment, evaluation, development, and compensation of teachers)
5. School Administrator Quality (e.g. hiring, preparation, assessment, evaluation, development, and compensation of principals and other school administrators)
6. Data and Information Systems (for both summative and formative evaluative purposes)
7. Charter Schools and Other Alternatives to Public Schools
8. Turning Around Low-Performing Schools and Districts
9. Large Scale Assessment Policy and Programs
10. Curriculum and Instruction
11. School Reform Policies
12. Financial Issues

Submissions

Length of manuscripts should be as follows: Research and evidence-based practice articles between **2,800** and **4,800** words; commentaries between **1,600** and **3,800** words; book and media reviews between **400** and **800** words. Articles, commentaries, book and media reviews, citations and references are to follow the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, latest edition. Permission to use previously copyrighted materials is the responsibility of the author, not the *AASA Journal of Scholarship and Practice*.

Cover page checklist:

1. title of the article:
   identify if the submission is original research, evidence-based practice, commentary, or book review
2. contributor name(s)
3. terminal degree
4. academic rank
5. department
6. college or university
7. city, state
8. telephone and fax numbers
9. e-mail address
10. 120-word abstract that conforms to APA style
11. six to eight key words that reflect the essence of the submission
12. 40-word biographical sketch

Please do not submit page numbers in headers or footers. Rather than use footnotes, it is preferred authors embed footnote content in the body of the article. In 2019, APA guidelines were changed so that one space is required after a period. Articles are to be submitted to the editor by e-mail as an electronic attachment in Microsoft Word, Times New Roman, 12 Font.

Acceptance Rates

The *AASA Journal of Scholarship and Practice* maintains of record of acceptance rates for each of the quarterly issues published annually. The percentage of acceptance rates since 2010 is as follows:

2012: 22%	2017: 20%
2013: 15%	2018: 19%
2014: 20%	2019: 19%
2015: 22%	2020: 18%
2016: 19%	2021: 17%

Book Review Guidelines

Book review guidelines should adhere to the author guidelines as found above. The format of the book review is to include the following:

- Full title of book
- Author
- Publisher, city, state, year, # of pages, price
- Name and affiliation of reviewer
- Contact information for reviewer: address, city, state, zip code, e-mail address, telephone and fax
- Reviewer biography
- Date of submission

Publication Timeline

Issue	Deadline to Submit Articles	Notification to Authors of Editorial Review Board Decisions	To AASA for Formatting and Editing	Issue Available on AASA website
Spring	October 1	January 1	February 15	April 1
Summer	February 1	April 1	May 15	July1
Fall	May 1	July 1	August 15	October 1
Winter	August 1	October 1	November 15	January 15

Additional Information

Contributors will be notified of editorial board decisions within eight weeks of receipt of papers at the editorial office. Articles to be returned must be accompanied by a postage-paid, self-addressed envelope.

The *AASA Journal of Scholarship and Practice* reserves the right to make minor editorial changes without seeking approval from contributors.

Materials published in the *AASA Journal of Scholarship and Practice* do not constitute endorsement of the content or conclusions presented.

The Journal is listed in Cabell's Directory of Publishing Opportunities. Articles are also archived in the ERIC collection. The Journal is available on the Internet and considered an open access document.

Editor

Kenneth Mitchell, EdD
AASA Journal of Scholarship and Practice

Submit articles electronically: kenneth.mitchell@mville.edu

To contact by postal mail:
Dr. Ken Mitchell
Associate Professor
School of Education
Manhattanville College
2900 Purchase Street
Purchase, NY 1057

AASA Resources

New and Revised Resources

- **AASA Releases 2021-22 Superintendent Salary Study**
  www.aasa.org/content.aspx?id=45378

- **NEW Resources on leading through COVID**
  COVID Guidance, Strategies, and Resources.
  www.aasacentral.org/covidguidance/

- **Official Online Industry Suppliers for Educators**
  aasa.inloop.com/en/buyersguide

- **Superintendent's Career Center**
  aasa-jobs.careerwebsite.com/

- **2020 Decennial Study of the American Superintendent**
  www.aasacentral.org/book/the-american-superintendent-2020-decennial-study
  The study is for sale and available at www.aasacentral.org/aasa-books

- **School District Spending of American Rescue Plan Funding**, an AASA survey of hundreds of district leaders across the U.S. in July (2021) about their plans to utilize American Rescue Plan (ARP) and other federal COVID-19 relief funding to address the pandemic-related student learning recovery. Results: www.aasa.org/uploadedFiles/ARP-Survey-Findings-090121.pdf

- **AASA Main and Advocacy App**
  Both apps are designed for school superintendents, central office staff, principals, teachers, policymakers, business and community leaders, parents and more. The Advocacy app enables advocates of public education to connect, network, communicate with other members, access, and share important information directly from their devices.
  www.aasa.org/app.aspx

- **AASA Launches 'Live Well. Lead Well.' Campaign: Initiative to Focus on Mental, Physical & Emotional Health of School system Leaders**
  "We at AASA recognize that school system leaders need our support now more than ever before," said Daniel A. Domenech, executive director. Read the press release here. For more information about the *Live Well. Lead Well*. campaign, visit the AASA website. www.connect.aasa.org/livewellleadwell

- **2022 Conference Daily Online**
  If you missed the conference this year, the award-winning newsletter for AASA's National Conference on Education, provided daily coverage of key speakers, topical education sessions, photos and video clips of the conference, and more. There is still time to download handouts, read blogs, watch videos, and more. www.nce.aasa.org/conference-daily-online

- **Lifetouch Photos from the 2022 National Conference on Education**
  www.lifetouchpartnershipevent.smugmug.com/AASA/2022/NCE

- ✓ **Join AASA** and discover a number of resources reserved exclusively for members. See Member Benefits at www.aasa.org/welcome/index.aspx. For questions on membership contact Meghan Moran at mmoran@aasa.org

- ✓ **Resources for educational leaders** may be viewed at AASA's virtual library: www.aasathoughtleadercentral.org

- ✓ **Welcome materials may be found at**
  www.aasa.org/welcome/resources.aspx

- ✓ Learn about AASA's **books program** where new titles and special discounts are available to AASA members. The AASA publications catalog may be downloaded at www.aasacentral.org/aasa-books

- ✓ **AASA's Leadership Network**, the Association's professional learning arm, drives educational leaders' success, innovation and growth, focused on student-centered, equity-focused, forward-reaching education. Passionate and committed to continuous improvement, over 100 Leadership Network faculty connect educational leaders to the leadership development, relationships and partnerships needed to ensure individual growth and collective impact**.** A snapshot of over 30 academies, cohorts and consortia is represented in the graphic below. To assist in navigating through the pandemic, AASA has produced and archived over 100 webinars since March 2020 on *Leading for Equity* and *What Works* at aasa.org/AASA-LeadershipNetwork-webinars.aspx.

  Contact Mort Sherman at msherman@aasa.org or Valerie Truesdale at vtruesdale@aasa.org to explore professional learning and engagement.

Upcoming AASA Events

AASA Learning 2025 National Summit, Washington, DC, June 28-30, 2022

AASA 2023 National Conference on Education, Feb. 16-18, 2023, San Antonio, TX

Call for Proposals is open March 31- May 31, 2022:
www.aasa.org/content.aspx?id=36900