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Brockmeier, L., Leech, D., Pate, J., & Gibson, N. (April 2011). Principals' Views about the Impact of High Stakes Testing[1]

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1.2 Authors

Lantry L. Brockmeier, Valdosta State University
   Don W. Leech, Valdosta State University
   James L. Pate, Valdosta State University
   Nicole M. Gibson, Valdosta State University

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[1]This content is available online at <http://cnx.org/content/m37190/1.1/>.

[2]http://www.ncpeapublications.org

1.3 Introduction

High stakes testing is not new to the American education system. The initial use of test-based reform in education began in the mid-1840s in Massachusetts (Resnick, 1982). Under leadership of the Massachusetts superintendent, Horace Mann, tests were developed to assess student knowledge in several disciplines. The results were published to allow for comparisons of schools and classrooms (Hamilton, 2003). Tyack (1974) reported that by the 1870s many states were administering tests and reporting the results in newspapers. Whereas student promotion had been based on teacher recommendations, student promotion became tied to the success or failure on these tests in the latter part of the 1800s (Engelhart, 1950).

Resnick (1982) indicated that before World War I there were over 200 tests available for use in schools. Linn, Miller, and Gronlund (2005) stated that a number of achievement test batteries were published after World War I, but the use of tests did not expand greatly until after World War II. In the 1960s, the Elementary and Secondary School Act grew from the recognition of differences in student performance and educational opportunities. Stakeholders were dissatisfied with the progress of students and as a result the amount of testing increased.

Airasian (1988) suggested that in the 1970s concern grew about the quality of schools and students. High stakes testing was most likely unavoidable due to poor decision making or the perception of poor decision making by educators in the 1970s (Cizek, 2001). The assignment of higher grades to increase student achievement and to enhance student self-esteem did not have the desired effect that educators thought that it would have on students. Business leaders and industrial leaders continued to complain that high school graduates could not read or write. In 1978, Popham implied that the use of minimum competency testing was halting the devaluation of the high school diploma. The criterion-referenced testing movement was an attempt to transfer some important decisions from individual teachers to increase uniformity or standardization (Burton, 1978). State mandates had the desired effect to ensure that all students received at least the same minimum knowledge and skills in identified content areas and that there was greater awareness between curriculum, instruction, and assessment (Camilli, Cizek, & Lugg, 2001).

Fremer (2005) stated that arguing against good testing at a conceptual level means that one has to dismiss the idea that relevant information can lead to better evaluation. Similarly Linn, Miller, and Gronlund (2005) stated that to argue that better educational decisions would be made without test scores is to argue that better decisions can be made with less information. Holland (2001) declared that standardized tests were indispensible. Grade point averages and course grades were just too unreliable to be used as outcome measures (Phelps, 2003). Afflerbach (2005) presented three reasons for high stakes testing's popularity; fairness, scientific due to the tests undergoing examination for validity and reliability, and the fact that tests are very commonplace. One of the most obvious benefits of high stakes testing is the ability to provide a numerical score that can be indexed to every school and student (Baines & Stanley, 2004).

Wahlberg (2003) stated that although there has been resistance in education circles towards high stakes standardized testing, the general public, state legislatures, and federal legislators are increasingly demanding better performance of our schools. The results of high stakes testing can demonstrate to taxpayers that their investment is being used effectively to yield quality outcomes (Lederman & Burnstein, 2006).

Stone (2003) indicated that most of the information written about standardized testing is negative and that this gives the impression that these tests have few advantages. For most of the 20th century, teachers and schools routinely used standardized tests for documentation of student, teacher, and school performance. Everything was fine with the testing as long as the information control was at the local level. For instance, Phelps (2005) reported that teachers were very supportive of high stakes standardized testing in the 1970s and 1980s when the stakes were only for students. It wasn't until policymakers held schools accountable for test results that the limitations became fatal flaws (Stone, 2003). Policymakers began to realize that schools needed external accountability just like most other organizations.

Kaback (2006) stated that high stakes testing will not become an endangered species anytime soon given America's current obsession for testing. Parents, policymakers, and educators view the results of high stakes testing as proof of student learning (Scherer, 2005). Driesler (2001) reported that 83% of parents responded that tests provide important information about children's education and 90% of parents wanted comparative information about their children and schools. Phelps (2005) reported poll and survey data across

numerous years that indicated the general publics' positive view of standardized testing. The percentage point differential between positive responses and negative responses to standardized testing varied from a +90 for students being required to pass a graduation test, a +80 for knowledge of the five core subjects, +76 for diagnosis, +39 for ranking schools, and a +28 for determining whether a student advances to the next grade. There was even a +86 percentage point differential to a testing question that began with "if your child failed the graduation test the first time."

Principals' roles have evolved very quickly since the passage of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (Davis, Darling-Hammond, LaPointe, & Meyerson, 2005). Chrispeels (2004) noted that with its passage, principals are being held to a higher level of accountability for student achievement than ever before in educational history. The change process brought on by this high stakes testing environment may be reflected in principals' instructional leadership, philosophical orientation to teaching and learning, and deep seated beliefs about the way instruction unfolds (Hope, Brockmeier, Lutfi, & Sermon, 2007). An increased emphasis has been placed on principal leadership to create high performing learning communities for increased student achievement (Zellner & Jinkins, 2001). For instance, Ross and Gray (2006) indicated that increasing transformational leadership practices has led to small important contributions to student achievement. Leadership, in fact, may account for up to 25% of the total school effects (direct and indirect effects) on student achievement (Leithwood, Louis, Anderson, and Wahlstrom, 2004).

1.4 Purpose of the Study

The primary purpose of this study was to examine Georgia principals' views about the impact of high stakes testing. Principals were asked to respond to items that crossed six domains; curriculum, teaching, work satisfaction, stress, accountability, and students. A secondary purpose was to determine if there were differences in principals' responses on the instrument by school configuration, principal's educational level, gender, and race or ethnicity.

1.5 Methodology

1.5.1 Population, Sample, and Sampling Procedure

Approximately 2000 schools on the Georgia Department of Education web site had complete information on principals and school addresses. Of the 2000 schools, there were 1,220 elementary schools, 430 middle schools, and 350 high schools. A stratified random sample of schools was generated by school level resulting in a total sample of 550 schools. The 550 principals were mailed a cover letter and *ThePrincipal's High Stakes Testing Survey*. The cover letter included information about the research purpose, confidentiality of the responses, number of survey items, average time for completion, and IRB approval. After the initial mailing and follow-up mailing, 261 of 269 returned surveys were complete and usable for analysis resulting in a 47% response rate.

Demographic information collected on the survey included gender, race or ethnicity, educational level, and school configuration. The number and percentage of principals responding to the survey by gender were 90 (34%) female principals and 171 (66%) male principals. By race or ethnicity, there were 200 (77%) Caucasian principals, 58 (22%) African American principals, and 3 (1%) Hispanic principals. The number and percentage of principals reported having a master's degree were 47 (18%), whereas the number and percentage of principals reporting having an Educational Specialist's degree and doctorate were 139 (53%) and 75 (28%), respectively. By school configuration, there were 99 (38%) elementary school principals, 66 (25%) middle school principals, 85 (33%) high school principals, and 11 (4%) other (i.e., combination school) principals.

1.5.2 Instrumentation

Hope, Brockmeier, Lutfi, and Sermon (2007) initially developed *ThePrincipal's High Stakes Testing Survey* to obtain information about the impact of high stakes testing on Florida's principals across six hypothesized domains (i.e., curriculum, teaching, work satisfaction, stress, accountability, and students). Principals' responses to each of the 48 items within six domains were measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). Items comprising the survey were designed based upon a review of the literature, which presented positive and negative attributes of high stakes testing. Brockmeier, Pate, and Leech (2008) examined the psychometric characteristics (i.e., validity and reliability) of the instrument. Expert panel members suggested only a few very minor modifications to improve the instrument, while the exploratory factor analyses and confirmatory factor analyses yielded data to support the fit of the model and factor invariance of the model by gender and race or ethnicity. Cronbach's alpha reliability for the 48-item instrument was .92; the subscale Cronbach's alpha coefficients were .70 for curriculum, .85 for teaching, .73 for work satisfaction, .81 for stress, .84 for accountability, and .63 for students. Reliability was good for the total composite scores on the instrument and was good to adequate for scores on each of the subscales.

In the present study, Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient for the 48-item instrument was .90, whereas the subscale Cronbach's alpha coefficients were .56 for curriculum, .82 for teaching, .74 for work satisfaction, .85 for stress, .84 for accountability, and .53 for students. When compared to the previous administration of the instrument, Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients were .14 lower for the curriculum subscale and .1 lower for the students subscale. However, there appeared to be less variation in principals' responses in the present study than in the previous administration of the instrument and less response variation would reduce the value of the reported reliability coefficients. Reliability was good for the total composite score on the instrument and was good for four of six subscales. Analysis of the total scores on the curriculum subscale and students subscale should proceed with caution due to their respective reliability estimates on this administration of the instrument. Note that negatively worded items were reverse coded for the estimates of reliability and subsequent inferential statistical analyses.

1.6 Results

The results section consists of two subsections; item analysis and inferential statistical analyses. First, principals' responses to items within subscales are reported using the median value and the percentage point differential between positive responses and negative responses for each item. Second, the results from the inferential statistical analyses are presented.

1.7 Item Analysis

1.7.1 Beliefs about Curriculum

Eight items represent principals' beliefs about curriculum. Principals agreed (median value was 4) with five of eight curriculum items (see Table 1). Principals agreed that (a) high stakes testing has resulted in principals paying more attention to the school's curriculum, (b) students' scores provide feedback to improve the curriculum, (c) high stakes testing requires teachers to teach to the test, (d) high stakes testing has led principals to rethink about subject matter that is important to teach, and (e) high stakes testing promotes some subject area content over other subject content. Principals neither agreed nor disagreed (median value of 3) with the statement that high stakes test items reflect the content students learn in a school's curriculum. Finally, principals disagreed (median value of 2) that students' scores reflect the quality of a school's curriculum and that high stakes testing is consistent with a balanced curriculum.

1.7.1.1 Table 1: Percentage of Responses and Descriptive Statistics by Item for Beliefs about Curriculum

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Item		1[a]	2	3	4	5	Mdn	M	SD
1	High stakes testing has led principals to reassess their beliefs about subject matter that is important to teach.	1	9	7	50	33	4.00	4.04	0.93
2	High stakes testing is consistent with the idea of a balanced curriculum (attention to all subjects).	8	54	12	20	6	2.00	2.62	1.08
									continued on next page

3	Students' scores on a high stakes test accurately portray the quality of a school's curriculum.	16	48	20	15	1	2.00	2.37	0.96
4	High stakes testing requires teachers to teach to the test.	6	23	18	39	15	4.00	3.34	1.15
5	High stakes test items accurately reflect the content students learn through a school's curriculum.	4	38	24	32	3	3.00	2.92	0.98
	continued on next page								

6	High stakes testing promotes certain subject area content over other subject area content.	0	7	7	56	30	4.00	4.08	0.82
7	Students' scores on high stakes test provide feedback for schools to improve the curriculum.	1	7	16	62	15	4.00	3.82	0.81

8	High stakes testing has caused principals to devote more attention to the school's curriculum.	1	5	7	60	28	4.00	4.08	0.79

Table 1.1

Note.[a] 1 (*Strongly Disagree*), 2 (*Disagree*), 3 (*Neither Agree nor Disagree*), 4 (*Agree*), and 5 (*Strongly Agree*).

1.7.2 Beliefs about Teaching

Principals' beliefs about teaching consist of 10 items. Principals agreed (median value of 4) with four statements (see Table 2). Principals agreed that (a) high stakes testing motivates teachers to improve the teaching and learning process, (b) students' scores on a high stakes test provides feedback for teachers to improve their teaching, (c) high stakes testing has increased cooperation among teachers, and (d) high stakes testing reduces the time to teach other subjects' content. Principals nether agreed nor disagreed (median value of 3) that (a) high stakes testing leads to better teaching, (b) the quality of a teacher's instruction is directly related to student performance, (c) high stakes testing permits teachers to use the full range of their teaching skills, and (d) high stakes testing reduces the teaching and learning process to a student's test score.

1.7.2.1 Table 2: Percentage of Responses and Descriptive Statistics by Item for Beliefs about Teaching

Item		1ᵃ	2	3	4	5	Mdn	M	SD
9	High stakes testing permits teachers to use the full range of their teaching skills.	6	40	25	23	6	3.00	2.84	1.05
10	High stakes testing leads to better teaching.	7	33	32	25	4	3.00	2.85	1.00
11	Students' scores on a high stakes test are a valid measure of teaching ability.	13	47	26	13	1	2.00	2.41	0.91
						continued on next page			

12	Students' scores on a high stakes test are a valid way to determine the quality of education.	9	48	26	16	0	2.00	2.51	0.89
13	The quality of teachers' instruction is directly related to student performance on a high stakes test.	7	39	22	28	4	3.00	2.84	1.04
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14	High stakes testing requires preparation that reduces time to teach other subjects' content.	3	15	16	54	12	4.00	3.58	0.98
15	Students' scores on a high stakes test provide feedback for teachers to improve their teaching.	1	8	15	67	8	4.00	3.74	0.76
				continued on next page					

16	High stakes testing reduces the teaching and learning process to a student's test score.	5	25	27	37	5	3.00	3.11	1.02
17	High stakes testing motivates teachers to improve the teaching and learning process.	3	20	22	50	5	4.00	3.36	0.95

| 18 | High stakes testing has increased cooperation among teachers. | 5 | 16 | 23 | 48 | 8 | 4.00 | 3.38 | 1.00 |

Table 1.2

Note.[a] 1 (*Strongly Disagree*), 2 (*Disagree*), 3 (*Neither Agree nor Disagree*), 4 (*Agree*), and 5 (*Strongly Agree*).

Principals disagreed (median value of 2) that students' scores on a high stakes test are a valid measure of teaching ability and that students' scores on a high stakes test are a valid way to determine the quality of education.

1.7.3 Beliefs about Work Satisfaction

Five items represent principals' beliefs of work satisfaction. Principals agreed (median value of 4) with two of five items (see Table 3). Principals agreed that (a) principals work satisfaction decreases when the focus is on high stakes testing outcomes and (b) high stakes testing has increased principal and teacher cooperation. With a median value of 3, principals neither agreed nor disagreed that (a) high stakes testing diminishes the desire to be an educator and (b) the use of high stakes testing leads to principals leaving the profession. Principals disagreed (median value of 2) that principal morale increased due to high stakes testing.

1.7.3.1 Table 3: Percentage of Responses and Descriptive Statistics by Item for Beliefs about Work Satisfaction

Item		1[a]	2	3	4	5	Mdn	M	SD
19	Principal morale has increased because of high stakes testing.	22	54	20	3	1	2.00	2.06	0.78
						continued on next page			

20	High stakes testing diminishes the desire to be an educator.	5	19	26	38	12	3.00	3.32	1.07
21	High stakes testing has increased principal and teacher cooperation.	3	17	27	49	4	4.00	3.34	0.90
22	The use of high stakes testing as a single measure to determine student achievement leads to principals leaving the profession.	4	20	36	31	8	3.00	3.19	0.99
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23	Principals' work satis- faction declines when the focus is on high stakes test out- comes.	3	20	25	43	11	4.00	3.39	1.00

Table 1.3

Note.[a] 1 (*Strongly Disagree*), 2 (*Disagree*), 3 (*Neither Agree nor Disagree*), 4 (*Agree*), and 5 (*Strongly Agree*).

1.7.4 Beliefs about Stress

Principals' beliefs about stress consist of 10 items. Principals strongly agreed (median value of 5) with four items (see Table 4). Principals strongly agreed that (a) stress increases with the public advertisement of high stakes testing results, (b) punitive measures associated with high stakes testing increases stress, (c) stress increases when the accountability grade declines, and (d) stress increases when the school receives a failing grade. Principals agreed (median value of 4) that (a) principals experience stress in an effort to maintain their school's accountability grade, (b) principals leave the profession from stress due to high stakes testing, (c) high stakes testing leads to competition among principals, (d) stress increases due to district supervisors' pressure to increase students' scores, and (e) principals increase teacher stress. Principals disagreed (median value of 2) that pressure to improve high stakes test scores may result in principals cheating to improve scores.

1.7.4.1 Table 4: Percentage of Responses and Descriptive Statistics by Item for Beliefs about Stress

Item		1[a]	2	3	4	5	Mdn	M	SD
24	High stakes testing leads to compe- tition among princi- pals.	1	12	19	53	15	4.00	3.68	0.91
continued on next page									

25	Principal's stress increases when the school receives a failing grade.	1	0	1	34	63	5.00	4.58	0.62
26	Principal's stress increases when the school's accountability grade declines.	0	1	1	38	59	5.00	4.54	0.63
27	Punitive measures associated with high stakes testing induce principal stress.	2	2	5	38	54	5.00	4.41	0.80
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28	Principals experience stress in the effort to maintain their school's accountability grade.	0	1	3	47	49	4.00	4.45	0.59
29	Principals stress increases with public advertisement of a schools high stakes test results.	0	4	6	39	51	5.00	4.38	0.77
						continued on next page			

30	The pressure of high stakes testing may result in principals cheating to improve scores.	23	28	30	15	4	2.00	2.49	1.11
31	District supervisors' pressure to improve high stakes test scores increase stress in principals.	0	5	10	49	36	4.00	4.18	0.78
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| 32 | Principals pressure to improve high stakes test scores increase teacher stress. | 0 | 1 | 7 | 49 | 43 | 4.00 | 4.33 | 0.69 |
| 33 | Principals leave the profession because of stress related to high stakes testing. | 2 | 12 | 35 | 36 | 15 | 4.00 | 3.49 | 0.96 |

Table 1.4

Note.[a] 1 (*Strongly Disagree*), 2 (*Disagree*), 3 (*Neither Agree nor Disagree*), 4 (*Agree*), and 5 (*Strongly Agree*).

1.7.5 Beliefs about Accountability

Eight items represent principals' beliefs about accountability. Principals agreed (median value of 4) that (a) high stakes testing has increased awareness of accountability issues, (b) principals are more accountable because of high stakes testing, and (c) high stakes testing has increased principal accountability for student performance (see Table 5). Principals neither agreed nor disagreed (median value of 3) that (a) high stakes testing improves the quality of education, (b) student performance is related to the quality of a principal's instructional leadership, and (c) high stakes testing crates a cooperative environment between the principal and the community. Principals disagreed (median value of 2) that students' scores on a high stakes test are an indicator of principal effectiveness and that high stakes testing is an effective means for determining the quality of public education.

1.7.5.1 Table 5: Percentage of Responses and Descriptive Statistics by Item for Beliefs about Accountability

Item	1[a]	2	3	4	5	Mdn	M	SD
continued on next page								

34	High stakes testing has increased principals' accountability for students' academic performance.	2	5	6	64	23	4.00	4.03	0.79
35	High stakes testing has increased principals' awareness of the accountability issue in education.	0	2	5	60	33	4.00	4.25	0.63
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36	High stakes testing is an effective means of determining the quality of public education.	14	43	26	14	3	2.00	2.49	0.99
37	Students' scores on a high stakes test are an indicator of principal effectiveness.	15	39	25	20	1	2.00	2.53	1.00
38	High stakes testing is a reform measure that improves the quality of education.	9	30	30	29	2	3.00	2.86	1.01
continued on next page									

39	Principals are more accountable because of high stakes testing.	2	9	15	56	19	4.00	3.81	0.89
40	High stakes testing creates a cooperative environment between the principal and community.	6	29	45	20	1	3.00	2.81	0.84
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41	Student performance on a high stakes test is directly related to the quality of a principal's instructional leadership.	11	36	28	21	3	3.00	2.69	1.03

Table 1.5

Note.[a] 1 (*Strongly Disagree*), 2 (*Disagree*), 3 (*Neither Agree nor Disagree*), 4 (*Agree*), and 5 (*Strongly Agree*).

1.7.6 Beliefs about Students

Principals' beliefs about students consist of seven items. Principals agreed (median value of 4) that (a) high stakes testing contributes to students dropping out of school, (b) high stakes testing induces anxiety in students, (c) the pressure of high stakes testing may result in students cheating to improve scores, and (d) principals are concerned about the impact of high stakes testing on minority students (see Table 6). Principals neither agreed nor disagreed (median value of 3) that (a) high stakes testing motivates students to achieve and (b) high stakes testing has changed the nature of student-principal interactions. Principals disagreed (median value of 2) that students' learning styles are accounted for in high stakes testing.

1.7.6.1 Table 6: Percentage of Responses and Descriptive Statistics by Item for Beliefs about Students

Item		1[a]	2	3	4	5	Mdn	M	SD
42	High stakes testing contributes to the number of students that drop out of school.	2	14	26	45	13	4.00	3.52	0.96
43	Students' learning styles are accounted for in high stakes testing.	37	51	8	3	1	2.00	1.79	0.77
44	High stakes testing induces anxiety in students.	3	5	3	51	39	4.00	4.19	0.90
45	High stakes testing motivates students to achieve.	8	39	31	21	0	3.00	2.66	0.92
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46	The pressure of high stakes testing may result in students cheating to improve scores.	1	13	25	53	8	4.00	3.52	0.86
47	Principals are concerned about the impact of high stakes testing on minority students.	1	5	9	53	33	4.00	4.13	0.80
48	High stakes testing has changed the nature of student-principal interactions.	6	25	25	35	10	3.00	3.17	1.09

Table 1.6

Note.[a] 1 (*Strongly Disagree*), 2 (*Disagree*), 3 (*Neither Agree nor Disagree*), 4 (*Agree*), and 5 (*Strongly Agree*).

1.8 Inferential Statistical Analyses

To answer research questions about differences in principals' responses by educational level, school configuration, gender, and race or ethnicity two ANOVAs and two independent means t tests for were conducted on principals' total scores (M = 128.00, SD = 18.52) on the instrument. The principals' total scores on the instrument were symmetric (skewness = 0.20) about the mean, but the scores were peaked (kurtosis

= 2.26). Data transformations were attempted, but had no effect on the distribution nor had an effect on the interpretation of the analyses so the results are presented for the untransformed data. Other statistical assumptions for the statistical procedures were met. An analysis of variance revealed that there was no significant difference on the total score by the principal's educational level, $F(2,258) = 0.08$, $p = .92$ or by school configuration; $F(2,247) = 0.84$, $p = .43$. In addition, an independent means t test revealed that there was no significant difference by gender, $t(259) = -0.50$, $p = .62$. In summary, regardless of the principal's educational level, school configuration, or gender there was no significant difference on their total score.

Since the race or ethnicity of responding principals was primarily African American and White, an independent means t test was conducted. The independent means t test revealed that there was a significant difference on the total score by race or ethnicity, $t(256) = 3.10$, $p = .0029$. African American principals responded (n = 58, M = 134.33, SD = 16.32) more positively than White principals (n = 200, M = 126.13, SD = 18.76) on *ThePrincipal's High Stakes Testing Survey*. Further, Cohen's effect size value ($d = 0.45$) suggested a moderate practical significance. African American principals responded 0.45 standard deviations higher than White principals to items on the instrument.

1.9 Conclusion

A stratified random sample of Georgia principals responded to *ThePrincipal's High Stakes Testing Survey*. Georgia principals' responses to the high stakes testing survey did not differ significantly by gender, educational level, or school configuration. On the other hand, there was a significant difference by race or ethnicity. African American principals responded more positively than White principals to items on the high stakes testing survey.

There are a few findings that are important to note. Overall, Georgia principals reported that high stakes testing has increased their awareness of accountability issues. Principals agreed that high stakes testing resulted in principals paying more attention to the school's curriculum and that students' scores on a high stakes test provided feedback to improve the curriculum. In addition, principals agreed that high stakes testing has made principals more accountable for student performance. Principals disagreed that students' scores on a high stakes test are an indicator of principal effectiveness and principals took a neutral position on whether student performance on a high stakes test was directly related to the quality of a principal's instructional leadership.

The Georgia principals' neutral position on student performance and the quality of a principal's instructional leadership may be related to the findings of another study. Lyons and Algozzine (2006) reported that North Carolina principals indicated that their accountability program had a differential impact on their instructional leadership. The accountability program increased their instructional leadership on monitoring of student achievement and aligning the school's curriculum, and assigning of teachers to subjects or classes, whereas instructional leadership in the areas of obtaining needed resources, evaluating teachers, and dealing with other's stress were unaffected by the accountability program. It is possible that Georgia principals took this neutral position due to this differential impact.

Principals reported that their stress level increased due to their district supervisor's pressure, effort to maintain or to improve the school's accountability grade, public advertisement of the accountability grade, and due to competition between principals. On the other hand, principals increased teacher stress to improve test scores and teachers increased student stress and anxiety to improve test scores. While principals' stress has increased, principals reported that high stakes testing has increased cooperation between educators. Principals reported that high stakes testing increased principal and teacher cooperation and it was the perception of the principals that cooperation among teachers increased as well.

Principals reported that students' scores on a high stakes test motivates teachers to improve the teaching and learning process and that students' scores provide feedback to teachers to improve teaching. However, principals took a neutral position on whether high stakes testing actually led to better teaching and whether the quality of a teacher's instruction is directly related to student performance. Principals disagreed that students' scores on a high stakes test are a valid measure of teaching ability.

Finally, principals took the neutral position on whether high stakes testing motivates students to achieve.

However, principals reported that students might cheat to improve their test scores and that high stakes testing contributed to students dropping out of school.

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CHAPTER 1. BROCKMEIER, L., LEECH, D., PATE, J., & GIBSON, N. (APRIL 2011). PRINCIPALS' VIEWS ABOUT THE IMPACT OF HIGH STAKES TESTING

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Chapter 2

Klinger, A., & Wronkovich, M. (April 2011). Replicating Administrative Decision-Making Using Simulation-Based Instructional Technology[1]

2.1 Education Leadership Review, Volume 12, Number 1 (April 2011)

2.2 Authors

Amy L. Klinger, Ashland University
Michael Wronkcovich, Ashland University

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[1] This content is available online at <http://cnx.org/content/m37191/1.1/>.

[2] http://www.ncpeapublications.org

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CHAPTER 2. KLINGER, A., & WRONKOVICH, M. (APRIL 2011).
REPLICATING ADMINISTRATIVE DECISION-MAKING USING
SIMULATION-BASED INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY

2.3 Introduction

The decision making process of educational administrators consists of a number of elements unique to the profession. Building or district level school administrators are almost continually confronted with a wide variety of both immediate and postpone-able decisions as the very core of their daily work. These decisions range from the simple ("Should we have a fire drill today?") to the complex ("Should this student be expelled?") but have a number of factors in common.

Decisions in educational administration consist of competing elements or constituencies – what the student wants to happen is very different from what the teacher wants to occur – and a broad base of diverse stakeholders. Members of the school community, including staff, students, parents, administrators, and board members, may often have conflicting priorities and interests that are conveyed to the administrator making the decision.

Educational decisions are often made on the fly, without the luxury of time for reflection, discussion, or distance. Because of the myriad of decisions occurring daily, it is often difficult for administrators to predict which decisions may have unexpected and far-reaching consequences despite their seeming innocuous nature.

By contrast, the preparation of educational administrators through graduate education can be the antithesis of the frantic pace of the school leader. Courses and class experiences are largely theoretical and discussion-based. Pre-service administrative students read, reflect, discuss, and are given the "right answers" for important administrative concepts. Class experiences are safe and relatively stress free – in many cases one needs only to sit through the class and complete the assignments. Students are not subjected to the high stakes, demanding elements of decision-making that can make or break an administrative career. As a result, a newly licensed school administrator may find himself in a "baptism by fire" when confronted with the harsh demands, realities, and consequences of real time administrative decisions.

Instructors and institutions responsible for preparing aspiring school administrators have a moral duty to use the most effective tools available to bridge the gap between classroom theory and in-the-field practice. Administrative internships, field visits, practitioner guest speakers and the like can provide exposure to the daily work of administration. As effective as case studies, hypothetical discussions, and role-playing activities might be as instructional tools, they do not accurately replicate the complex and changeable political, social, and emotional dynamics that exist in the daily work of school administrators. The use of digital technology, such as the simulation discussed in this paper, can provide a realistic, cost effective means to replicate the spontaneous, unpredictable nature of administration within the supportive environment of the classroom.

2.4 The Effectiveness of Simulation Learning

Education simulations are "sequential decision-making classroom events in which students fulfill assigned roles to manage discipline-specific tasks within an environment that models reality." (Hertel & Millis, 2002, p. 15). Simulations differ from educational games in that they typically are more realistic and spontaneous. Games require fixed rules and usually revolve around some combination of luck and knowledge, whereas the chance of success is not increased by luck or chance in simulations. Education simulations offer a greater complexity that allows participants to acquire specific knowledge that can be applied in more diverse situations (Hertel & Millis, 2002).

Research on learning and motivation has long discussed the effectiveness of simulation experiences as a means to "weave substance-specific information into real-life problems in meaningful ways…" (Hertel & Millis, 2002, p. 1). International studies suggest that participation in a simulation resulted in a greater depth of learning as students understood more, produced more complex, insightful written work, and retained the concepts taught longer than those students given the same content in a more superficial, traditional approach (*Deep Learning, Surface Learning*, 1993).

Two significant factors contribute to the increased achievement of simulation participants: motivation and depth of learning. Finkel discusses the motivations inherent in inquiry-based learning, such as simulations, as these activities require inquiry into a problem and allow for shared leadership and control between the instructor and student (2000). Simulations by their very nature contain elements that increase motivation

for learning including active participation, relevance to the real world, and at least initially, the challenge of the simulation activity itself (Hertil & Millis, 2002).

As a result of the highly motivational aspects of simulations, deep learning is achieved. Rhem identifies four key components of deep learning, which are readily apparent in the use of educational simulations:

1. Motivation increases with the level of choice and control given to participants in simulations.
2. Learner activity and engagement is high as the simulation is an active process.
3. Collaboration with peers and instructor creates a high level of interaction both during and after the simulation experience.
4. As the simulation progresses, the learner is immersed in important concepts that are reinforced as connections are made to prior experience and existing knowledge (1995).

Deeper learning is also achieved as the simulation activates motivation prior to transmitting concepts and participants are actively engaged as they receive the information. Individualized instruction at an appropriate pace for the learner, and prompt feedback on performance also enhances the depth of the learning experience in a simulation (Greenblat, 1981).

This paper discusses the use of simulations with adult learners in the education profession. Once again, simulation learning provides significant advantages. Simulation learning is particularly well suited to adult learners as it incorporates two significant qualities of older students – the need for autonomy of direction during instruction and the use of personal experience as a learning resource (Hertil & Millis, 2002). Actual and potential educational administrators benefit from the acquisition of useable knowledge during the simulation that can be transferred and applied to other situations. The diverse content and critical knowledge of educational leadership is more effectively integrated in simulation experiences. Through their participation in simulations based in educational administration concepts, the gap between the theories and actual practices of a profession are bridged (Hertil & Millis, 2002). Students of educational administration enter into a simulation experience not to "act" like a principal, but to actually "be" one.

2.5 The Educational Administration Simulation Project

Ashland University's Educational Administration Simulation Project began with the desire to develop an engaging, yet realistic decision-making experience for students that vividly simulated the demands and the often far-reaching consequences of administrative decisions.

Simulation learning experiences can take many potential forms. Conversation simulations occur within a simulated environment (*Types of social simulations*, n.d.) and focus on the participants' interactions with other individuals in the environment, either real people or actors being filmed, or digital avatars that function in the same capacity. This type of simulation contains multiple options, allowing participants to experience and reflect on nature, quality, and outcome of their interactions.

Mentor simulations allow participants to interact with individuals acting in a mentor, or expert capacity, and typically take the form of simulated question and answer sessions. Participants have the opportunity to listen to and gather information from knowledgeable experts to whom they would not typically have access (*Types of social simulations*, n.d.). Expert simulations are used as assessments of participant's skills or knowledge. A character from within the simulation, either actual or virtual, poses questions to the participant, scores the response, and provides feedback to maximize the participant's learning (*Types of social simulations*, n.d.).

Ashland University's simulation project incorporated the complex interactions of a conversation simulation and created a series of "sub-conversations" within the simulation activity. An additional strength of simulation learning is the ability to present events, decisions, and outcomes at an accelerated speed, and compress or eliminate irrelevant details (Hertil & Millis, 2002). This allowed the simulation created to encompass a complex series of events that developed over time.

While simulation-based learning is not a new instructional tool, the use of digital technology to create a personalized, immersive experience is an exciting new application to enhance student learning. Through

their participation in an Educational Administration Simulation Project, graduate students became the administrator and were presented with information and complex situations through the use of interactive video. Even more significantly, with their first decision students began an administrative journey whose outcomes and consequences were directly related to the individual decisions that preceded it.

2.6 Developing the Simulation

After evaluating numerous software options, the researchers decided to use *SimWriter* by NexLearn, LLC of Wichita, Kansas. *SimWriter* is "Flash-based" software that allows the designer to concentrate on the simulation rather than complex programming code. Complete simulation structures can be quickly mapped and examined prior to "dropping in" the various media, which allows rapid development of project ideas like the one used in this research project.

The software compiles and builds the entire project in one of three formats: Executable (.exe), Browser (.html), and Flash (.swf), and allows for testing from any point in the simulation on the fly and in any of the three formats. *SimWriter* exports scoring information to a learning management system used for online based learning in three formats – SCORM 1.2, SCORM 2004, and AICC, which conformed institutional needs. The software includes a "Pack and Send" feature that zips the entire project and attaches it to an email for external review making for easier collaboration on projects, and uses a media manager to automatically link files.

At the institutional level, the researchers were able to "drop" the simulation into the university's learning management system (Angel) with ease. *SimWriter* creates simulations which merge with this system quickly and easily by converting the projects into a SCORM 1.2 package. Another compelling feature of the software is the ability to create simulations as text only or enhanced with audio or video elements, allowing for the creation of simulations for specific learning goals using a wide range of technical capabilities.

The researchers created the first simulation for testing during the 2008-2009 school year. The initial step was to create the case study situation and the relevant demographic, political, and social factors that impacted the decisions to be made. It was important that the "story line" of the simulation have complex and diverse dimensions that lent themselves to the many possible outcomes required in the virtual experience. The case needed to be both realistic and believable, yet have many subtle nuances through which an individual's unique perspectives could be filtered. As a starting point, the researchers examined many of the cases presented in *Case Studies on Educational Administration* by Dr. Theodore Kowalski (2008). By examining Dr. Kowalski's cases both individually and collectively, the researchers were able to establish a foundation from which to build the resulting simulation.

The simulation scenario focused on decision-making at the building level for school administrators and presented participants with conflicting parties and viewpoints, which had to be reconciled in some manner to reach a satisfactory outcome. The simulation was designed to be gender, racially, and ethnically neutral - the participant's role as principal was never assigned any gender, race, or ethnicity. This ensured that participants made decisions as "themselves", not as a pre-conceived person or role.

When participants launched the simulation from the link provided, they were presented with a narrator who became the common thread running through the simulation. The narrator began by setting the stage with an introduction to the school including demographics and background, and assigned the participants the role of principal. The participants then interacted with video segments where they were directly confronted and addressed by various stakeholders who were upset about a controversial event scheduled at the school. As principal, the participants were required to make an initial decision as to whether to hold the event or cancel it, which triggered the path of the rest of the simulation, and began a series of "ripple-effect" results that required additional decision-making, as often happens in the real world of school administration.

The researchers created a complex series of paths that fanned out from the participant's original decision. These individual plot lines illustrated the consequence or outcome that resulted from the decision. As in real life, unpredictable or unforeseen elements were introduced. By the time the content of the simulation was completed, participants had presented with four or five possible decision-making points comprising more than 25 potential outcomes.

As participants viewed each segment, additional factors and consequences were unveiled allowing the participants to make informed decisions at each decision point. Participants had to make determinations about speaking with the media, disciplining students, meeting with parents, considering the demands of agenda-driven groups, and working collaboratively with other administrators in a politicized situation, to name just a few.

When participants made choices that lead to results that did not improve the chances for reconciliation, the outcomes were less desirable. By the end of the simulation activity, the participants ended up along a continuum of outcomes that ranged from the satisfactory to the catastrophic. After completing the simulation, the participants had an opportunity to reflect on the choices made in relation to their outcome. If the outcome was undesirable, the participant was encouraged to review their steps and reflect on how in an actual decision making situation they could optimize their chances for a satisfactory reconciliation. After completing the study answer document, participants were able to go back through the simulation, making different choices in an effort to recreate a more desirable outcome. This allowed participants to apply the lessons learned to the real world of educational decision-making.

Once the specific content and decision points of the simulation were determined, technical production work began. Individuals ranging from lawyers to superintendents to student actors were used to create video dramatizations of the various confrontations and situations that arose as the case unfolded. A narrator was used throughout the simulation to provide continuity and as a vehicle to convey demographic, procedural, and background information to the participants. Every scene and situation in the simulation was deliberately kept gender, racially, and ethnically neutral so that participants would make decisions as themselves throughout the experience. All interactions with the simulation were first person, face-to-face interactions, with the participant being directly addressed by those in the dramatizations.

Post-production work was primarily technically oriented, as video footage was edited to develop the exposition of the scene, but at the same time to keep the total length of the simulation manageable. Each video clip was "deposited" into the current position in the simulation plan and links between the various paths were established. Additional visual details such as captions, still photos, and text boxes were developed to assist in the seamless flow of the story line. After the simulation production was completed, testing began. Each potential decision point and simulation path was validated to make sure that it linked with the appropriate outcomes.

2.7 The Research Study

The research component of the project began with the development of answer documents intended to capture demographic information about respondents, quantitative data about their decision choices, qualitative information about why they chose as they did, and personal feedback about the simulation itself and the simulation experience. The first portion of the study, outlined in this paper, dealt with respondents' reactions to the simulation experience and outcomes. A subsequent quantitative study will contrast the actual decision-making process of experienced and aspiring administrators.

2.7.1 Research Questions

In this initial study on the use of simulations to replicate administrative decision-making, several research questions were posed:

1. How did participants view the content and concepts of this particular simulation? In this case, did participants feel that the simulation authentically replicated actual administrative work?
2. How did participants view the simulation experience as an instructional tool regardless of the content of the specific scenario?

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2.7.2 The Study

The research study examined two distinct groups during the 2009-2010 school year. The first research group consisted of members of the Ashland Leadership Academy Seminar (ALAS). The participants in ALAS were current school leaders, holding positions from building principal to superintendent. These experienced administrators completed demographic information related to their age, ethnicity, gender, level of experience, and current administrative position. They individually completed the simulation and recorded their responses and rationale at each key decision point, their overall reactions to the decisions made, and their perceptions of the simulation experience itself.

The second research group consisted of graduate students enrolled in administrative preparation programs in the Educational Administration department at Ashland University. Nearly all were teachers with undergraduate degrees in education. The simulation was administered in exactly the same manner as the experienced administrators from ALAS.

The simulation introduction and instructions were captured on digital video and imbedded into the administration of the study so that every participant received exactly the same explanation directly from the researchers in the same fashion. Participants were given an online link to the simulation and simply needed to click on the appropriate icon to begin the simulation. Completed response documents were anonymously mailed to the researchers for data compilation.

The last section of the response questionnaire gathered two pieces of qualitative information from respondents that were used in the study findings:

1. The participants' reactions to and reflections on the decisions they made as a result of moving through the simulation.
2. The participants' judgments on the software, simulation production, and the overall experience of participating in this type of virtual decision making.

2.7.3 Study Population

The study population consisted of 111 experienced and pre-service administrators (66 graduate students and 45 practicing administrators). Based on data reported by respondents in the preliminary sections, the graduate student sample consisted of 28 males and 38 females with an average age of 34 years. As a whole the graduate student group reported an average of 8.98 years of teaching experience with individuals ranging from no experience to 33 years of experience. The experienced administrators sample consisted of 27 males and 18 females with an average age of 50 years. The group reported an average of 15.7 years of administrative experience.

The demographics of both study groups combined indicates an almost even gender distribution (55 males, 56 females), and a fairly wide distribution of ages from 24 on up. Both groups report adequate exposure to educational experiences, although not necessarily administrative experiences.

2.8 Findings

After participating in the simulation, participants were asked to reflect on the decisions they made as a result of completing the simulation and on the simulation experience itself.

2.8.1 The Simulation Decisions

Both graduate students and experienced administrators alike reported similar feelings about the decisions they made throughout the simulation. A vast majority of participants felt that the decisions they were forced to make were realistic and effectively simulated the actual conditions of educational administration:

2.8.1.1

"The situation was something that could happen at any high school – very realistic!

"The simulation provided an administrative situation (scenario) that has a high probability of occurring.
"

"The situation was definitely a tough one that was very feasible. That could definitely happen in any school system. You (as an administrator) can't please everyone, all of the time!!"

Pre-service and experienced administrators alike voiced frustration with the forced nature of the initial choice in the case, commenting that they would not have allowed the scheduling of the controversial assembly that was the catalyst for the remainder of the simulation:

2.8.1.2

"I would have preferred to make the initial decision for or against the assembly rather than have to work from someone's poor and ill-informed decision."

"I would not have had the assembly in the first place. I wish that would have been an option."

"*My problem with the simulation is that I would have never okayed an offensive group in the first place, so it would have never gone public….I would have researched the group and then said 'No'….. I would have also let my superintendent know what is going on immediately, which was not an option for me.*"

Experienced administrators tended to voice this concern less frequently, perhaps indicating their understanding of the sometimes arbitrary nature of situations thrust upon school leaders without their consent.

Some contrasts between the two study groups arose when examining the decisions made within the context of the simulation. Graduate students reflected much more on the nature of their decisions as they progressed through the simulation. This group felt that the decisions were difficult, often stressful to make:

2.8.1.3

"They were very difficult decisions. They made me do some thinking about what I thought would be best for the majority. I'm not sure my decisions were good ones in the end, as the superintendent reprimanded me! But I thought my decisions were best for the students."

"Very realistic! Tough, no win decisions."

"*I was a little overwhelmed. Every time I made a decision that I thought was going to be in the best interest of the students, another problem would arise. I felt that each decision got progressively more difficult to make… I was not completely thrilled with the eventual outcome, but making difficult decisions is administration.*"

"Many times you want more information or more choices, but in real life you are sometimes put in the same position of having too few choices."

The lack of comment on stress, unease, and uncertainty by the practicing administrators group indicates their familiarity with the conditions of leadership, but also speaks to the strength of the simulation in creating this important factor in decision making.

The graduate student group also frequently commented on their satisfaction with the decisions made in the simulation:

2.8.1.4

"I felt very confident in my decision. It was good to see how I could react in a situation like that when I become an administrator."

"I was comfortable with the resulting decisions because throughout the simulation I was backed by board policy. My final outcome would not win me any awards, but it would show that I stand by policy and maintain my position even in difficult decisions such as these."

"I made each decision with the good of the majority in mind, knowing that it was impossible to please everyone. I feel good about my decisions…"

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The graduate student group reflected not only on the decisions they made, but also on what they learned through their participation in the simulation:

2.8.1.5

"It really made me stop and think about what I would do if I were in this situation. I'm not sure my decision was a popular one and it may cause some tension amongst staff and students, but I liked the way the simulation made you think about your decision and then your next decision is based upon your first decision."

"I learned a valuable lesson with this activity and that is to remember to go through the proper chain of command. Also I will seek advice before making a final decision."

2.8.2 The Simulation Process

As was the case in their analysis of the simulation decisions, both study groups had a similar response to the simulation process itself. Respondents, regardless of their administrative experience, favorably discussed the realism afforded by the technology:

2.8.2.1

"*The simulation was very real. My feelings during the process were the same as if the actors were in my presence.*"

Responses about the process of participating in the simulation were overwhelmingly positive and supportive. While occasional technical suggestions were made, all participants labeled their participation in the simulation as "valuable", "realistic", and "educational".

Both study groups, most often through observations about the highly engaging nature of the activity itself, discussed the positive instructional applications of the simulation experience:

2.8.2.2

"I felt engaged throughout the simulation. The video and interactive nature was much more motivating than just reading a case study and responding. It provided immediate feedback on my decisions and reinforced my choice or forced me to question my decision. The experience was very thought provoking."

"*The product is a good catalyst for discussion that should lead to in depth research into things like board policies, community history, communication skills and the change process.*"

"*I thought the outcomes resulting from my decisions were realistic and thought provoking. This is an excellent training tool.*"

"This exercise was addictive. It was fascinating to find out what happened at every turn."

As in the responses about the decisions made discussed previously, the graduate student group also provided additional reflections on the simulation process, relating that it was more difficult, uncomfortable, and stressful than anticipated:

2.8.2.3

"I felt capable of making decisions with the information provided, but I felt this situation to be more stressful when real characters express their concerns through personal attack."

"Very hard decisions were thrown at me! It was uncomfortable, yet a teachable moment. At times I wanted to be able to press the back button on my browser to change my answer – I did not enjoy the consequences."

"I felt it was a lot more challenging than I had anticipated."

Perhaps most significantly, the graduate student respondents often discussed the manner in which the simulation provided them with new insights beyond what a typical classroom might offer.

2.8.2.4

"It's amazing how your decisions affect others. I felt like I was under extreme pressure. Just like in real life it is hard to know how people will respond to certain things."

"The situations really made me think about what I would do and the decisions made me realize that not everyone is going to react like I had thought."

"I felt very uncomfortable, but because the situation was not "real" there was some safety in the decision making process. However, I did not want to make a bad decision because my integrity was "on the line." Even though it was not real, it certainly carried the same emotional effect."

2.9 Summary

Clearly respondents in the study very positively perceived both the simulation product and the experience itself. Administrators with experience and those in-training found the virtual decision making exercise to be an effective replication of the type of administrative decisions encountered in today's schools. Additionally, both groups had high praise for the use of simulation participation as an effective instructional tool.

This positive reaction raises some interesting notions for further study. Did study participants find the simulation experience to be a positive one because of the strength of the simulation scenario and production value alone? In other words, would participants still view simulations as a highly effective learning experience regardless of their quality or content?

It is important to maintain the linkage between the two conclusions found in this study as we consider the need for high expectations in the construction of instructional simulations. Once upon a time, the notion of showing a video to a class was considered a "cutting edge" instructional approach, regardless of the nature or quality of the video. The content and scope of the simulation must always meet or exceed the inherent appeal of this new technology. While there is an initial appeal to participating in a simulation experience, the instructional nature of the simulation itself will be the final indicator of its effectiveness as a classroom tool.

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Chapter 3

Lindahl, R. (April 2011). School Leadership Structures in Alabama: Round and Round They Go; Where They Will Land, No One Knows[1]

3.1 Education Leadership Review, Volume 12, Number 1 (April 2011)

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3.2 Author

Ronald Lindahl, Alabama State University

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CHAPTER 3. LINDAHL, R. (APRIL 2011). SCHOOL LEADERSHIP STRUCTURES IN ALABAMA: ROUND AND ROUND THEY GO; WHERE THEY WILL LAND, NO ONE KNOWS

3.3 Introduction

The hackneyed adage, "If Rip Van Winkle woke up today and went to school, he'd feel right at home," continues to have considerable face validity, particularly in regard to the leadership structures of schools. The administrative structure of schools has traditionally been hierarchical and bureaucratic. It follows a scientific management (Taylor, 1916) approach to the separation of administrators' and teachers' responsibilities, with the administrator responsible for most major decisions and the teachers responsible for what Taylor referred to as the *work*.

However, in Alabama, various efforts have recently been implemented to alter this structure somewhat, calling for a dissolution of some of the lines between teachers and administrators and for the sharing of leadership in the school. This article examines those efforts against the backdrop of the professional knowledge base on shared leadership in schools.

3.4 An Overview of the Knowledge Base on Shared Leadership in Schools

The knowledge base on school leadership is primarily based on the heroic model of leadership. Many authorities have determined that the effectiveness of the principal is a key, if not *the* key, factor in a school's performance (Lezotte, 1991; Carter, 2001; Cawelti, 1999; Hallinger & Heck, 2010; Harris, 2005). Recent studies in Alabama's public schools (Carter, Lee, & Sweatt, 2009; Lindahl, 2010; Printy, 2010; Schargel, Thacker, & Bell, 2007) confirm the key role the principal plays in the academic achievement of schools. Leithwood and Jantzi (1999, 2000) found that principals' transformational leadership had some effects on school conditions, which, in turn, influence student performance. However, there is a dearth of dynamic, successful principals. As Schargel et al. pointed out, "modest pay, long hours, uneven resources, problematic authority" (p. 6) and increased public accountability make the heroic, hierarchical model of the principalship unattractive to many fine educators. Yukl and Lepsinger (2008) also decried the complexity of the demands on principals.

One potential alternative to the heroic model of the principalship is teacher leadership. However, there is little evidence that teacher leadership has a pronounced influence on student performance. For example, Ogawa and Hart (1985) found that teacher leadership accounted for only 2% to 8% of the variation in student achievement. However, very recent research by Hallinger and Heck (2010) and Printy (2010) has concluded that collaborative school leadership can positively, indirectly impact student achievement.

Recently, considerable attention has been shown in the knowledge base to various forms of shared leadership. This is not a new concept. Follett introduced it in 1940, in her writings on the *Law of the Situation*. However, its acceptance in education has been limited. Sarason (1996) wrote that the failure of school reform was predictable because of the power relationships [hierarchical principal structure] that exist in schools.

Spillane (2006) defined shared leadership as occurring when "organizational members influence the motivation, knowledge, affect, or practices of other organizational members" (p. 11) in activities tied to the core mission of the organization. Pearce and Conger (2003) noted that it is not tied to formal authority or expertise, but rather to the individual's capacity to influence peers and to the organization's specific needs at the moment. Fletcher and Kaufer (2003) explained that it involves a shift from individual achievement to focus on collective achievement, shared responsibility, and teamwork. Harris (2005) emphasized the development of a common culture. Senge (1990, 2000) used the term *learning organization* to describe his model of shared leadership. Crowther, Kaagan, Ferguson, and Hann (2002) termed it *parallel leadership*, whereas Raelin (2003) referred to it as *leaderful practice* and Yukl and Lepsinger (2008) used the term *connected leadership*.

Shared leadership can take many forms. Schwadel (1991) described co-Chief Executive Officers. Katzenbach (1998) and Ostroff (1999) discussed small groups of executives. Yukl (1998) talked of organizational structures with no formal, hierarchical leader. Lambert (2003) described study groups in Alberta, Canada, Kansas City, Kansas, Clayton, Missouri, and San Leandro, California. Lambert also described research teams in Manitoba, Canada, vertical learning communities and the vision team in Kansas City, Kansas, and

the ZCI process and Circle of Leaders in Calgary, Canada. Park and Datnow's (2009) study concluded that school systems centralize some decisions while de-centralizing others and that the configuration of teacher leadership and the types of responsibilities that teachers assume vary greatly by site.

The most recent additions to the knowledge base on shared leadership have focused on professional learning communities (DuFour, Eaker, & DuFour, 2005; Giles & Hargreaves, 2006; Gregory & Kuznich (2007); Harris & Muijs, 2005; Rasberry, with Mahajan, 2008; Sparks, 2005). York-Barr and Duke (2004) described these as schools in which there is active involvement by individuals at all levels of the organization. This involvement may be at the instructional, professional, or organizational level, as long as those involved grow and learn (p. 255). They may be formal or informal, but they should all involve collaborative problem solving and sharing of knowledge (Printy, 2008, p. 189). This should include sharing best practice, building a positive school culture, improving student learning, taking collective responsibility, using data wisely, providing shared leadership, effecting planned change, and creating supportive structures (Wells & Feun, 2007). The teams must be open to critical thinking, reflective dialogue, self-examination, and addressing student learning (Rasberry, with Mahajan, 2008, p. 2).

Spillane (2006) provided a useful differentiation between *shared leadership* and *distributed leadership*, contending that shared leadership involves a formal leader plus other leaders, whereas distributed leadership is about leadership practice, not roles, about interactions, not heroes (p. 4). Although this semantic differentiation is not universally adhered to in the knowledge base, it is very helpful when examining the emerging leadership structure efforts in Alabama's schools.

3.5 An Overview of Some of the Shared Leadership Initiatives in Alabama's Schools

In 2005, the Alabama Department of Education designed and implemented the Teacher Leader Network, which piloted a three-year program of a formal teacher leader in each of the 66 Alabama schools that did not make Adequate Yearly Progress in 2004 (Alabama Department of Education, 2010a). This was accompanied by other State initiatives, such as the *Accountability Roundtable* and *State Support Teams* for schools failing to make Adequate Yearly Progress, and the Alabama Math, Science, and Technology Initiative (AMSTI), Alabama Reading Initiative (ARI), and the Alabama Reading First Initiative (ARFI), all of which moved selected teachers into leadership roles in the school, e.g., coaches, specialists, or faculty facilitators (Alabama Department of Education, 2010b).

In 2008, the Alabama Department of Education, through the Governor's Commission on Quality Teaching (GCQT) (2008), proposed new directions in teacher leadership through the creation of *Professional Pathways* for Alabama Teachers. These *Pathways* proposed to alter the teacher certification levels to provide teachers with greater opportunities to assume broader roles in instructional improvement, without having to leave the classroom full-time or to become an administrator. With experience, proven performance, and training, teachers would progress from *apprentice teacher* to *classroom teacher* to *professional teacher*. At the professional teacher level, they would assume such leadership roles as leading teams of colleagues, serving as a school improvement committee chair, cooperating teacher, or department or grade level chairperson. Teachers desiring to assume greater leadership roles could pursue training and certification as a *master teacher* or *learning designer*. The former role would focus on supporting the learning of peers (e.g., mentor or demonstration teacher). Teachers attaining the *learning designer* certification might serve as specialists in assessment, data analysis, school improvement, or technology integration. Both of these groups of teachers would remain in their classrooms part-time, but would receive release time to exercise these additional roles (GCQT, 2008). The State Department of Education also created a statewide mentoring program, in which recommended, experienced teachers provide one-on-one mentoring for new teachers.

Parallel to these efforts, in July, 2005, the Alabama State Board of Education adopted new *Standards for Instructional Leaders* (Alabama Department of Education, 2006). The Governor's Congress on School Leadership (Alabama Department of Education, 2005) proposed that teachers holding Instructional Leader certification not receive a salary increase for that certification until they actually assume an administrative

position. Furthermore, it developed far more rigorous program standards for those master's degree programs preparing Instructional Leaders. As thousands of teachers in Alabama had previously completed their master's degrees in such programs with no intention of moving into an administrative position, these new directions reduced the enrollment in these programs. In an effort to provide prospective teachers with programs more related to their roles, the Governor's Congress on School Leadership proposed that teachers earn master's degrees in their content areas and that new Teacher Leadership programs be developed at the post-master's level. On November 25, 2009, State Superintendent of Education Joseph Morton (personal communication) released drafts of the new program approval standards for Class AA Teacher Leadership programs, with implementation intended for spring, 2010. This certification is aimed at classroom teachers who have successful teaching experience and content expertise who want to remain in the classroom, but who also want to be better prepared to assume leadership (not as administrators) roles in their schools.

3.6 An Analysis of Alabama's School Leadership Structure Initiatives

Clearly, the hierarchical, bureaucratic structure of leadership is firmly entrenched in Alabama's schools. Such structures strongly resist change (Muijs & Harris, 2003; Murphy, 2005; Murphy, Smylie, Mayrowiz, & Louis, 2009). Not only must the structures be changed, but the *culture* of the school must also be changed; strong cultures strongly resist change (Allen, 1985; Deal, 1985; Harris, 2002; Lindahl, 2006; Wilkins & Patterson, 1985).

Those initiatives which focus on empowering a small number of teacher leaders, which Spillane (2006) referred to as shared leadership, call for less structural and cultural change than do the initiatives involving more widespread teacher leadership, which Spillane dubbed distributed leadership. Consequently, implementing the Alabama Teacher Leader Network program, which designated one formal teacher leader per pilot school, or programs such as the Accountability Roundtable, AMSTI, ARI, ARFI, and Teacher Mentoring program, all of which called for the designation of select teachers as coaches or mentors, should be relatively easy to implement. They call for a principal to share relatively little authority with one or two additional individuals in the school. Their focus is generally limited to a specific subject area. Release time, training, and additional compensation are provided to the new teacher leaders to perform their new duties. The remainder of the faculty are not called upon to alter their roles and can readily see the rather limited parameters of these new teacher leaders' authority and responsibility, thus reducing resistance to the changes. However, this empowerment of a few teachers does relatively little to change the hierarchical structure and culture of school leadership. Although it may reap benefits and may prove to be a solid modification, it represents a relatively minor change in the status quo.

On the other hand, the Alabama *Pathways* initiative and the new teacher leader certification have the potential, over time, to change the school leadership structure to one of more distributed leadership. It is conceivable that through these initiatives, large numbers of teachers may prepare themselves as general teacher leaders, not for a specific role, such as a math or reading coach. As a critical mass is reached in schools of teachers prepared and disposed to exercise teacher leadership, far greater structural and cultural changes would be required, possibly leading to professional learning communities. Although it is feasible to provide the necessary release time (Muijs & Harris, 2003; York-Barr & Duke, 2004), continuous staff development (Muijs & Harris, 2003, 2007;), and additional resources (Murphy, 2005) and compensation to a few individuals, providing this to larger numbers of teacher leaders is highly problematic.

The principal's role would need to undergo major changes (Murphy et al., 2009; Silins & Mulford, 2004; Silins, Mulford, & Zarins, 2002). Alabama's current Standards for Instructional Leaders call for principals to "lead and motivate staff," "work with staff and others to establish and accomplish goals," "use a variety of problem-solving techniques and decision-making skills to resolve problems," and "delegate tasks clearly and appropriately" (Alabama Department of Education, 2006, p. 25). All of these suggest top-down, hierarchical uses of authority. With more distributed leadership, the role of principal shifts to such tasks as to: "develop a shared vision based on community values; organize, focus, and sustain the conversations about teaching and learning; insist that student learning is at the center of the conversation; and protect and interpret community values, assuring a focus on and congruence with teaching and learning approaches" (Lambert,

2003, pp. 47-48). This is a considerable shift in approach, role, and skills.

Teachers' roles, and their relationships with their peers would need to undergo the most radical changes in most schools, and this would mean there would be considerable resistance to large-scale distributed leadership, or professional learning communities. Fitzgerald and Gunter (2008) questioned whether this is really exploitation of teachers for additional duties, hindering their primary role – teaching. Alabama's very powerful teacher organization, the Alabama Education Association, would likely resist major changes in teachers' roles. Cultural norms among teachers such as privacy, egalitarianism, civility, and not taking time away from the classroom permeate schools (Murphy et al., 2009). Faculty are not generally open to inspection by their peers and modification of their teaching practices (Printy, 2008). Involving more people in decisions will require more time and will make it harder to achieve consensus (Landeau, Van Dorn, & Freely, 2009).

However, if these difficulties can be overcome, the distributed model of professional learning communities offers promise for improving student performance (Gregory & Kuznich, 2007; Rasberry, with Mahajan, 2008). Recognition of this is beginning in Alabama. A study of high performing schools serving low income populations (Schargel et al., 2007) concluded that principals in these schools, "Empower others to make significant decisions...nurture teacher involvement and engender teacher leadership," and obtain "comprehensive input and involvement in the decision-making processes" (p. 8). In these schools, teachers listen to each other, are involved in making decisions, build collaboration, and support others in teaching and learning. In an unpublished study on high and low-performing elementary, middle, and junior high schools in Alabama, Lindahl found that the teachers in higher performing schools reported a significantly higher presence of the qualities of distributed leadership than did the teachers in lower performing schools. In their 2009 study of rural schools, Carter et al. studied high performing schools, most of which served low income populations. They found that *family* and *team* were often used to describe faculty relationships in those schools (p. 17).

Finally, the newly proposed *Standards for Class AA Instructional Leader* programs (State Superintendent of Education, Dr. Joseph Morton, personal correspondence, November 25, 2009) state that "A core principle of Class AA Instructional Leader programs will be the development of shared leadership practices with all who have a stake in improving student achievement, especially parents and teachers" (*Rationale* section, para. 1). Whether this statement refers to shared leadership in its generic form or in the specific manner in which Spillane (2006) defined it remains to be seen. However, this principle does infer that at least *some* modification is needed to Alabama's school governance approaches and structures.

3.7 Conclusions

Alabama's public schools are in an early, experimental phase of questioning the traditional, hierarchical structure of school leadership. Preliminary efforts include provisions for shared leadership, in which selected teacher leaders are called upon to provide leadership for specific tasks. Other efforts are directed more at developing leadership capacity for distributed leadership, in which many, if not all, teachers in a school assume leadership roles in a fluid, emerging manner. It will take many years for most of these efforts to reach fruition, as the planning processes proceed to implementation and evaluation. These planning and implementation processes will be complicated by the traditional territoriality of the various organizations within the state that have vested interests in teacher leadership. For example, the powerful teacher organization, the Alabama Education Agency, will shape its political support and professional development offerings to its vision of how best to protect and serve teachers. The major administrator organization in the state, the Council for Leaders in Alabama Schools, will approach it from the principal and assistant principal perspective. The Alabama Department of Education and the various colleges and universities which prepare teachers, teacher leaders, and administrators, will each add their own perspectives. Historically, it has proven difficult to develop the collaboration necessary to have a single, unified vision and approach for initiatives of this importance and complexity. Careful evaluation will be needed to determine the extent to which either model, or both models, can be an effective complement to, or replacement for, the traditional structures. Even within the new models, the question must be answered, "Can both the shared and distributed models co-exist effectively? Should they?" Even after substantial evaluation, it will take many more years for the

most successful of these efforts to truly become institutionalized, if at all. Although, conceptually, these efforts at restructuring school governance hold promise, one reason why the hierarchical model has endured so long is that it has proven relatively effective and efficient over an extended period of time. Without substantial evidence to the contrary, as yet not available, the traditional model may still prove to be the best choice. During this period of experimentation, Alabama's school leadership structures will surely go "round and round." It is far too early to even guess where they will "land."

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CHAPTER 3. LINDAHL, R. (APRIL 2011). SCHOOL LEADERSHIP STRUCTURES IN ALABAMA: ROUND AND ROUND THEY GO; WHERE THEY WILL LAND, NO ONE KNOWS

Silins, H., & Mulford, B. (2004). Schools as learning organizations – Effects on teacher leadership and student outcomes. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement, 15*(3-4), 443-466.

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Chapter 4

Angelle, A., Wilson, N., & Mink, G. (April 2011). Building Bridges through School-University Partnerships[1]

4.1 Education Leadership Review, Volume 12, Number 1 (April 2011)

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4.2 Authors

Pamela S. Angelle, The University of Tennessee
   Nicole L. Wilson, The University of Tennessee
   Ginger T. Mink, The University of Tennessee

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[1]This content is available online at <http://cnx.org/content/m37195/1.1/>.
[2]http://www.ncpeapublications.org

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CHAPTER 4. ANGELLE, A., WILSON, N., & MINK, G. (APRIL 2011).
BUILDING BRIDGES THROUGH SCHOOL-UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIPS

4.3 Introduction

With heightened emphasis on school leadership and the call for greater accountability, leadership preparation programs must evolve to meet the needs of today's principals. Numerous indictments against educational administration programs have surfaced over the past decade(Levine, 2005) requiring a significant shift in the way we "do the business" of equipping school leaders with the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to effectively and efficiently run America's schools. This shift in the way we prepare school leaders calls for a multidisciplinary approach and partnerships with practicing principals working alongside university faculty. This instructional methodology can provide aspiring leaders a theory to practice grounding in every course.

This qualitative study examines a newly designed principal preparation program in the first year of its inception through interviews of principle players in the partnerships. Partnering with a large district, curriculum for the program was co-constructed by a team which included university professors and school district personnel. The curriculum was designed to specifically meet the needs of the school district. Each course is taught by multiple instructors, including the university professor, a school based practitioner partner, and an interdisciplinary university professor from outside of the College of Education. As the call for increased partnering of universities with school districts increases, examining this program through the lens of those who partnered may serve to inform other universities of the successes and challenges faced in these partnerships. The unique design of this university preparation program has been followed from the outset with a critical eye to adjust and improve the program as it begins. Thus, the objectives of the study were to evaluate the effectiveness of the initial months of the partnerships and address the following questions:

- What are the perceptions of the school district – university partners who collaborated in the design of the new leadership preparation program?
- What are the perceptions of the partner instructors of the first year of the leadership preparation program?
- What are the perceptions of the school district – university partners who participate as an advisory body to the educational leadership program?

Following a review of the literature on exemplary programs, we provide an overview of the program partnerships. We then examine the perceptions of the parties involved in the classroom experience and document findings from interviews of the educational leadership professors and the practitioner partners who co-taught the courses. Finally, we will present the perceptions of members of the Educational Leadership Steering Committee, a group of representatives from districts who have partnered with the university, serving as an advisory body to the program.

4.4 Review of the Literature

4.4.1 Conceptual Framework

This study is framed in the model of exemplary leadership preparation programs as documented in the work of Darling-Hammond, LaPointe, Meyerson, Orr and Cohen (2007). Studies of leadership preparation programs (Darling-Hammond, et al., 2007; Devita, Colvin, Darling-Hammond, & Haycock, 2007; Dilworth & Thomas, 2001) have consistently found similar components across exemplary leadership preparation programs. These components, if implemented with fidelity, led to outcomes which included principals who felt they were better prepared to lead instruction and garner support from all stakeholderss, were more positive about the work of a principal, had a greater intent to stay in the field of administration, and were better able to develop a school vision. Moreover, schools with principals who focused on instructional leadership found increased student achievement and greater job satisfaction in their teachers (Darling-Hammond, et al., 2007).

This study focused on two of the components of exemplary leadership programs; that is, university-school district partnerships and instruction from both university professors and school practitioners.

4.4.2 University-School District Partnerships

Goodlad (1993) in his early work with professional development schools and partnerships for teaching training, noted that school systems and universities profit from symbiotic relationships; that is, the "intimate living together of two dissimilar organisms in a mutually beneficial relationship" (p. 29). Gutierrez, Field, Simmons, and Basile (2007) refer to these benefits as "intellectual capital" (p.334). This resource is the expertise brought to the table by the core people in the partnership. Gutierrez, et al. call this the "heart of actualizing the potential of the partner school model" (p. 335).

Strong partnerships between the university and the school districts increase the likelihood of quality candidates for the university, opportunities for valuable internship experiences, and active, on-going conversations on the best way to marry research and practice (Darling-Hammond et al., 2007; Devita et al., 2007; Dilworth & Thomas, 2001; Schmidt-Davis et al., 2009). Darling-Hammond et al. found that university-school district collaboration at the beginning of leadership preparation ensured that support would continue to be provided once graduates became principals.

The relationship that is established between school districts and universities must be one of mutual respect and benefits. Goodlad (1998), as cited in Dyson (1999), noted that the purpose of school-university collaboration is to allow the strengths of both entities to benefit the whole while also allowing for the goals of each partner to be met. However, as the partnership is initiated, Goodlad (1993) suggested that lessons learned from professional development school endeavors should be heeded. Cultural differences in school systems and university systems are vastly different. Schools are more regimented in time, schedules, and space where universities have greater freedom in scheduling and time for research and investigating problems of interest. While universities approach problems from the perspective of inquiry and pondering, the approach of schools holds a more immediate need for action (Goodlad, 1998). Each side of the partnership should be aware of and sensitive to the perspectives from which the other will approach the partnership.

Kersch and Masztal (1998) cautioned that even without problems, the tasks of initiating a partnership will take more time and effort than anticipated. These researchers also note that change comes slowly, particularly for those who are being asked to change. An analysis of collaborations prompted Kersch and Mazstal to recommend a written commitment from the partners which should include a timeline, a list of responsibilities of each partner, and an evaluation. The written commitment must emanate from the shared vision of all partners, a vision founded on communication and compromise. Partnerships will rarely be sequential but evolving.

4.4.3 Instruction from both University Professors and School Practitioners

Instruction from both university faculty and practicing school and district level administrators provided aspiring leaders the theory-to-practice connection critical to understanding work in the field (Darling-Hammond, et al., 2007; Devita, et al., 2007). The big picture of theory with the application to schools provided students of leadership with improved problem solving skills.

The application of theory to the world of schools is critical to preparing aspiring leaders for the real work of principals. Quinn (2005) supported the creation of "a problem-based, real world program of instruction" to "encourage universities and principals to seek innovative approaches to the leadership curriculum" (p. 16). This can be accomplished with exemplary principals working with professors on syllabi, course activities, and formative assessments. Quinn further recommended on-site delivery of instruction to increase accessibility of practitioner partners and district personnel. Convenient access to the instructional site may motivate practitioners to participate in the instructional component of the partnership.

4.5 Background

The university in this study has entered into partnerships with 26 school districts, in the geographical area surrounding the university. These partnerships are formalized through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), signed by both the Dean of the College of Education and each district's Superintendent of Schools.

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This MOU spells out the responsibilities of the university and the school district, including membership on the Educational Leadership Program Steering Committee (SC). This committee includes one member from each partner school district and faculty representatives in the Educational Leadership and Policy Studies Department (ELPS). The SC: (1) is the partnership decision-making body; (2) establishes goals based on district-level data and needs; (3) develops a plan for collaboration and for ensuring successful implementation of the leadership preparation program; and (4) develops and plans for evaluation of the partnership.

Partnerships have also been developed through The Center for Educational Leadership (CEL), in which the Leadership Academy, the preparation program for aspiring leaders, is located.[3] The Leadership Academy includes, but is not limited to (1) Partnering with a local school district to tap aspiring leaders; (2) Coursework (leading to a masters or education specialist degree) taught by university professors in partnership with practicing professionals from surrounding school districts; (3) Innovative scheduling which allows for an immersed, extended (4 days per week) full time internship experience; and (4) The Capstone Project which includes presentation of an electronic portfolio and an action research project to university faculty and members of the school system central office.

The pathway, leading to administrative licensure, is a full-time cohort program designed to provide a deep and intensive principal preparation experience. To enrich the coursework, faculty from colleges beyond the College of Education will teach one module per course. Faculty from business administration, communication, social work and others bring a new perspective to the traditional education-centric coursework. Moreover, ELPS faculty will be assisted by practitioner partners. A primary focus of the principal preparation program involves strong collaborative relationships with school-based personnel. A cornerstone of this collaboration is the integration of practitioners who will function as co-instructors with university-based professors.

The third groups of partners, the practitioner partners, are district level administrators or building level principals who hold an expertise in the major content area of the course. The school-based practitioner is considered an "expert" in the content of the course in which he/she co-teaches. Experiential knowledge is primarily considered when establishing someone as an "expert." The practitioner works with the university professor in ongoing syllabus development and revision. This involves, among other activities, a careful review of the course syllabus focusing especially on content taught, assignments required, and evaluations of student performance. The practitioner functions in the role of a co-teacher, not a guest lecturer, in 3-4 classes during a given semester. The school-based practitioner works on the development of meaningful course assignments that are based in real-world school contexts.

4.6 Methodology

4.6.1 Study Participants

Qualitative data were collected through interviews. Principal participants in the partnerships were asked to volunteer for interviews. Ten practitioner partners were identified and all agreed to be interviewed while three identified school district leaders agreed to be interviewed. Six superintendents, or their representatives, agreed to be interviewed and five university professors volunteered for participation. This resulted in a final sample size of 24 participants. Interviews took place both face-to-face and via telephone. All interdisciplinary partners contacted for an interview were unable to participate. A description of site participants is found in Table 1.

The practitioner partners who were interviewed were those principals and/or district personnel who were identified as having expertise in the course content. These partners co-taught with professors. Respondents identified as district leaders were district level personnel who worked in the large urban district where the university is located. This group has a distinctive partnership with the university because the Leadership Academy initial cohort were all employees of this district. Thus, the support and feedback from this group was critical to the success of the partnership. The university professors were limited to faculty who taught in

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[3]Note: The university also offers a more traditional leadership preparation program for students from the surrounding 25 districts with which the university has partnered. This preparation program leads to principal licensure and an M.S. or Ed.S. degree.

the leadership preparation program. District superintendents, or their representatives, were limited to school system representatives who partnered with the university through formal memoranda of understanding and who were active in the Steering Committee, the advisory group to the leadership preparation program.

Interview Respondents

Participant	Current Position	Gender
Practitioner Partner 1	High School Principal	Male
Practitioner Partner 2	High School Principal	Male
Practitioner Partner 3	Assistant Superintendent	Male
Practitioner Partner 4	Retired Principal	Female
Practitioner Partner 5	Public Relations Supervisor	Female
Practitioner Partner 6	Retired Principal	Male
Practitioner Partner 7	Curriculum Supervisor	Female
Practitioner Partner 8	Human Resources Director	Female
Practitioner Partner 9	Elementary Supervisor	Female
Practitioner Partner 10	Middle School Supervisor	Female
District Leader 1	Director of Curriculum	Female
District Leader 2	Director of Human Resources	Female
District Leader 3	High School Supervisor	Male
Steering Committee 1	Superintendent	Male
Steering Committee 2	Superintendent	Female
Steering Committee 3	Assistant Superintendent	Male
Steering Committee 4	High School Principal	Male
Steering Committee 5	Superintendent	Male
Steering Committee 6	Superintendent	Male
University Professor 1	Tenure- Track Assistant Professor	Female
University Professor 2	Adjunct Professor	Female
University Professor 3	Non-Tenure Track Assistant Professor	Female
University Professor 4	Assistant Professor	Male
University Professor 5	Professor Emeritus	Male

Table 4.1

4.6.2 Data Analysis

An interview protocol was utilized for each of the four categories of partners who were interviewed. All interviews were semi-structured and varied in length from 15-25 minutes. Interviews were recorded and verbatim transcribed. Transcripts were entered into QDA Miner, a qualitative analysis software program. Two researchers independently coded the transcripts and compared coded transcripts. Three systematic iterations were completed to determine frequencies in the data.

Working independently, each researcher created codes based upon the responses of the participants. For example, a response from a participant of "the experience, the conversation, and the, you know, collaboration of those individuals was just...it was neat" (Practitioner Partner 2) was coded as "experience". A response of "the practitioner partner had updates from the field and provided information related to current trends and practices" (University Professor 2) was coded as "contribution to the course".

Summaries were generated from QDA Miner Software, which were analyzed for patterns and used for code mapping. Three iterations of coding, collaboration, and modifications reduced data to create categories for university and K-12 partnerships. Categories such as collaboration of teaching, perceptions and experience, and contribution to aspiring leaders were constructed. The researchers discussed commonalities and discrepancies from their interpretations in an effort to identify themes. Five themes emerged from the pattern variables and were used to establish the shared beliefs and principles of the practitioner partners, district leaders, and professors (see Table 2).

Code Mapping – Three Iterations of Analysis.

Third Iteration: Application to Data Set
1. What contributes to the relationship between theory and practice? 2. How does collaboration occur within the partnerships? 3. What is each participant's perception of his or her partnership with the university? 4. What challenges to universities and K-12 institutions face when partnering? 5. How does each type of instructor contribute to the education of aspiring leaders?

Second Iteration: Pattern Variables	
Theory to Practice; Collaboration of Teaching; Perceptions	Challenges with Partnerships; Contribution to Aspiring Leaders
First Iteration: Initial Codes/Surface Content Analysis	
Collaboration; Tasks; Experience; Supplemental; General Information; Perceptions; Initiation; Quality	Challenges; Recommendations; Status; Contribution to the course; Improvement; Advantages; Disadvantages

Table 4.2

Note. *Adapted fromAnfara, V. A., Jr., Brown, K., & Mangione, T. (2002). Qualitative analysis on stage: Making the research process more public. Educational Researcher, 31, 28-38.*

4.7 Findings

University professors and personnel from K-12 institutions reported that collaboration was beneficial to the education of aspiring leaders and to their own institutions. Comments from those interviewed include the university professors (UP), the practitioner partner (PP), the superintendents or representatives of the superintendents who serve on the Steering Committee (SC), and the district leaders from the urban district (DL) whose employees made up the first Leadership Academy cohort. Respondents are identified by partnership group to which they belong and the respondent number.

4.7.1 Relationship of Theory to Practice

Professors and practitioners agreed that there is value in merging theory and practice. Respondents related that the most complex aspect of the partnership for both the professors and the practitioner partner was learning how to balance the class time devoted to theory and to practice as well as collaborating on planning

and elements of class discussion. As one professor noted, class time must be planned so students can understand "real-life situations that allow students to apply in-class concepts and topics to work conditions they will face." The practitioner partner can "apply stories of things that happened at his school about concepts we were learning" (UP 1).

The perspective of the practitioner partners supported the concept of bridging theory with practice. Common responses indicated that "having a practitioner partner allows students to experience firsthand what it is like 'in the trenches' so that they can apply their academic knowledge to the reality of the coursework" (PP 5) and "what a practitioner is able to do is come in and show you working models of how they base things on theory [the students] have already learned" (PP 1).

Emphasis on the application of textbook theory to everyday practice was successful because of the level of collaboration between the instructors. The cooperative efforts from all instructor participants were evident, as supported by interview responses.

4.7.2 Teaching Collaboration

Collaboration between practitioners and professors progressed from program initiation to data collection for this study. During the early days of professors and practitioner partners in the same classroom, there was little consistency across coursework in how the partnership worked. In some classes, the practitioners were guest speakers in a specific content area. The belief was that "more in-depth collaboration [might] occur in year two and three" (PP 3). University professor 5 stated that he

4.7.2.1

gave her [the practitioner partner] a copy of the course outline and asked her what areas she felt most comfortable with and what areas she might like to present in and I kind of organized the rest of the materials around what she is interested in doing.

As the program has evolved, the role of the practitioner has developed into that of a co-teacher. Through team teaching, professors and practitioners are able to collaborate on course content, timelines, and expectations as well as instruction, class activities, and within class and web-based discussions. Respondents cited specific strategies for co-teaching, such as "we divided the class in half where I introduced the topic, and then he followed up with the application to the school level" (UP 1). Another professor stated that "We looked at the four pillars or elements of school data....he kind of took the lead role in three and I took the lead in the student performance" (UP 5).

While university professors and practitioner partners worked collaboratively in construction and delivery of the coursework, the department faculty reached out to the districts surrounding the university, whether students from these districts participated in the leadership preparation program or not. Faculty from ELPS realized that feedback and attempts to meet the needs of the regional school systems widened the net of collaboration for all involved.

4.7.3 Steering Committee Perceptions

Interviews were conducted with university partners from local school systems. Respondents included regional school system superintendents, or their representatives, from the group charged with serving as the advisory board to the program's leadership preparation program, known as the Steering Committee (SC). Superintendents responded that the partnerships are unique in that Local Education Agencies (LEA) surrounding the university have not had the opportunity to collaborate with a university in this capacity. Partner superintendents also agreed that the unique nature of the partnership extended beyond the boundaries of the regional area as they were not aware of other school districts participating to the extent that they have. Collaborating partners were pleased with the opportunity to contribute to the training of aspiring leaders, to see the university as a resource to their districts, and to participate in this collaboration as a pathway to build camaraderie between districts. The work of the SC was viewed as a way to learn from the university and each other. One respondent stated that "I see it as something that will be a real plus for all of us in

terms of us steering our people in that direction [more effective development] and having the opportunity to learn and grow new leaders" (SC 4), while another perceived the partnership as "a wonderful resource and asset to the region as far as leadership development" (SC 2).

4.7.4 Partnership Focus

Respondents from the various partnership groups articulated differing foci for the partnership. The wider net of school districts surrounding the university established a partnership with the ELPS faculty and each sent a representative to serve in an advisory capacity on the SC. SC representatives and many practitioner partners responded that a broader focus should be the intent of the partnerships; that is, their concern was how to improve the learning provided to aspiring leaders. The larger interest was in what both the districts and the university can do in the present, and in the future, to ensure that schools have exemplary principals who will meet the needs of the community in which they work.

The largest school district with whom the university partnered was located in the same city as the university. This district was not only larger than the other school systems but represented the only urban district of the twenty six partners. Moreover, the first cohort of students in the Leadership Academy was populated solely by school building personnel from this district. The perceptions of the district personnel regarding the focus of the partnership was more narrow than the SC and intent upon the details of how the partnership, and the larger outcomes, should proceed, rather than the process of what should occur. Their concerns were specifically local and then national, through the recognition that they hoped the Center for Educational Leadership would bring to the area. This partnership group repeatedly cautioned that they needed to make sure the university would continue to meet the needs for preparing aspiring leaders as identified by the urban district, rather than the larger picture of leadership preparation for the regional area. Common among this group was the thought that "here is an opportunity to really put a handprint on where the needs are and what skills, talents, attributes we [district personnel] want to see in administrators" (DL 1). The district leaders believed that by supporting a full time internship, that is, four days each week, in their school system, the aspiring leaders would not only gain experience as an administrator but would gain this experience working under the policies, procedures, and guidelines of the district. Concerns expressed by every respondent from this urban district centered on how the district personnel would be able to meet the needs of the partnership, including time for meetings, assuring that mentors spent adequate time to address the needs of interns, and whether the demands of the partnership would be reasonable for the district.

4.7.5 Challenges

All respondents considered the partnership experience valuable to both the leadership candidates and themselves as educators. However, interviewees also acknowledged that there were aspects of the partnership that were difficult. Factors such as clearly defining the role of the practitioner, the practitioner's contribution in pre-planning the course, and the diversity of the practitioner partners were addressed by both practitioners and professors. Professors suggested that there is a need to "offer clear, specific examples of what they [practitioner partners] will be doing" (UP 4). One professor expressed concern about differing expectations; that is, practitioner partners who were part of the new Leadership Academy were selected by district level personnel with no input from faculty while practitioner partners in the previously existing program were selected with input from program faculty. This professor (UP 1) called for "greater clarity from the district" regarding faculty expectations for practitioner partners.

Another challenge was finding practitioner partners who held expertise in specific areas such as school reform, finance, and policy. Conversely, some practitioner partners held expertise in many areas and faculty were cautious about overusing partners, hoping to offer a variety of perspectives to the students. One faculty member recommended, "I don't think the students should ever have the same practitioner partner in two classes" (UP 4).

Additional recommendations forwarded during the interviews were for faculty to make a concerted effort to increase communication between the partners and the professors. Opportunities to improve curriculum and input from all parties on course objectives was considered paramount. Both professors and practitioners

agreed that to offer a program that successfully prepares educators to be effective school leaders, both the university and the school district must commit to the growth and development of school level leaders to their full potential. As a result, continual refinement is needed (DL 1).

4.7.6 Professor Perceptions

Professors agreed that by collaborating with practitioners, aspiring leaders were provided the opportunity to gain practical insights into the complex and challenging issues that school leaders face. This partnership supported meaningful information and theory taught by the professor. Professors unanimously responded that information shared by the practitioner partners was valuable and relevant to the curriculum being taught. Timely examples provided by practitioner partners were deemed especially pertinent to conveying how theory is "lived" in the world of schools, noting that "examples have proved valuable in generating connects between concepts we discuss in class and practical conditions they face as leaders in schools" (UP 4).

Professors shared that though they were at one time K-12 educators, the world of schools is rapidly changing; thus, the presence of a practitioner partner who experiences the daily life of schools benefits all. UP 2 stated "I think the experience provided an excellent learning opportunity for both the students and myself." Perceptions of the various partners associated with the leadership preparation program proved invaluable as the successes and challenges of the program are continually evaluated.

4.8 Discussion

The university has entered into partnerships with districts with the goal of preparing leaders to meet the challenges of twenty-first century schools. These partnerships included three distinct groups, including district superintendents of partner LEAs (the steering committee group), district personnel from the largest district served by the university (the district leader group), and the school practitioners who taught with the university professors in the leadership preparation courses (the practitioner partner group). Findings from interviews indicated that all groups were generally pleased with the university partnership, were enthused about collaborating with the university, and had the same objective, that is, high quality and well prepared leaders for K-12 schools.

The significance of the theory-practice connection was repeatedly cited as the most significant outcome of the partnership. Practitioners felt a genuine gratitude for the opportunity to participate, and, more specifically, for the opportunity to do what they love: teach. The practitioner partners and professors expressed the importance of having experts from the field co-teach with professors and, together, the influence on the preparation of the aspiring leaders.

Steering Committee members, district leadership, and practitioner partners noted that they had not been approached for feedback in the past and, prior to the partnership agreements, felt removed from the business of leadership preparation. Respondents were gratified that their voice was now a part of the process. However, each group reported needs and challenges, specific to their group and the communities they serve, which brings to the fore the precarious nature of university-school based partnerships.

This study, though limited in scope because of sample size and focus on one university, should be of interest to other universities contemplating partnerships with school districts and others. Current literature (Darling-Hammond et al., 2007; Devita et al., 2007; Dilworth & Thomas, 2001; Schmidt-Davis et al., 2009) promotes the concept of partnerships as a means to exemplary leadership preparation. However, universities who enter into these partnerships walk a fine line. Each group of partners in this study supported the partnerships. At the same time, each group perceived the success of the partnership based on the extent to which their group's needs were addressed and met. University faculty faced a balancing act of meeting the needs of several partners, while also ensuring that the requirements of higher education accrediting agencies, state guidelines for principal licensure, and university administration are met.

Longitudinal data collection is called for in this study to examine partnerships over time. Missing stakeholders in this study are the students who are taught by multiple instructors. While leadership candidates

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complete faculty evaluation surveys, in depth interviews would add another voice to the findings. Follow up studies of the new leaders in practice will include perceptions of school community, faculty, and district leaders, as well as any changes in the K-12 student achievement, to investigate the wider reach of this preparation program. Partnerships beyond the university classroom support the idea that a community of educators is necessary in the preparation of a school leader. Partnerships must be bi-directional, not unidirectional, for all parties to deem the partnership a success. A common response of all of the participants was the belief that the partnerships are moving in a positive direction that will lead to strengthening leadership preparation while providing benefits for both the university and the school districts. Continuing the conversation is essential.

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Chapter 5

Davis, S., & Leon, R. The Big 20: Critical Principles and Essential Attributes of Great Leadership in Schools[1]

5.1 Education Leadership Review, Volume 12, Number 1 (April 2011)

5.2 Author Information

Stephen H. Davis, is a Professor in the Department of Education at California Polytechnic University, Pomona. Dr. Davis is widely published in the area of principal preparation and presently serves in the newly accepted doctoral program at Cal Poly.

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[1] This content is available online at <http://cnx.org/content/m37193/1.2/>.

[2] http://www.ncpeapublications.org

Ronald J. Leon, is an Associate Professor in the Department of Education at California Polytechnic University, Pomona. Dr. Leon has written and published in several state, national, and international journals. He also serves as a faculty member in the newly accepted doctoral program at Cal Poly.

5.3 Introduction

"Treat people as if they were what they ought to be and you help them to become what they are capable of being." Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe

This perspective rests (partially) with the discomfiting fact that leadership is not a hard science that exists within a well-defined set of causal phenomena, clear operational protocols, or immutable truths. Instead, great leadership is more artful than mechanical, affective than rational, and propositional than determinative. It is a heartfelt endeavor that reminds us of grandma's recipe for rhubarb pie (a recipe that only grandma could follow with positive effect)–rhubarb, flour, butter, eggs, sugar, and *a whole lot of love*. Ironically, the more we discover about the complexities of human psychology, the deeply nuanced and subtle characteristics of interpersonal relationships, and the dynamics of social influence, the more challenging our quest for certainty and predictability regarding the attributes of great leadership becomes.

Without question, our perspective is subject to debate. Nevertheless, the two of us have been "educationists" in one form or another since the early 1970s. Between us we have over 75 years of cumulative experiences in K-12 schools, school districts, and in higher education. During that time, we have formulated many impressions, insights, and intuitions about what it takes to lead effectively. We make no claim of exclusivity or authorship over these ideas (although we aspire to present them in both a meaningful and interesting fashion). Each of our ideas is anchored in the literature on organizational leadership in schools and generally. In fact, we hesitate to define them as anything other than good ideas. We also acknowledge that the ability to lead effectively does not depend on one's ability to satisfy each idea in some contrived chronologic order, nor does it depend on the ability to satisfy each of the ideas comprehensively. However, we are confident that in the aggregate the following 20 *big* ideas outlined in Figure 1 provide fertile ground upon which great leadership often grows, while individually, each idea can serve to guide, inspire, or promote the types of behavior associated with great leadership in America's public schools.

5.3.1 Outline of the Big 20 Ideas for Great Leadership in Schools

5.3.1.1 Organizational Perspectives

- Contextually Adept
- Systems Thinkers
- Crafters of Culture and Climate
- Cultivators of Leadership
- Lead Cheerleaders
- Leaders of Learners

5.3.1.2 Cognitive Perspectives

- Amorphous Scientists
- Sophisticated Diagnosticians
- Champions of Data
- Judicious Decision-Makers
- Storytellers and Sense-makers
- Inquiring and Inquisitive
- Imaginers and Creators

5.3.1.3 Affective Perspectives

- Seekers of Truth
- Courageous Seekers of Social Justice
- Poets and Plumbers
- Role Models and Symbols
- Moral Stewards
- Emotionally Intelligent
- Meta-cognitively Aware

Our primary purposes in presenting these ideas are twofold. First, we want to encourage both aspiring and current school leaders to reflect deeply about their own skills, talents, and perspectives by providing them with a set of rich descriptors that we believe fairly represent the conceptual and practical grist of great leadership. Second, we want to contribute to the capital stock of knowledge in the field of school leadership with humble acknowledgement of the many important perspectives that have come before us.

Finally, our set of 20 big ideas contains a great deal of information and in the aggregate may seem little more than a disparate and perhaps random collection. In the interests of clarity and economy we organized them into three general thematic perspectives common to the field of leadership, 1) organizational, 2) cognitive, and 3) affective. In doing so, we placed each idea within an empirically based conceptual framework. This, of course, enables one to make better sense of these ideas (e.g., what they mean in terms of important leadership characteristics and their comparative distribution).

Ideas that fell within the organizational perspective were those that related to a leader's ability to think systemically; manage and organize resources, tasks, and people; plan and support crucial organizational functions, and seek out intra-organizational synergies and extra-organizational opportunities (Yukl, 2009). Those that fell within a cognitive perspective related to a leader's thinking and problem solving, intellectual attributes, skills and expertise, and knowledge processing (Gardner, 1999). Finally, ideas that fell within an affective perspective related to a leader's emotions, social relationships, self-reflections and awareness, ethics and morals, and aesthetic qualities (Newman, Guy, & Mastracci, 2009; Zhen, 2008).

5.4 Organizational Perspectives

1. Contextually Adept
Conceptions of great leadership vary widely and are complicated by its highly contextualized nature. Where leadership emerges, when it emerges, and with whom often makes the difference between attributions of greatness and mediocrity (consider, for example, the emergence of Winston Churchill as a wartime leader in Great Britain and his rapid descent from prominence once the war ended). The essence of great leadership rests mainly upon the confluence between the knowledge, skills, and dispositions of the leader, the circumstances upon which leadership behaviors are expressed, and their subsequent impact on the perceptions of others and valued organizational goals (Goffee & Jones, 2001).

2. Systems Thinkers
Great leaders see the interconnectedness between seemingly disparate organizational stimuli and environments. They understand the systemic relationships (and their effects) that exist between the various structures, processes, and behaviors in and around their schools (e.g., the nexus between effective teaching and student discipline, between student achievement and resource allocation, etc.). This "wide angle view" allows them to better anticipate and manage the consequences of intentional and serendipitous individual behaviors and organizational events. Moreover, through systems thinking they are better able to foster a cohesive organizational culture, identify and capitalize on opportunities for organizational growth, and reduce asynchronous goals, behaviors, and activities (Senge & Sterman, 1990). Essentially, great leaders are able to see both the disaggregated and aggregated features of their schools and how to leverage them to the best advantage of students and teachers.

3. Crafters of Culture and Climate

While culture and climate are indelible features of all organizations, great leaders deliberately and strategically shape (and reshape) the culture and climate of their schools to advance powerful teaching and learning. Culture reflects what we believe and value, and how we act with our students, families and each other (Schein, 1985). Climate, on the other hand, typifies "what it feels like around here" and is evident to any newcomer or visitor to the school (Cohen, McCabe, & Michelli, 2009). Every new-hire, staff development activity, goal setting process, formative or summative evaluation, and even every staff meeting is an opportunity to build, shape, and develop the school's culture and climate to support a high functioning school that serves all students equally well. In their book Reframing Organizations, Lee Bolman and Terrence Deal (2003) propose that effective leaders shape organizational culture structurally (e.g. rules and regulations), politically (e.g. influence strategies), symbolically (e.g., role modeling), and through the potency of their professional relationships.

4. Cultivators of Leadership

Great leaders understand that in schools the capacity to lead others resides in all constituents, including students, classified staff, certificated staff, administrative staff, parents, and district office officials. Moreover, for a school to operate anywhere near its full potential, all stakeholders must be encouraged and supported in their efforts to exercise leadership. Distributing leadership is essential if schools are to meet the challenges of disproportionate levels of achievement among student subgroups, uneven teacher quality, high dropout rates, and other manifestations of an economically stratified society that confront so many schools and districts. Effective schools are not organized anarchies or places where individuals jockey for personal advantage and status, but rather, are places where each stakeholder leads through the example of his/her expertise, quest for knowledge, accountability for the welfare of the whole organization, and a commitment to promoting a professional culture of collaboration, inquiry, and shared vision (Davis & Leon, 2009). Finally, great leaders do not subscribe to the flimsy (yet enduring) theory that leaders are born, not made.

5. Lead Cheerleaders

Noted leadership authors Roy Williams and Terrence Deal (2003) wrote about the leader as cheerleader, not waving pom poms, but standing on a bully pulpit articulating, illuminating, and celebrating important organizational goals and accomplishments. Regardless of the method used, the great leader encourages, motivates, praises, and rewards the successes of students, staff, parents and the school-community. Public education is often criticized for not communicating or sharing its successes. Accordingly, the great leader is in the forefront of "selling" and "celebrating" what is right, good and meritorious within the school. The work of education excellence is hard and demanding. The rewards educators receive are not monetary, but rather in the successes and accomplishments of those they serve. Being the lead cheerleader for the school is an emblematic duty of great leaders that is both symbolic and substantive. Moreover, it comes with the territory and its importance among the Big 20 cannot be minimized. GO TEAM!

6. Leaders of Learners

It is, perhaps, a cliché to make the point that current conceptions of great school leadership are synonymous with theories of instructional leadership. We don't disagree with this proposition, but we have a few thoughts that extend the concept a bit. First, what troubles us is that in the lexicon of educational administration, the term instructional leadership is frequently bandied about with reckless abandon, as if everyone uniformly understands its underlying assumptions. We think not. To know great instruction, one must know much more than human resource management strategies, pedagogical techniques, and curriculum policy. One must deeply understand how teachers and students think and feel and why they think and feel in the ways that they do. One must know what inspires teachers and students collectively and as individuals to perform at optimum levels and to advance their knowledge and skills. Most importantly, the very best instructional leaders are mentors of students, teachers of teachers, and learners within a community of learners (DuFour, 2005). Instructional leadership is not a task to be accomplished, but rather a quality of truly great school leaders (e.g., it is who they are vs. what they do).

5.5 Cognitive Perspectives

7. Amorphous "Scientists"

Efforts to define the field of organizational leadership are complicated by irreconcilable contradictions. On one hand, leadership is social science framed upon empirically grounded principles of task and relationship behaviors. On the other hand, it is often described as an opportunistic and interpretive art form based upon the politics of social influence and personal charisma. As a result, the quest to define great leadership stubbornly resists efforts to identify universal qualities, predictable outcomes, or rigid definitions of effective practice. Leadership is best described as a "meta-discipline" that subsumes the conceptual foundations of many social scientific domains. Great leaders can "see" how different domains of knowledge intersect with the functions and goals of organizational life. Moreover, they recognize that leadership requires broad conceptual knowledge and the strategic and tactical skills to artfully apply such knowledge to advance the goals of the organization (Yukl, 2009).

8. Sophisticated Diagnosticians

The challenges that face leadership are often entangled by multiple competing factors, differing points of view, and the need to fully (and clearly) understand the issues at hand. Part of solving problems and making informed and successful decisions is the ability to carefully diagnose a problem before embarking on a course of action. Great leaders are sophisticated diagnosticians. They consider the interests, needs, and demands of students, staff, and parents; ask the hard questions; analyze appropriate data (when available); conduct targeted research; and when possible, consider the implications and parameters surrounding a decision before making it. Diagnostic skill is essential to effective strategic planning, conflict resolution, and resource allocation, and must inform the decision choices and problem solving strategies that are continuously made by administrators and teachers (Leithwood & Steinbach, 1995).

9. Champions of Data

In 21st Century schools the use of data and what is commonly called "data driven decision making" occupies an increasingly important role in the work of school leaders and the decisions they make. Given the prominence of information technologies and accountability movements in American public schools, great leaders competently use, plan with, and interpret multiple sources and types of data to advance student learning and effective teaching practices. In addition, great leaders communicate the results of their data analyses to illuminate the facets of school operations that are well aligned with key organizational goals and objectives as well as those that are not. Great leaders also teach others (e.g., staff, parents, community and even students) how to make sense of school data and how the data reflect important aspects of student learning and teaching. The great leader is a "champion of data," and as champion continually translates, streamlines, and puts into context the multiple sources and types of information that bombard the school-community and reflects its progress (Boudett, City, & Murnane, 2005). Finally, and most importantly, great leaders know how to apply the analyses of data toward improved teaching and organizational practices that promote student learning.

10. Judicious Decision-Makers

To lead is to decide. Decision-making is the sine qua non of leadership. It's what leaders do day-by-day and often minute-by-minute. In highly pluralistic organizations like schools, perceptions of a good executive decision often have less to do with objective or quantifiable measures of effectiveness than with subjective feelings of satisfaction that one's interests have been met. Decision-making in schools and school systems is an intensely human and highly apperceptive endeavor that relies on the ability to skillfully combine rational deliberations, heuristic judgments, and intuitive insights. At its core, great leadership is about the exercise of judgment (i.e., what to do and how), timing (i.e., when to do it), discrimination (i.e., what matters most), navigation (i.e., charting the correct course), and performance (i.e., behaviors used to achieve desired outcomes). Sometimes not to decide is to decide, and often the most important decision choices faced by school leaders are between "right and right" rather than "right and wrong" (Davis & Davis, 2003).

11. Storytellers and Sense-makers

Great leaders are engaging storytellers and adept sense-makers (McKee, 2003). In complex organizations like schools, unprocessed experiences and events are at best ambiguous and at worst meaningless. Through powerful and meaningful stories, great leaders construct frames of reference and vibrant mental models that help school stakeholders to better understand the disparate experiences and complicated events that shape and influence organizational life. The leader-storyteller identifies, illuminates, or portrays agents and events

at varying levels of specificity, and in doing so creates vivid images of reality and, subsequently, increased trust and shared confidence with constituents. Great leaders artfully use analogies and metaphors that simply and convincingly portray the organization's primary values, norms, and desired outcomes (Morgan, 1997).

Similarly, the leader as sense-maker guides the organization on a visceral journey through chaos and uncertainty. Through the processes of absorption and synthesis, the leader/sense-maker extracts the essential elements from disruptive, complex, or uncertain external and internal environmental stimuli and creates cogent generalizations that guide organizational goal setting and constituent behavior. Moreover, sense-makers simplify and structure complex information in ways that help to reveal "truth" and promote certainty, clarity, and equilibrium within the organization (Weick, 1995).

12. Inquiring and Inquisitive

Great leaders are curious and inquisitive learners. They abhor the status quo and strive to facilitate a self-diagnostic organization that learns from its mistakes as well as its successes and institutionalizes self-renewal both individually and collectively (Senge, 1990). Great leaders also recognize that the quest for knowledge and understanding is a phenomenon that unfolds between the individual and the organization in a dialectic cycle of tension and relief. They understand that the factors influencing organizational and leader behaviors exist as part of a feedback loop upon which new ideas are tested and honed, confirmed or disconfirmed. The ongoing sparring of ideas, values, needs, and goals creates a degree of dissonance that, when managed skillfully, discourages organizational complacency while stimulating renewal and growth. As learners, great leaders are agile, adaptive, resilient, and perseverant (McGough, 2002).

13. Imaginers and Creators

For great leaders, organizational dissonance is an ally not an enemy. Although hard times, conflict, and adversity frequently occur in complex organizations, great leaders do not allow them to become anchors that drag their schools into stagnation, paralysis, or complacency. Rather, they use them to activate creativity, animate imagination, and stimulate innovation. Great leaders possess an unwavering sense of purpose, both personally and for the organization as a whole, and a penetrating curiosity about why things are the way they are, how they might be, and what may lie around the corner (i.e., an urge to discover). Imbued with a sense of hope for a brighter future and an enduring belief in the goodness of public schools, the great leader is on a never-ending quest for better ways, better outcomes, and better lives within the organization. The strength to lead change is grounded upon feelings of confidence and efficacy in being able to shape and reshape one's work products and environments (Davis, 2006).

5.6 Affective Perspectives

14. Seekers of Truth

The need for great leadership in schools has never been more imperative. But just what is great leadership? Who has it, what does it look like, and under what circumstances? Is it a singular and heroic concept imputed to the charismatic, intellectually gifted, ambitious, and forceful? Or, is it more broadly conceived, defined less by the character attributes of a few exceptionally talented, prominent, or dominant individuals than by the distributed and often unsung contributions of those who toil for the benefit of the organization at-large (Meyerson, 2001)? Is great leadership best represented by what an individual does or what he/she inspires others to do? Questions such as these underscore an ongoing, and as yet unresolved, debate over the essence of great leadership. To ensure enduring organizational vitality, adaptability, and moral integrity great leaders ask themselves such questions over and over again. Often, finding the right answers is less important than asking the hard questions.

15. Courageous Seekers of Social Justice

Great leaders proactively and courageously seek out and act to eradicate organizational *and* interpersonal discrimination, inequity, and injustice. They are not simply discontented, but outraged, when the system or the people who comprise it overtly or covertly violate the opportunity for each child and each stakeholder to achieve his/her full potential as learners and as human beings. Through the substantive and procedural

mechanisms of the school or school district, the courageous leader seeks to ensure that the opportunity to succeed is distributed evenly and fairly (Gaetane, Normore, & Brooks, 2009).

16. Poets and Plumbers

Stanford professor James March (1994) maintains that great leaders are both "poets and plumbers." Imbued with the wisdom of Solomon, the imagination of de Vinci, and a sense of the aesthetic, great leaders are also skilled managers who effectively apply tactics of interpersonal and intra-group influence. Moreover, they master the technical elements of organizational operations, while possessing the leadership acumen needed to shepherd and inspire constituents through tumultuous events and toward a collective vision of a better future.

17. Role Models and Symbols

Great leaders exemplify the powerful symbols of their organizations through persistent, focused, and public demonstrations of their deep personal commitment to the values, rituals, and cultural characteristics that define core organizational purposes. Through unremitting behaviors, they practice and reinforce the skills, ideals, and values that are most important to their organizations. They "talk the talk," and they "walk the walk" consistently and with sincerity and integrity (Scarnati, 2002).

In many ways, great leaders are performing artists who understand the aesthetic potential of the leadership role. Most tend to be interesting people who capture our attention by strategically, tactfully, and ethically managing their expressions (e.g., physical, communicative, behavioral) to resolve wicked dilemmas and to address different environmental contexts and audiences. By artfully managing the theatric qualities of the job (e.g., stagecraft, emotions, actors, scripts, sets, physicality, timing, drama, and costume) great leaders influence how we think, feel, and behave. They also challenge us to play around in an imaginary world, to think in terms of "what if" rather than "what is" and to see our better selves. Importantly, great leaders play different roles while never losing sight of who they really are (Bolman & Deal, 2003).

18. Moral Stewards

As Americans know all too well, attributions of leadership effectiveness and greatness may not always go hand-in-hand, but they should. Great leaders identify and transform the various deontological perspectives of their constituents into an enduring moral praxis that shapes and guides their motives and behaviors, and ultimately, organizational work. Ethical behavior is understood and evaluated in terms of both valued means and desired ends. Likewise, it is understood that good outcomes derived from bad practice (or intentions) stains the integrity of the enterprise and those who work within it. However, as we noted earlier, the greatest challenge for leaders is not in choosing between right and wrong, but in choosing between right and right. Schools and school systems are fraught with disorienting and intractable dilemmas that are rarely solved and at best managed. The ability to parse out and choose among the subtle and nuanced qualities that differentiate reasonable alternatives to complex dilemmas requires the ability to recognize the penumbral characteristics of such dilemmas and their comparative moral justifications. In so doing, the great leader recognizes his/her biases and motives, understands how these can distort and obstruct effective leadership behavior, and moves beyond them in pursuit of the common good (Sergiovanni, 1992).

19. Emotionally Intelligent

Great leadership is a passionate and intensely emotional endeavor. Great leaders understand the role and importance of exercising emotional expressions in the workplace and learn to regard their raw emotions as data rather than instructions. To do this well requires a degree of dispassion, patience, restraint, and an internal locus of control. Of course, this is much easier said than done. But, a leader who fails to manage his or her emotions well quickly loses the trust and confidence of others. Great leaders also understand that through expressions of emotion and behavior, they possess great influence over the emotional status of others within the organization. They read people, social environments, and extant circumstances with thoughtful precision and express their emotions with tactful and artful subtlety (Goleman, Boyatzis & McKee, 2004).

20. Meta-cognitively Aware

Great leaders understand how they think, how they learn, why they feel as they do, and why they respond as they do to various stimuli (internal and external). The meta-cognitively astute leader never surrenders to feelings of uncertainty, self-consciousness, or personal weakness, but neither does she/he permit an unbridled ego to hijack forthright self-reflection and honesty. Great leaders know their strengths, weaknesses, and

emergent abilities; they find ways to capitalize on their strengths and compensate for their weaknesses (Gardner, Avolio, & Walumbwa, 2005).

5.7 Final Comments

"Educationists should build the capacities of the spirit of inquiry, creativity, entrepreneurial and moral leadership among students and become their role model." (Dr. Abdul Kalam)

As the quotation above by Dr. Abdul Kalam, the former Prime Minister of India, so aptly states, great leadership today is not the traditional top-down leadership of command, control, and direction. Rather, it is the leadership of humility, moral persuasion, personal example, quiet inspiration, faithful stewardship, distributed empowerment, and collective inquiry. Importantly, great leaders lead through self-knowledge, passion, compassion, creativity, and determination.

Our *"Big20"* ideas steer clear of the task, or technical, characteristics found in many taxonomies of leadership, and they only obliquely touch on the factors commonly associated with transactional leadership. It is not that these are unimportant, but we believe that they are largely subordinate to the attributes of *great* leadership.

When we look back over the great leaders of years past, prospectively reflect on the great leaders of years to come, and ponder the essence of the *Big 20* ideas, we are reminded of Jim Collins's description of "Level 5 Leadership" (Collins, 2001). The truly great leader possesses a "paradoxical combination of deep personal humility and intense professional will." This is not a novel concept to be sure, but it is one that bears repeating in an educational environment that continues to celebrate statistical measures of success, competitive depictions of achievement (e.g., we vs. them), and harsh consequences for those who fail to "measure up." We maintain that leading schools today is not about the ability to influence or persuade followers to do what they may not ordinarily do, nor is it about the inspirational exhortations of the charismatically endowed. It is about the humble ability to join with others in collective, purposeful, and mutually rewarding work to make a difference in the life of every child, in every school, and in every community in America. To do this well takes a fierce resolve, an organizational perspective, cognitive acuity, and affective ability. Great leadership is not engendered through professional obligation, nor is it the consequence of fidelity to some policy-fabricated leadership technology. It is a passion, a quest, and a calling.

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Chapter 6

Mirci, P., & Hensley, P. (April 2011). Transformational Adult Learning in a Doctoral Program for Educational Justice[1]

6.1 Education Leadership Review, Volume 12, Number 1 (April 2010)

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6.2 Authors

Philip Mirci, University of Redlands
   Phillis A. Hensley, Texas A&M - Corpus Christi

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[1]This content is available online at <http://cnx.org/content/m37196/1.1/>.
[2]http://www.ncpeapublications.org

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CHAPTER 6. MIRCI, P., & HENSLEY, P. (APRIL 2011).
TRANSFORMATIONAL ADULT LEARNING IN A DOCTORAL PROGRAM
FOR EDUCATIONAL JUSTICE

6.3 Introduction

The work of educational justice leaders is to transform the current monocultural model of schooling. Because education exists as a subsystem of the larger societal system, social justice discourse must be the center for educational transformation. Such discourse involves consciousness raising and questioning one's presuppositions of the oppressive uses of power and control in schooling and society. Educators are required to transmit an approved monocultural curriculum to students (Freire, 2000). This model is dominating through standardization to reproduce the social and economic status quo (Shannon, 1992).

Education is political. In order to retain one's job, a person is required to implement mandated policies and regulations that are consistent with the monocultural model. Within this context educators are unconsciously socialized into accepting uncritically this model. Educational justice leaders need to work against this socializing tendency within them before they can be effective change agents. Thus they need to maintain a level of credibility among stakeholders while simultaneously advocating for an alternative model.

Emergence of a knowledge era is bringing about societal and global upheavals. Increasing technologies, e-commerce, outsourcing of jobs, and a global economy driven by the knowledge industries are impacting people daily (Drucker, 2007). Increasing diversity necessitates culturally proficient leaders (Terrell & Lindsey, 2009). Elderly are beginning to outnumber youth, impacting fiscal allocations; jobs are shifting globally between countries; and social injustices are accumulating (Marx, 2008). These problems, combined with the monocultural model of schooling, require leaders who can transform education and society. Institutionalized marginalization continues in schools (Adams, Blumenfeld, Castañeda, Hackman, Peters, & Zúñiga, 2000; Heldke & O'Connor, 2004). Problems are exacerbated by a wealth gap (Giroux, 2009). Doubts exist about the capacity of current educational leaders to be paradigmatic change agents (Fullan, 2005). The current monocultural model reflects a static worldview entrenched in essentialism whereby the beliefs, values, and norms of the dominant culture are perpetuated (Fuchs, 2001). Problem-posing is an alternative model arising from social reconstructionism and reflects a dynamic, historical consciousness and systemic worldview (Freire, 2007). In this model the purpose of schooling is to address the needs of society as a whole, acknowledge diversity, develop critical literacy, prepare students to become societal change agents who solve social problems, and end oppression (Webb, Metha & Jodan, 2009). Problem-posing and social reconstructionism assert the democratic ideal that the freedom one affords to self should be afforded to others.

6.4 Theoretical Framework

Mezirow's (1981) theory of transformative learning was selected because of its genesis in critical theory. He reinterpreted Habermas' (1972) concept of emancipation as a knowledge domain transforming one's life-world (Brookfield, 2005). Mezirow redefined emancipation as perspective transformation.

This theory has prompted scholarship and broader understandings of adult learning. The phases of transformative theory serve as a heuristic guide for studying the meaning perspectives of doctoral students. Self-examination of one's existing meaning perspectives is threatening as habituated ways of thinking are questioned (Mezirow, 1991).

The possibility exists that not all people in a doctoral program for educational justice leadership willembrace transformative learning. Instead, they may avoid self-examination and not critically analyze meaning perspectives using social justice tenets. Thus, their emancipation will be limited by unquestioned institutional beliefs and norms that shaped them. In contrast, embracing transformative learning entails a process of reevaluating one's identity, institutions, and worldview.

6.4.1

An individual who begins to see himself or herself as being capable of learning and exchanging knowledge with others is calling into question his or her previous habits of mind... Our experiences are filtered through our meaning perspectives or habits of mind... Our way of seeing includes distortions, prejudices, stereotypes, and unquestioned beliefs. Transformative learning happens when we encounter an event that calls into question

what we believe and we revise our perspective. At times, this can be a dramatic event, but most often it is a more gradual, cumulative process(Cranton & Wright, 2008, p. 34).

Mezirow (2009) identified ten phases in his theory: (1) experiencing a disorienting challenge; (2) engaging in self-examination; (3) assessing one's assumptions critically; (4) recognizing a connection between the disorientation and the process of transformation; (5) exploring possible new roles, relationships, and action; (6) developing an action plan; (7) constructing new knowledge; (8) adopting temporary new roles; (9) developing confidence and competence with chosen roles; and (10) reintegrating one's worldview based on the new perspective. People may not encounter each phase. The process may be recursive, and involve thoughts, emotions, and intuition.

6.5 Methodology

A phenomenological design was used to study *'several individuals' common or shared experiences of a phenomenon'* (Creswell, 2007, p. 60). Purposeful sampling was used to recruit participants who met the criteria of completing two years of coursework, passing two qualifying examinations, and being advanced to candidacy to work on their dissertations.

The sample consisted of 18 participants. Three were African-American: two females and one male. Three were Hispanic: one female and two males. Eleven were Caucasian: nine females and two males. One female was Filipino. They ranged in age from 32 to 58. Pseudonyms were used to protect participant anonymity.

Data were collected through one-to-one interviews that were transcribed and analyzed using the constant comparative method (Schwandt, 2007). Mezirow's phases of transformative learning were used in creating semi-structured interview questions and in coding data. Synder (2008) reported that coding data by these phases was common among researchers studying Mezirow's theory. Member checking to ensure accuracy and increase credibility of the findings was utilized.

6.6 Results and Discussion

All of the participants reported experiencing the first four phases of the theory: disequilibrium from a dilemma or challenge; self-examination through critical reflection; assessment of personal assumptions in conflict with social justice discourse; and the connection between disorientation and the process of transformation. They also indicated they were beginning to reintegrate their worldview based on the new perspective. Four themes emerged from data analysis: (a) disequilibrium and critical reflection, (b) inclusive worldview and perspective shifts regarding self and others, (c) differences between transmissive and transformative learning, (d) and obstacles to transformative learning. Longer selections, representative of the theme, were selected to provide more in-depth descriptions for the reader.

6.6.1 Disequilibrium and Critical Reflection

In addressing disequilibrium through problem-posing education, participants described the transformative process, critical reflection, and how they coped while in disequilibrium; they also identified various examples of disorienting issues.

The following statements by Molly and Alicia represented the experiences of participants. According to Molly

6.6.1.1

I came into the doctoral program believing I was a good person wanting good for all people. In the program I collided with information that made me realize I held certain beliefs that impeded actually advocating for all people. This required a dismantling, tearing down, deconstructing so I could construct an identity and possess a depth of understanding required to walk with a social justice posture.

Alicia reported,

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6.6.1.2

You have got to be willing to strip down and become completely naked and then begin to clothe yourself with the humility, courage, and integrity to choose freedom from issues of socialization and indoctrination that hinder the rights of others. It is a process of birth and rebirth while recognizing a tendency to revert to earlier ways of being for the sake of comfortablility.

Participants recognized that disequilibrium involved self and the world as expressed by Mark: "You challenge your biases and prejudices in a way that may really disrupt your world. Donna viewed the challenge as "Getting past the threats to my belief system because I had a pretty hard barrier up."Sharon stated, "The process was freeing and enlightening because I'm willing to risk, be afraid, challenge fundamental beliefs, and attend to what I previously would have ignored." Marie cried and stated she "felt panic of being out of control and the loss of sense of self because of challenging beliefs I never would have considered questioning."Tricia expressed frustration over her perceptions of how institutions shaped her:

6.6.1.3

I felt anger because I felt that the different arenas in which I was indoctrinated while growing up such as church, education, and family had given me partial pieces of the puzzle and that caused me to be fragmented within my individual self. I felt I was deceived into believing I stood for something that I didn't because of my unexamined assumptions and uninformed beliefs that came through socialization. The anger was in part directed at the people that I felt contributed to this fragmentation but also at myself for not asking questions, digging deeper, and confronting myself.

Critical reflection was connected to working through disequilibrium. Rosie indicated, "It was self-searching where you thought you knew your way only to realize you really know nothing about your way."According to John, reflection involved examining what and why beliefs were held: "You have to go deep down and reflect on those thoughts."Luke responded to disequilibrium through reflection "over something I believed in the past and how I'm struggling to understand different perspectives about that belief in the present." These comments illustrated the use of reflection in working through disequilibrium.

Two different ways of coping with disequilibrium emerged. One involved solitude and such activities as running, hiking, walking, and other forms of exercise. Alicia reported, "There were times I needed to get away, and so I would go to a hotel and be by myself."Journaling and silent contemplation were used. The other involved interacting with other people. Marjorie illustrated this need to talk with others, "I reflected inwardly but needed to process all of this outwardly by talking to others such as classmates." This suggests that a dimension for future study may focus on perceptions of participants as being introverts or extraverts based on Jungian personality typologies (Cranton, 2006).

Eight of the Caucasians reported 'white privilege' as being a disorienting issue. Alice stated, "I grew up poor. I never considered myself privileged. Someone asked me the color of a Band-Aid. It was flesh-toned for white people, and then I understood."All participants began to realize, as Rosie stated,"The societal system is set up to advantage and privilege whites and is reinforced through the myth of meritocracy."According to Luke,

6.6.1.4

As a white male, I didn't know about this concept and how it functions within the societal system around issues of power and authority... Now that I am aware, I acknowledge its existence and my relationships with people who are not white and male are qualitatively different.

Recipients of white privilege and entitlement reported feeling guilt, shame, and embarrassment. They learned, as shared by an African-American student, that "marginalized groups have to spend a great deal of their lives trying to strategize on how to maneuver through a world of white privileged people."

Another disorienting issue was heterosexism. It challenged people to consider their religious orientations. John revealed the dilemma: "My religious upbringing says homosexuality is wrong, and I want to learn more about queer theory to respect other people's rights."Nancy said,"Gay and lesbian students were invisible to

me; my religion says sexual orientation is a choice, and I hadn't previously thought about the needs of these students."

Social justice is prophetic in that institutional tenets may be challenged. Participants struggled in challenging their Christian beliefs. Some adopted a new meaning perspective in their conceptualization of God. They gave primacy to the gospels and primacy of universal love. Some also changed religious affiliations and joined churches opposed to heterosexism and sexism. Donna continued to struggle with her religious upbringing while she also came to the following realization: "Although I find it liberating to find love and companionship with the opposite sex, I realize this ideology has not led to the freedom for those who find love and companionship within the same sex."

While some continued to struggle with the issue of heterosexism, they opposed it. In this sense, they differed from a minority of their colleagues who seemed to choose which forms of oppression they would oppose, which they would ignore, and which they would support based on religious ideology. This was reflected in a statement made by a student who had not advanced to candidacy and was, therefore, ineligible for inclusion in the study, "I don't believe we need to be that inclusive."

6.6.2 Inclusive Worldview and Perspective Shifts Regarding Self and Others

Through transformative learning participants sought to develop greater consciousness in the service of humanity. Their worldview expanded. Molly captured the essence of this theme, "Once you get little flashes of clarity, you can't go back to where you were before." The following were selected as indicators of this theme. According to Frank, "You find yourself being a different person ... it is a process of moving from a narrow, small, uninformed sense of the world to the ability to engage in looking at multiple perspectives."

Nancy reported, "In the past I looked at situations in a reductionistic manner and confused my opinions as if they were facts. I now strive to be systemic. I know I still have blind spots and will always need to monitor my own egocentrism. I strive to look at an issue from multiple perspectives."

Sharon discussed how her relationship changed,

6.6.2.1

My relationships with my social group began to change. The source of fear was that I would no longer be who I thought I was, and this change was frightening because if I am not who I thought I used to be, then who am I? I felt that people wouldn't recognize me. I eventually overcame these fears because it became more important to me that I become an authentic person as opposed to being the person that people were comfortable with me being.

Furthermore, Cecilia reported that she will be able to influence lives,

6.6.2.2

A lot of time we will look at Dr. Martin Luther King and be excited without realizing the millions of people who took a step with him for justice. The people who proofread his speeches and gave them back to proofread again – the reader was just as important as the writer, and the walker was just as necessary as the speech, and all these different things revealed that you are just as much a part of this as is everyone else. This encourages me. I get to influence lives.

Rosie indicated,

6.6.2.3

One of my previous beliefs was that if an individual tried hard enough, he or she would be able to get out of whatever situation he or she wasin. Whereas now, I would say, that definitely the whole education system and larger society have a tremendous role to play in students' success.

Marjorie concluded, "Being in the program has opened my eyes to so many things that I didn't really know were problems. I was so entrenched in the education system that I didn't realize I was part of the problem."

6.6.3 Differences between Transmissive and Transformative Learning

Transmissive learning is based on didactic teaching methods. It is synonymous with Freire's (1970) concept of the banking model of education. Information is transmitted to students through textbooks, lectures, and discussions. Mark illustrated the problem with this approach: "If this is what they want in order for me to succeed in their courses, this is what I have to givethem."A contrast to this type of teaching is what Freire calls a problem-posing model. It is a dialogic approach. Teachers view themselves as co-learners in creating conditions for transformative learning. This model has been resisted in higher education despite the opportunities it provides for transformative learning (Crowther, Galloway, & Martin, 2005). Case studies, dilemmas, and co-investigations are some of the strategies of this model. The following indicators described perceptions of transmissive teaching: Tricia stated,

There were classes where teachers just gave me information like the banking model that Freire wrote about in terms of transmitting information within a set of hierarchies where the instructor was the person who knew everything and we were supposed to unquestioningly accept the information.

Nancy presented her frustrations when she said,

6.6.3.1

In courses where learning was by accommodation, there were very trivial assignments in some of the core classes. An example would be the requirement of writing a reflection at the end of each chapter of the textbook. I found it almost insulting at times. Some of those requirements in the core courses needed to lead to much deeper levels of discourse.

Tricia reported similar sentiments, "I think that ego got in the way of some of the professors because they wanted to be the expert. They had the title, but the title didn't mean they knew anything really about social and educational justice."

Sharon discussed the need to conform in order to succeed,

6.6.3.2

There were other courses where it was almost as if to succeed in the course you had to conform to accepting whatever was in the text, and you couldn't internalize the content of the text because the methodology was oriented towards the teacher lecturing or transmitting what you needed to know or discussing chapters. ... Did those teachers understand social justice?

Frank reiterated sentiments voiced by other participants,

6.6.3.3

This is a very specialized doctorate, and anyone teaching in the program really should have a background in social justice and andragogy. Some professors do not possess this understanding, and consequently reduce the program to an educational leadership doctorate that is being offered everywhere.

The following indicators described perceptions of transformative teaching through problem-posing. Nancy reported, "There were other courses where I really had to look at my level of consciousness (how am I involved in the process, what happens with this) and it made me question things from childhood to the present day." Frank said,

6.6.3.4

There were classes that allowed me to work towards understanding and figuring out the context in terms of who I am ... where I came from culturally, and how all of this fits into the larger perspective of how it affects everyone. I don't think that there has been any educational institution where I had been before that allowed for not understanding or disagreeing in trying to understand without being shut down.

Molly reported the need to be challenged, "The classes that I think were successful in helping us change in a positive way had challenging readings to challenge our thinking, but then the professors challenged us as well."

Cecilia found that,

6.6.3.5

There were classes that brought about that deeper level of exploration for the members individually that really would challenge our current thinking. ... We would take real case studies where you confronted your own paradox of "this is happening, so how do you address it? ... We were constantly challenged with reconsidering what we would have done as a result of the intervening social justice information, theory, or philosophy - of that deeper level of thought that you didn't have before that required taking on a different point of view.

These findings suggest that courses be based on a problem-posing model of education to promote the conditions for transformative learning. If this is done, students could develop deeper competence and confidence as scholar practitioners. Courses can be taught in this manner if the goal is deep learning enabling students to create accurate understandings that can be applied with practicality everyday in educational settings. Faculty may benefit from meeting and discussing social justice theories and ways to create conditions for transformative learning.

As students increased proficiency in social justice discourse, they perceived that some faculty members did not seem to be opposed to all forms of marginalization (i.e. racism, classism, sexism, heterosexism, ableism, sizeism, ageism, and religious intolerance). Donna expressed this in the following statement, "You could tell which professors were the authentic social justice advocates because they clearly opposed all forms of oppression." Marjorie articulated a shared perception, "Some professors were role models because they had engaged in transformative learning and struggled with their previous beliefs like we were doing."

6.6.4 Obstacles to Transformative Learning

The doctoral program is a cohort model usually involving 20 students. The participants in this study came from the first two cohorts. Obstacles to transformative learning for the first two student cohorts occurred as a few students imposed their rigid beliefs on others. Whenever theories and other forms of injustice surfaced other than racism and classism, these individuals seemed to use aggression or distraction to divert discussions. Mark stated, "Their need to be right about their existing stereotypes and prejudices was greater than their willingness to consider divergent perspectives." An indicator of these obstacles included the following. Marie reported,

6.6.4.1

A few people came into the program determined to end one form of oppression. While many of us may have had a focus or interest we were still open to expanding our understandings. However, their continued exclusionary stance led me to question whether they were committed to social justice. I think if we want social justice, it has to be for all people; otherwise, it's not justice.

Cecilia concluded,

6.6.4.2

Some people held strong religious beliefs that Jewish or gay and lesbian students were neither favored by God nor destined for salvation. This was frustrating because others of us were learning that social justice inevitably includes examining, questioning, and challenging certain tenets or norms within the multiple institutions with which we are affiliated.

Mollyindicated,

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6.6.4.3

I was told by a classmate that when an issue arose that he disagreed with, he stopped listening and ignored it by distracting himself until something surfaced that he agreed with. He avoided questioning his beliefs, didn't come to class prepared, and just seemed to want a doctoral degree without any real commitment to social justice.

Discerning the degree in shifts of meaning perspectives is difficult (Taylor, 2007). The possibility exists that even the most obstructionist students may have engaged in some degree of transformative learning. The possibility also exists that their continued aggression and reactivity may have fostered transformative learning, expanded worldviews, and enhanced knowledge of social justice for the other participants.

6.7 Conclusions

The results of this study reveal alignment of Mezirow's (2009) phases of adult learning with the transformative learning experiences of participants. Students experienced disequilibrium as they encountered social justice theories, examined the different forms of oppression that groups of students encounter in their schooling, and reflected on the institutions that shaped their own lives. Through self-examination they assessed their presuppositions and embraced new meaning perspectives. They were in the process of reintegrating their lives based on the new meaning perspectives. They may encounter other phases of the theory as they complete their dissertations and implement actions in leadership positions.

Transformative learning and educational justice leaders are consistent with the tenets of cultural proficiency. Culturally proficient leaders are people who seriously examine and transform their assumptions, behaviors, and beliefs about those who are different from them so they can act as change agents against injustice. Such work includes critically analyzing organizational practices and policies within societal institutions that are barriers to human freedom.

Transformative adult learning is central to educational justice leadership. It answers the following question posed in 1926: "How can people who wish to improve the world do so without being conscious of the need for improvement within themselves?" (Lindemann, 1989, p. 65). Freire's (1970) model of problem-posing education is conducive to transformative learning. This study illustrates the need to understand transformative learning, the conditions that promote it, and the use of a problem-posing model of teaching.

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