Essay: Support for School Leadership: Who is Feeding the Principal?
Barbara Stacy Rieckhoff, PhD

Neila Connors’ well-known book, If You Don’t Feed the Teachers, They Eat The Students (2000), serves as a favorite read for new and aspiring principals. It contains much sage advice for mentoring teachers and supporting their transition in the profession while...

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Essay: Guns, Campus and the Courts
Joseph Cernik, PhD

The Newtown shooting opened up (again) the issue of guns on school grounds, both at the K-12 level and university level, and whether teachers and administrators should be armed. The Newtown shooting also focused attention again on the shootings at the Virginia...

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An Exploratory Analysis of Principals' Self Perceptions of Curricular and Instructional Leadership: Evidence from Ohio

by Jeffrey Bucher, MEd & W. Kyle Ingle, PhD

Abstract

In this study, the researchers sought to determine the relationship between principals’ characteristics, their schools’ characteristics, and the dependent variable—principals’ perceptions of their own curricular and instructional leadership (CIL). The researchers found significant and positive relationships between principal characteristics and CIL, including gender (female) and years of principal experience (p<.01). Principals with prior teaching experience in suburban schools were significantly related to increases in CIL compared to their counterparts with prior teaching experience in charter schools (p<.05). With regard to school-level characteristics, a unit increase in the percentage of African-American students was significantly and positively related to an increase in CIL. However, a unit increase in the percentage of Hispanic students was significantly related to a decrease in CIL.

1. Making Time for Curricular and Instructional Leadership

Broadly speaking, school leaders matter, as does their leadership in curricular/instructional matters. Researchers (Shipps & Firestone, 2003) have indicated that the many facets encompassing the role of the school principal have continually evolved, becoming increasingly complex, comprehensive, and time consuming. The myriad of principal activities have fallen under one of two categories: building manager or curricular-instructional leader. Through the years, much of the principalship has fallen under the category of building manager rather than curriculum-instructional leader (Hunkins & Ornstein, 2004). Wong and Nicotera (2007) have noted that the general focus for school leaders “has been on procedural and programmatic managerial compliance” (p. 41).

Researchers (Hunkins & Ornstein, 2004; Lashway, 2003; Wong & Nicotera, 2007) have indicated that principals consider curricular and instructional leadership a key role, but involvement with daily operations of the school has led to wide discrepancies between actual and desirable time spent on curricular and instructional activities. Involvement in instruction was among the least frequent activities performed by school administrators, who reported only 15 to 20 percent of their time spent on coordinating curricular and instructional activities. Even less time – 3 to 10 percent – was spent observing classroom instruction (Hunkins & Ornstein, 2004). Drake and Roe (2003) reported that principals rated curriculum development as one of the most important principalship tasks—second only to teacher evaluation. In sum, educational leadership researchers have suggested that principals recognize that instructional leadership should be a top priority; but management chores often take precedence,
2. Curricular and Instructional Leadership in Ohio

In 2004, the state of Ohio formed a commission whose members were tasked with developing high level quality job performance standards for the state's teachers and principals (Ohio Department of Education, 2007). The Commission on Teaching Success declared, "The absence of standards that provide principles of professional practice for all teachers and school leaders must be addressed if we are serious about ensuring quality teaching in every Ohio classroom" (Ohio Department of Education, 2007, p. 5). As a result of the commission's findings, the Ohio legislature passed Senate Bill 2 in 2004, establishing an Educator Standards Board charged with writing the standards that are in use today. Ohio's school leaders are expected to use the standards for self-assessments of their performance and planning for their own professional development to enhance future performance.

Drawing from survey responses of practicing school principals in the state of Ohio and school-level data maintained by the Ohio Department of Education (ODE), this study focused on Standard 2 of the Ohio Standards for Principals, which states: "Principals support the implementation of high-quality standards based instruction that results in higher levels of achievement for all students" (Ohio Department of Education, 2007, p. 40). We sought to determine the relationship between principals' characteristics, their school's characteristics, and the dependent variable - principals' perceptions of their own curricular and instructional leadership.

3. Sample

The convenience sample consisted of Ohio elementary and secondary school principals who chose to respond to the electronic survey. Principals' email addresses were obtained from the ODE. The email explained the purpose of the online survey, which was available to respondents for three weeks. The electronic survey was made available to all potential respondents in April 2010, yielding 334 respondents out of 3,624 surveys sent (response rate=9%). Of these, 221 willingly provided building identification numbers, allowing us to add school characteristics in model 2 (response rate=6%). Given the small sample size, we compared our sample of all principal respondents and the sub-sample of respondents that voluntarily provided building identification numbers with the characteristics of principals across Ohio and the nation (see Table 1). With regard to gender, our respondents mirrored that of Ohio. The subsample providing building identification numbers was a greater proportion of males (59%) than females (41%). African-American principals were approximately 13% of public school principals in Ohio. However, the sample and subsample were only 5% and 3%, respectively. Educational attainment comparisons were similar to state percentages with the exception of one. Respondents with doctorates were 10-11% in comparison to Ohio principals statewide. The higher response rate among doctoral earning principals may be explained by their having been through the research process themselves and being able to empathize with needing respondents.

4. Instrumentation

A cross-sectional survey (available upon request from the authors) consisting of 41 closed-structured questions was completed by responding Ohio principals. The instrument consisted of demographic questions written by the researcher and 20 questions related to Standard 2. These were developed by the ODE for use by educators in self-evaluations (2007). The 20 questions exploring principals' knowledge and skills related to Standard 2 consisted of Likert-style questions scaled 0 through 4 with 0 representing "Never"; 1 representing "Rarely"; 2 representing "Sometimes"; 3 representing "Frequently"; and 4 representing "Always" for each element. The researchers pilot tested the instrument by administering it to 12 current/former educators (principals and teachers) before distribution to Ohio principals. Only slight revisions were made to the instrument after pilot testing.

Cronbach's alpha analysis of the items yielded a .928, suggesting more than adequate internal consistency (McMillan, 2004). Principal respondents conducted a self-analysis on the 20 items. These responses were aggregated and served as the dependent variable - principals' self-perceptions of curriculum and instructional leadership (CIL).

5. Data Analysis

In addition to descriptive analysis of our respondents (See Table 2), we undertook multiple regression analysis to examine the relationships between principals' characteristics, their school's characteristics, and their self-perceptions of curricular and instructional leadership (See Table 3). In model 1, the relationships between demographic characteristics of principals and principals' self-perceptions of curriculum and instructional leadership (CIL) were examined. These included variables representing gender, racial characteristics, educational attainment levels, types of degrees earned, teacher licensure characteristics, and prior professional work experiences. In model 2, school-level characteristics were added, including student demographics and school locale.

The researchers first turned their attention to principals' characteristics. In model 1 and model 2, female principals reported significantly higher self-perceptions of curricular and instructional leadership than their male counterparts (p<.01). There was roughly a 6 point increase in self-perception among females in comparison to their male counterparts, holding all other variables constant. Like Smith et al. (2006) we found women to have significantly higher self-perceptions for instructional leadership. Cotton (2003) noted that "women tend to have spent more time as teachers before becoming principals" (p. 53). This finding was borne out in our analysis and may explain this finding. Years of teaching experience, however, were significantly related to self-perceptions of curricular and instructional leadership, but only at the .10 level and only so in model 1.

Also, the researchers tested whether those holding a master's in curriculum and instruction or teaching and learning had significantly higher self-perceptions of curricular and instructional leadership than their counterparts who earned master's degrees in other fields (typically educational administration). Our analysis revealed this to be the case significantly only at the .10 level in model 2. A surprising finding was that an additional earned master's degree was negatively associated with self-perceptions of curricular and instructional leadership. This was significant at only the .10 level in model 1, but significant at the .05 level in model 2. Researchers who have analyzed "quantity versus quality" in educational attainment and a variety of outcome variables (e.g., economic growth, salaries) have produced mixed findings (Breton, 2011; Hanushek & Woessmann, 2008). Our findings may lend some credence to the adage, "the more
Lindenwood University - An Exploratory Analysis of Principals' Self Perceptions of Curricular and Instructional Leadership: Evidence from Ohio

6. Implications

Although years of teaching experience and type of teaching licenses held by respondents were not variables significantly related to self-perceptions of curricular and instructional leadership (except at the .10 level), types of prior teaching experience were. Notably, principals with suburban teaching experience had significantly higher self-perceptions of curricular and instructional leadership than principals with charter school teaching experiences (p<.05), which served as the referent group. Other types of teaching experiences (e.g., rural, urban, and private) were associated with higher self-perceptions than charter school experience, but were either inconsistent across the models or the levels of significance varied from model to model (See Table 3).

Principal respondents were asked to indicate whether they were part of a school improvement plan committee as a teacher. Principals were also asked, "When teaching, I observed peers and provided feedback as part of a teacher evaluation program." Arguably, these experiences might motivate one to pursue the principaship and make them more comfortable with curricular and instructional leadership roles. Principals with school wide committee experienece had significantly higher self-perception scores (p<.05) than principals who did not in model 1. Although the direction of the relationship was similar in model 2, the significance level dropped to the .10 level. Also, we found a unit increase in principal experience was significantly associated (p<.05) with an increase in self-perception of curricular and instructional leadership. This relationship - consistent across both models - suggests that as principals stay in the position longer, their confidence grows.

Middle/junior high school principals had significantly higher self-perception scores than their high school principal counterparts (which served as the referent group). This was significant at only the .10 level in model 1, but at the .05 level in model 2. This may be explained by what has been acknowledged in the literature as a tendency toward developing interdisciplinary teams of teachers in the middle grades. This is undertaken with the rationale that such teams mitigate teacher isolation through working groups of colleagues to discuss and solve problems; that instruction may be improved by increasing integration and coordination across subjects; and that teachers on a team sharing the same group of students will be able to discuss and respond quicker to the needs of individual students (e.g., MacIver & Epstein, 1991; Merenbloom, 1986; Vars, 1987). This common approach to instruction in middle schools may increase self-perceptions of principals because the culture of shared responsibility for instruction and the means of addressing problems as a team are already present.

Researchers hypothesized that principals in urban settings would have significantly lower self-perception scores than counterparts in rural and suburban settings. This was based on research that overwhelmingly had shown urban areas vulnerable to higher teacher attrition rates, higher minority enrollments, higher rates of poverty, higher rates of special education (non-gifted) students, and students speaking English as a second language (e.g., Ingersoll, 2002; Lankford, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2002). School locale was not significant. However, a unit increase in African-American students in the responding principals' school was associated with a significant increase in curricular and instructional self-perceptions (p<.05). The reverse was so for principals in schools with higher percentages of Hispanic students (p<.05). The language difference and the inherent challenges to providing an education to these non-English speaking students may explain this significant and negative relationship.

As to overall model quality, the adjusted R-squared - the proportion of Y variability explained by the model(s) - increased from .172 in model 1 to a .300 in model 2. However, the valid n-size decreased in model 2. This was because principals were asked to provide their buildings' unique identifying numbers (IRN) as part of the survey. A total of 113 respondents opted not to do so or did not know it. As such, a conveniend sample and small n-size were characteristics that limit the generalizability of our study. Given these limitations, our findings should be interpreted with caution.

We have acknowledged that our exploratory study was hampered by a convenience sample and a small response rate/sample size in comparison to the population (Ohio principals). Hopefully, researchers will be more successful in obtaining larger or even random samples in future studies in order to gain statistical power. Researchers may also want to move beyond self-perceptions as a dependent variable. After all, one may believe oneself to be excellent curricular and instructional leaders, but perceptions of curricular and instructional leadership among stakeholders (e.g., teachers, parents, school board, superintendent) may be at odds with those of the school leader. Student outcomes, teacher attrition rates, faculty and staff members' job satisfaction (or lack thereof) may provide evidence that suggests one's self-perceptions are inflated.

There is the potential for researchers to add principal characteristics and behaviors to value-added models that seek to isolate the impact of a teacher or principal on student learning. Value-added models are controversial and fraught with issues (e.g., McCaffrey et al., 2004). However, in response to requirements for federal Race to the Top funds, Ohio lawmakers have legislated a system in which Ohio principals and teachers are evaluated using a framework in which fifty percent is based on measures of student academic growth (Ohio Revised Code §3319.112). Policymakers at the state and federal level continue to see this as a promising approach for increasing teacher and principal accountability. This policy development reinforces our most important implication for school leadership practice - hiring principals who can be effective curricular and instructional leaders.

The careful recruitment and selection of principals (Brown-Ferrigno & Shoho, 2004) is as relevant today as ever. If principals with higher self-perceptions of curricular and instructional leadership are indeed more effective, our findings suggest that school districts may want to recruit more females, who tend to have longer careers as teachers, and are historically under-represented in the principal ranks (Crow & Glascock, 1995). Principals - most of whom have experience as teachers - are expected to recognize quality in the delivery of curriculum and instruction. When hiring for school leadership positions, school superintendents and boards should consider candidates' prior experiences as teacher leaders (e.g., school improvement plan committee service). These may serve as valuable signals of fitness for the role of school leaders and evidence of strong motivation. There are risks in hiring a candidate for a school leadership position who is less experienced in the classroom. Superintendents and school boards must ask themselves, "Can someone be an effective instructional leader with so few years in a classroom?" Students and teachers need school leaders confident and capable in the
facilitation of teaching and learning - the "technical core" of schools (e.g., Hoy & Miskel, 2008).

Related Items:

- Table 1: Demographic Comparison
- Table 2: Descriptive Analysis
- Table 3: Multiple Regression Analysis
- Article References
Table 1.

Demographic Comparison

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<thead>
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<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Ohio—Sample</th>
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### Table 2.

**Descriptive Analysis**

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| CIL                           | Composite Score          | 18| 80 | 58.00| 10.851 |

*Valid n (listwise): 334*
Table 3.  
*Multiple Regression Analysis*

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<td>-----</td>
<td>-----</td>
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<td>0.070</td>
<td>2.196**</td>
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<tr>
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Valid n= 334
Adj. R² = .172

Valid n= 221
Adj. R² = .300

Notes: *Significant at .10; **Significant at .05; ***Significant at .01
References


Browne-Ferrigno, T., & Shoho, A. (2004). Careful selection of aspiring principals: An exploratory analysis of leadership preparation program admission practices. In C. S. Carr & C. L. Fulmer (Eds.), *Educational leadership: Knowing the way, showing the way, going the way* (pp. 172-189). Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Education.


Teacher Effectiveness among Female Teachers in Primary and Secondary Schools in Southwestern Nigeria

by Ireti Folasade Alao, PhD

Abstract

This study determined the level of female teachers' effectiveness in primary and secondary schools and specific factors related to the effectiveness of female teachers in southwestern Nigeria. The teacher effectiveness rating scale was used in gathering data on a sample of 2,400 female teachers in selected Nigerian primary and secondary schools. The analysis of data shows that a high percentage (78.3%) of the teachers were effective. More specifically, 81.4% of the primary school female teachers were effective, while 75.1% of the secondary school female teachers were effective. The difference in effectiveness was found to be statistically significant (t =4.93, p<0.05). Workload and multiple role performance were found to have a significant relationship with female teachers' effectiveness (χ² =30.49, p<0.05 and χ² = 31.52, p<0.05 respectively), while schedule of duty and status at work had no significant relationship with female teachers' effectiveness (χ² =21.37, p>0.05 and χ² = 15.49, p>0.05 respectively). Recommendations were made on improving the effectiveness of female teachers by assigning light teaching periods that would allow attention for other non-teaching duties, as well as development of skills and access to counseling interventions to ameliorate challenges that may affect their performance at work.

1. Introduction

Researchers have shown that teacher effectiveness is one of the keys to improve students' educational outcomes. Rivkin, Hanushek & Kain (2002) and Clotfelter, Ladd & Vigdor, (2007) found that effective teachers have significant impact on students' ability to learn. Sanders & Rivers (1996) and Gordon, Kane & Staiger (2006) also found that students who consistently have an effective teacher benefit exponentially from schooling. Alliance for Excellent Education (2008) emphasized the fact that effectiveness, more than any other indicator of teacher quality, is the area in which policy makers and educators must focus their attention in order to improve students' educational achievement.

Moreover, to achieve the Education For All (EFA) goals and the Millennium Development Goals, researchers have emphasized that attention should be focused on the provision of quality teachers for primary and secondary school education who will be able to teach and equip the students with the opportunities they need to optimize their potentials and contribute to the growth and development of the society and humanity. Presently in Nigeria, the delivery of basic education is more or less in the hands of the female teachers, as statistics from the Federal Ministry of Education (2003) have shown that the percentage of female teachers, especially at the elementary level, is higher than that of the male teachers (female teachers- 53.8%, male teachers- 27.7%). Females have been found to be warm, patient, and meticulous. They have also been found to be affected more emotionally and psychologically than males by situations, events, gender roles and role conflicts, and
socio-cultural demands, while also experiencing more professional burnout. Therefore, investigating some of the factors affecting female teachers’ effectiveness will go a long way in improving the quality of the majority of teachers who will deliver the nation’s educational goals. Such investigation could provide valuable information that could help in a better understanding of the female teachers and enable necessary interventions that could help them perform their professional duties at their best. This will invariably contribute to improving the condition of the educational system in Nigeria.

Since the 1920s, teacher effectiveness has been a focus of research because of its importance and relevance in the measurement of students’ achievement at school. Research on teacher effectiveness have focused on various aspects of the subject matter, ranging from indicators of teacher effectiveness to a paradigm of operations and measurement. Ryans (1953) viewed teacher effectiveness as the extent to which the teacher does things, or behaves in ways that are favorable to the development of skills, understandings, work habits, desirable attitudes, and adequate personal adjustment on the part of the pupils and students. He defined the essence of a teacher’s role as guiding the learning or development of others, and all other roles and responsibilities of the teacher were considered important only in enhancing this essential function. Campbell, Kyriakides,Muij & Robinson (2003) defined teacher effectiveness as the power to realize socially valued objectives agreed for teachers’ work, especially, but not exclusively, the work concerned with enabling pupils to learn. Studies (Bajunid, 2000; Klette, 2000 and PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2001) have also shown that the significance of teachers’ work outside the classroom is also increasing, and that teachers typically spend less than half their working time on classroom instruction, while spending more time on lesson preparation, marking, report writing, curriculum development, and social and welfare tasks of pupils and parents. Empirical studies of teachers’ work by Campbell & Neill (1994) and PricewaterhouseCoopers (2001) also showed that teachers typically spend less than half their working time on classroom instruction while the remaining time is occupied by other extra-classroom activities like administrative and clerical tasks, marking, lesson preparation, meetings, report writing, curriculum development, social and welfare tasks with students and parents, school management, leadership roles, and professional development. It has also been postulated that given the education reforms and the development of modern education systems in various countries, the roles of the teacher should not be limited to cognitive activities; rather, they should include the management of people, relationships, and handling of pastoral and welfare matters in the school system.

In this study, teacher effectiveness refers to the extent to which the teacher performs the professional activities that enable the student to gain the maximum from the school system. This was measured through the teacher’s rating on the performance of her professional duties of teaching, classroom management, teacher task responsiveness, feedback to students, respect for students, behavior management skills, and student development.

Studies (Chen & Yang, 2004; Fan, Wang, & Ma, 2004; Hou & Zhang., 1998; Li, 2001; LIU Yu, 2005; Wang & Li, 2002; Zhang, Cao & Miao, 2006 and Zhao, 2006) conducted on female teachers reported that female teachers are a special group of people, who although in the majority, are often not given adequate attention and consideration. In addition, most of them were inclined to lose their enthusiasm for work, had little interest in personal accomplishment, took no pride in their profession, and had a lower efficiency in the work (LIU Yu, 2005).

Few studies have been conducted particularly on female teachers in Nigeria, but deductions have been made on Nigerian female teachers from studies conducted on Nigerian teachers generally with bias in gender. Mallam (2005) in his study of the impact of gender of teacher on students’ attitudes toward mathematics found that female students learned mathematics better when they were taught by female teachers. Akiri & Ugborguobo (2009); Ladebo (2005); Ma & Macmillan (1999) and Michaelowa (2002) in their various studies of job satisfaction among Nigerian teachers, revealed that female teachers found their jobs more satisfying than male teachers did. Sargent & Hannum (2003) found that gender does not have a statistically significant relationship with teachers’ job satisfaction, though female teachers appeared to be more satisfied with their teaching career. In a study conducted by Jiajia (2008) on the belief system of 60 principals and vice principals on the productivity of teachers in their schools, it was reported that the majority of them considered experience, graduate, qualified, unmarried, and permanent teachers more productive. Male principals, however, held the view that male teachers were more productive than the females, whom they considered disadvantaged by domestic responsibilities. Researchers agreed that variations in life situations, events, and roles affect females in the society; the extent to which these may affect the effectiveness of female teachers in Nigeria was the focus of this study.

This study therefore set out to:

i) determine the level of effectiveness of female teachers in primary and secondary schools in Southwestern Nigeria

ii) identify the factors that may be related to female teachers’ effectiveness

iii) examine differences in the effectiveness of female teachers in primary schools and those in secondary schools.

To meet these goals, the following hypotheses were postulated and tested;

1) There is no significant relationship between female teachers’ effectiveness and each of their schedules of duty, work load, multiple role performance, and status at work.

2) There is no significant difference in the effectiveness of female teachers in primary and secondary schools in Southwestern Nigeria.

2. Methodology

The population for the study consisted of married, never married (singles), and unmarried (divorced, separated, widowed) Nigerian female professional teachers in primary and secondary schools in Southwestern Nigeria. All six southwestern states—Lagos, Ogun, Oyo, Osun, Ondo, and Ekiti—participated in the study. The multistage sampling technique was used in the sample selection for this study. Each of the states were divided into three senatorial districts from which one was randomly selected for the study. The senatorial districts selected for the study were Ekiti South, Lagos Central, Ogun Central, Ondo Central, Osun East, and Oyo South. Thereafter, 10 primary...
and 10 secondary schools were randomly selected in each of the selected senatorial districts. In each of the primary schools selected, 20 female teachers were randomly selected to participate in the study. In each senatorial district, 200 secondary school female teachers were selected using the stratified sampling technique. The strata used were sciences, arts, social sciences, languages, and vocational & technical education. For each stratum, 40 female teachers were randomly selected. This was to avoid lopsidedness in the selection of the female secondary school teachers for the study. Finally, 1,200 female primary school teachers were selected from 60 primary schools, and 1,200 female secondary school teachers were selected from 60 secondary schools, 2,400 female teachers participated in the study.

The age range of the female teachers who participated in the study were between 20 and 56 years. Four hundred and forty-three of the teachers were between 20 and 30 years of age, 834 were between 31 and 40 years of age, and 884 were between the ages of 41 and 50 years, while 239 were between the ages of 51 and 56 years. The years of experience of the teachers ranged between 1 and 34 years. Teachers with years of experience between 1 and 10 years were 1,007, while 711 of the teachers had years of experience between 11 and 20 years, and 682 had years of experience between 21 and 34 years. Among the female teachers, 296 were single, 50 were separated/divorced, 50 were widowed, and 2,004 were married. In terms of qualification, 46 of the female teachers possessed the Teacher’s Grade II Certificate, 1,229 had the Nigeria Certificate of Education, 1,002 held the Bachelor's Degree in Education, while 52 held the Master’s Degree in Education and 71 possessed the Postgraduate Diploma in Education.

The research instrument used for data collection was the Teacher Effectiveness Rating Scale (TERS). The Teacher Effectiveness Rating Scale (TERS) was developed by Omoteso (1998). The scale consisted of sections A and B. Section A included 7 items eliciting demographic information. Section B included 20 items each, with 4 levels of rating scale. Scores varied from 4 for “very effective” to 1 for “not effective.” Total scores ranged from 20–80. Scores below 50 (which is the median score for the scale) indicated unfavorable effectiveness rating (i.e., not effective), while scores above 50 indicated favorable effectiveness rating (i.e., effective). The Teacher Effectiveness Rating Scale had a correlation coefficient (r) of 0.68 and coefficient alpha of 0.76.

TERS was administered on the selected teachers in their schools. The selected teachers responded to section “A” of the “Teacher Effectiveness Rating Scale,” while the heads teachers and the heads of departments rated the effectiveness of the selected teachers by responding to the section “B” of the Scale. The responses to the instrument were scored and analyzed.

3. Data analysis

Data collected for the study were subjected to descriptive and inferential statistics, using the SPSS statistical package. Results of the analyses and discussion of the findings are presented below. To determine the effectiveness of the female teachers, the median score (i.e., 50) on the TERS was used in the classification. Teachers whose scores on the TERS were above 50 were considered to be effective, while those whose scores were below 50 were considered not effective. Using this classification, the female teachers’ scores on the TERS were processed, and the results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1 shows that 81.4% of female teachers in primary schools were effective, and 11% were not effective. Among female teachers in the secondary schools, 75.1% were effective, and 8.7% were not effective. On the whole, 78.3% of the respondents were effective, and 9.8% were not effective.

Research Hypothesis 1

Hypothesis 1 states that there is no significant relationship between female teachers’ effectiveness and each of their schedules of duty, workload, multiple role performance, and status at work. In order to test this hypothesis, each of these variables were cross tabulated with levels of teacher effectiveness and the relationship of each of the variables were tested using the chi-square. In the analysis, duty post/position of authority was input as schedule of duty with two levels of classification, namely teachers with extra schedule of duty and teachers without extra schedule of duty. Number of periods taught per week also represented workload, with two levels of classification namely light workload and heavy workload. Marital status represented multiple role performance while qualification was input as status at work. The results are presented in Tables 2, 3, 4, and 5.

Relationship between Schedule of duty and Teacher Effectiveness of Female Teachers in Southwestern Nigeria.

Based on their responses on duty post/position of responsibility, the female teachers were grouped into two groups, namely, teachers with positions of responsibility (i.e., class teachers having other schedules of duty other than that of a class teacher, e.g., games mistress, PTA secretary, chairman/secretary of committee) and teachers without positions of responsibility (i.e., class teachers having schedules of duties of a class teacher only). Using these classifications, schedule of duty was cross tabulated with levels of teacher effectiveness for chi-square analysis. The results are presented in Table 2.

Results in Table 2 show that 77.9% of teachers without extra schedules of duty were effective, while 9.7% were not effective. Among teachers with extra schedules of duty, 84.6% were effective and 10.5% were not effective. The results in Table 2 show that there was no significant relationship between schedule of duty and teacher effectiveness of female teachers in Southwestern Nigeria ($\chi^2=21.372$, df = 14, N =2400, p<0.05). For this variable (schedule of duty), therefore, hypothesis 1 was accepted, indicating that there was no significant relationship between schedule of duty and female teachers’ effectiveness.

Results in Table 3 show that 83.6% of teachers with light workloads were effective, while 8.9% was not effective. Among teachers with heavy workloads, 78.5% was effective and 10.3% was not effective. The results in Table 3 show that there was a significant relationship between workload and teacher effectiveness of female teachers in Southwestern Nigeria ($\chi^2=30.492$, df = 4, N =2400, p<0.05). For this variable (workload), therefore, hypothesis 1 was rejected, indicating that there was a significant relationship between workload and female teachers’ effectiveness.

Relationship between Multiple Role Performance and Teacher Effectiveness of Female Teachers in Southwestern Nigeria.

http://www.lindenwood.edu/ela/issue02/alao.html[7/30/2013 3:07:36 PM]
Based on their responses on marital status, the female teachers were grouped into four groups, namely, teachers who were single (i.e. never married), teachers who were divorced or separated from their husbands, teachers who were widowed, and teachers who were married. Using these classifications, multiple role performance was cross-tabulated with levels of teacher effectiveness for chi-square analysis. The results are presented in Table 4.

Results in Table 4 show that 72.6% of teachers who are single were effective, while 7.4% were not effective. Among teachers who were divorced or separated from their husbands, 72.0% were effective and 4.0% were not effective. Among teachers who were widowed, 78.0% were effective, while 12.0% were not effective. Seventy-nine point two percent of teachers who were married were effective, and 10.3% of them were not effective. The frequency counts were subjected to the chi-square test to determine the relationship between workload of the female teachers and their level of effectiveness. The results in Table 5 show that there was a significant relationship between multiple role performance and teacher effectiveness of female teachers in Southwestern Nigeria ($\chi^2 =31.520, df = 6, N =2400, p<0.05$). For this variable (multiple role performance), therefore, hypothesis 1 was rejected, indicating that there was a significant relationship between multiple role performance and female teachers’ effectiveness.

**Relationship Between Status at Work and Teacher Effectiveness of Female Teachers in Southwestern Nigeria.**

Based on their responses on highest qualification obtained, the female teachers were grouped into 7 categories using certification nomenclature. It was assumed that level of certificate determines hierarchy at places of work, and therefore status at work could be determined using level of certificate. Using these classifications, status at work was cross-tabulated with levels of teacher effectiveness for chi-square analysis. The results are presented in Table 5.

Results in Table 5 show that 69.6% of teachers who have Teachers’ Grade II certificates were effective while 8.7% were not effective. Among teachers who have NCE certificate holders, 79.8% were effective and 10.3% were not effective. Among teachers having bachelor’s certificate in education, 77.3% of those with B.Sc and B.A. degrees were effective, and 9.5% were not effective, while 76.6% of those with B.Ed. certificate were effective and 9.1% of them were not effective. Eighty four percent of teachers with M.A. (Ed.) certificates were effective, and 4.0% of them were not effective, while 77.8% of teachers with M.ED certificates were effective, and 7.4% were not effective. Among teachers with PGDE certificates, 73.2% were effective, while 12.7% were not effective.

The results in Table 5 show that there was no significant relationship between status at work and teacher effectiveness of female teachers in Southwestern Nigeria ($\chi^2 =15.492, df = 12, N =2400, p>0.05$). For this variable (status at work), therefore, hypothesis 1 was accepted, indicating that there was no significant relationship between status at work and female teachers’ effectiveness. Results of the analyses show that workload and multiple role performance had a significant relationship with female teachers’ effectiveness, while schedule of duty and status at work did not have a significant relationship with female teachers’ effectiveness.

**Research Hypothesis 2**

Hypothesis 2 states that there is no significant difference in the effectiveness of female teachers in primary and secondary schools in Southwestern Nigeria. In testing this hypothesis, the mean scores of female primary school teachers and female secondary school teachers on the teacher effectiveness rating scale were compared using the independent t-test. The results of the analysis are presented in Table 6.

The results in Table 6 show that the primary school female teachers had a mean score of 57.82 and a standard deviation of 20.41, while the secondary school female teachers had a mean score of 53.03 and a standard deviation of 26.70, with a mean difference of 4.79. The independent t-test showed that the difference between the means was significant ($t =4.927, df =2398, p<.05$). Hypothesis 2 was therefore rejected, indicating that there was a significant difference between the effectiveness of female teachers in Southwestern Nigeria. This implies that primary school female teachers, with the higher mean score, were more effective than secondary school female teachers in Southwestern Nigeria.

**Discussion**

Results of the analysis show that schedule of duty and status at work, had no significant relationship with teacher effectiveness, while workload and multiple role performance had a significant relationship with teacher effectiveness. This may be due to the fact that some schedules of duty may not have a direct relationship with students’ teaching and learning, or overall behavior (e.g., games mistress, chairman/secretary of committee, secretary to P.T.A.). Also, status at work may have taken some teachers away from some student-based activities like teaching; instead, they have become senior tutors who supervise other teachers on a lower status. This is in agreement with Leigh’s (2007) report that qualification does not seem to affect female teachers’ effectiveness significantly, whereas workload and multiple role performance are tasking and demanding on the individual and as such would affect the female teachers’ effectiveness. Teachers with teaching periods between 1 and 20 were found to be more effective, due to an average of 4 teaching periods or less per day and therefore time to attend to other non-teaching duties. Teachers with teaching periods between 21-40 were not as effective, due to an average of more than four to up to eight periods per day, leaving them with little or no time to attend to other non-teaching duties. Moreover, other personal activities and roles of the female teachers contend with the remaining hours of the day outside the classroom. This, coupled with a heavy workload, may affect some female teachers emotionally and psychologically, making them irritable, touchy, edgy, and—at the extreme—aggressive.

Neva (2007) studied teacher effectiveness in relation to work satisfaction among 300 secondary school teachers in Nepal and found that teacher effectiveness positively related to work/job satisfaction, especially among teachers in government secondary schools. Day, Stobart, Sammons, Kington, Gu, Smees & Mujtaba (2006), in a study of teacher effectiveness among 300 primary and secondary school teachers in local authority schools in the United Kingdom, found that teachers’ capacities to be effective are influenced by variations in their work, personal life, and professional identities, as well as their capacity to manage these variables. They concluded that teachers’ sense of positive professional identity was associated with well-being and job satisfaction and a key factor in their effectiveness.
Perhaps this result indicates that female teachers in primary and secondary schools in Southwestern Nigeria enjoy variations in their work, lives, and professional identities, and that they are capable of managing all the events for effective well-being in the performance of their professional duties. Guarino, Santibanez & Daley (2006) and Ingersoll (2005) reported that low pay and poor working conditions undermine teachers’ long-term commitment to their jobs and teacher working conditions (indicated by overall job satisfaction, perceptions of work environments, and willingness to continue to teach) and salary levels are critical in the issue of teacher effectiveness (Boyd et al, 2005; Hanushek, Kain & Rivkin, 2004).

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

Results of the study showed that the majority of female teachers were effective teachers. However, the percentage of female teachers that were effective in the primary school was higher than the percentage of female teachers that were effective in secondary schools in Southwestern Nigeria.

Workload and multiple role performance were found to have a significant relationship with, and affect, female teachers’ effectiveness. Teachers with workloads less than 20 periods per week were found to be more effective than teachers with more than 20 periods per week. Perhaps teachers with such light teaching periods had time for other professional duties than teachers with heavy teaching periods. This suggests that teaching periods should be allocated to female teachers to allow some space to attend to professional duties other than teaching. Limiting maximum teaching periods of female teachers to four periods per day may help keep the female teachers effective while affording them time to attend to other nonteaching duties that contribute to their professional effectiveness. However, investigations on optimum workload that will enhance effective performance of the female teachers would be necessary.

Moreover, the significant relationship found between multiple role performance and female teachers’ effectiveness is in line with the findings of research earlier discussed that females are affected by situations, events, gender roles, socio-cultural demands, and role-conflicts. This suggests that female teachers would benefit from some skills to balance their job and life demands in order to be effective in the discharge of their professional duties. It will therefore be necessary to lay at the disposal of female teachers some counseling interventions for skill development from time to time to help them adjust to the changing realities in life and on the job, and at the same time be effective in the discharge of their professional duties. One week before resumption for the term could be set aside as a period for skill development programs for female teachers in preparation for the term. Life skills such as self-acceptance, self-confidence, positive self-concept, self-efficacy, self-management, life-crisis management, and skills for effective relationship management could be topics for discussion in order to support the female teachers for effective performance against all odds. Their professional skills could also be enhanced with some skills such as communication, ethical observance, academics, leadership, discipline strategies, classroom management, and teacher-student relationship. Workshops, seminars, and refresher courses should also be developed for teachers as necessary to keep them abreast of knowledge and methodologies in their subject areas and education. A well-developed and adequately equipped guidance and counseling unit should be operational in every school, where services could be made available and accessible to female teachers in the school system in order to ameliorate the challenges faced by female teachers.

However, there was a significant difference in the effectiveness of female teachers in primary schools and those in secondary schools. Female teachers in primary schools were more effective than female teachers in the secondary schools. Further investigation is needed to identify the factors responsible for the difference.

Finally, effective monitoring of teachers’ activities in the school system for effectiveness and quality control by appropriate monitoring or regulatory agencies may help in detecting early signs of inadequacy or professional burnout on the part of any teacher, and necessary and appropriate intervention should be put in place. In addition, necessary referrals should be made to the counseling unit when and if necessary.

###

Related Items:

- Table 1: Level of Effectiveness of Female Teachers
- Table 2: Relationship between Schedule of Duty and Teacher Effectiveness of Female
- Table 3: Relationship between Work Load and Teacher Effectiveness
- Table 4: Relationship between Multiple Role performance and Teacher Effectiveness
- Table 5: Relationship between Status at work and Teacher Effectiveness
- Table 6: Difference in the Effectiveness of Female Teachers
- Article References

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Table 1.  
*Level of Effectiveness of Female Teachers in Primary and Secondary Schools in Southwestern Nigeria*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Teacher Effectiveness</th>
<th>Primary School</th>
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<th>Secondary School</th>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Effective</td>
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<td>901</td>
<td>75.1</td>
<td>1878</td>
<td>78.3</td>
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<td>Not effective</td>
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<td>104</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>236</td>
<td>9.8</td>
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Table 2. 
*Relationship between Schedule of Duty and Teacher Effectiveness of Female Teachers in Southwestern Nigeria*

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<th>df</th>
<th>p</th>
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<td>Effective</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Teachers</td>
<td>N</td>
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<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
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<td>without extra</td>
<td>1712</td>
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<td>schedule of duty</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Teachers with</td>
<td>137</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
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<td>extra schedule</td>
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<tr>
<td>of duty</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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Table 3. 
*Relationship between Work Load and Teacher Effectiveness of Female Teachers in Southwestern Nigeria*

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<th>Work Load</th>
<th>Level of Teacher Effectiveness</th>
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<th>%</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
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<th>df</th>
<th>p</th>
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<td>Teachers with light workload</td>
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<td>75</td>
<td>8.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teachers with heavy workload</td>
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<td>75</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>35</td>
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<td>78.2</td>
<td>236</td>
<td>9.8</td>
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Table 4. 
*Relationship between Multiple Role performance and Teacher Effectiveness of Female Teachers in Southwestern Nigeria.*

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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Effective</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Single (never been married)</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>72.6</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>7.4</td>
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<td>Separated/Divorced</td>
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<td>4.0</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Widowed</td>
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<td>78.0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
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<td>Married</td>
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<td>206</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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<td>78.2</td>
<td>236</td>
<td>9.8</td>
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Table 5. 
Relationship between Status at work and Teacher Effectiveness of Female Teachers in Southwestern Nigeria.

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Status at Work</th>
<th>Level of Teacher Effectiveness</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>$\chi^2$</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>p</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Not Effective</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Grade II</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>12</td>
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Table 6
*Difference in the Effectiveness of Female Teachers in Primary and Secondary Schools in Southwestern Nigeria*

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<th>Groups</th>
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<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>P</th>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2398</td>
<td>4.927*</td>
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<td>Secondary school female teachers</td>
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<td>53.03</td>
<td>26.70</td>
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References


Rivkin, S. G., Hanushek, E. A. & Kain, J. F. (2002). Teachers, schools and academic achievement. Dallas; University of Texas-Dallas, Texas Schools Project.


Closing the Gap? Persistent Underperformance of Black Minorities in Former Whites-Only SA Schools

by LM Dreyer, PhD & SAM Singh

Abstract

This paper is based on a study that explored the life experiences of Xhosa-speaking learners as a minority in a former whites-only school in the Western Cape province of South Africa. The focus was specifically on the factors that contribute to the continued poor academic performance of this minority group within the school. Identifying and understanding these factors as challenges to academic success can help teachers and schools provide appropriate support structures to maximize the potential of these learners. Research has shown that programs of support will only be effective if they appreciate and cater to the needs of the learners concerned (Michael, Andrade & Bartlett, 2007; Ogbu 2003; Rhamie & Hallam, 2002). The purpose of this paper is to highlight the role of peers and teachers in contributing to persistent underperformance of minority Xhosa speakers in a former whites-only school in the Western Cape province of South Africa.

1. Theoretical Framework

The advent of the newly democratized government in South Africa brought about the opening of all school doors. The South African Schools Act (DoE, 1996) formalized this access to quality education for all by granting learners access to any school regardless of social, economic, race, or cultural background. Many black families in South Africa enrolled their children into former white-only schools, believing that these schools were better resourced and that their children would therefore receive a better education. Many of these children have to travel long distances from the townships to the suburbs to attend school. However, research has shown continued poor academic performance of racial and linguistic minorities in these schools. Although the generic racial term "Black" refers to all who were previously referred to as non-whites (indigenous Africans, colored people, and Indians) under the Apartheid government, this study focused specifically on the life experiences of the Xhosa learners who belong to the group of people from indigenous Africans.

A wealth of research (Altinyelken, 2009; Nickerson & Kritsonis, 2006; Ogbu, 2003) highlights some of the challenges to learning and development that may affect effective learning. Language and cultural differences have been identified as barriers and are particularly relevant in our diverse South African society. Research has shown that children who attend schools where the language of learning and teaching (LoLT) is in their second language experience tremendous conflict, especially if the parents and caregivers are not proficient in the second language ( Altinyelken, 2008; Prinsloo, 2005; Yeh, Okubo, Ma, Shea, Ou & Pituc, 2008;). Landsberg, Kruger and Nel (2005) proposed that when such children enter school, these abilities and cultural differences are not understood, and this can lead to social awkwardness and discomfort in the school situation that, in turn, could affect academic success in school.

However, underperformance of minority groups is not an exclusive South African phenomenon. Altinyelken (2009) conducted a qualitative study into the educational challenges of migrant girls whose families moved from rural areas in the east to the western parts of Turkey. This study revealed that the girls, as a minority group with a language and culture different from the larger, general population...
within these schools, encountered a number of challenges that influenced their educational achievement. Themes which emerged from this study included adaptation, language, peer relations, discrimination, bullying, and self-esteem. These themes are all relevant to the scope of the study on which this paper is reporting.

Discovering not only what causes these disparities in academic performance among minority groups, but also what factors contribute to their academic success, has become increasingly important. These factors can serve to guide and inform future measures of support provided for learners, parents, and teachers within the context of fostering academic success (Ogbu, 2003). In a study that explored why Asian American students perform better than other minority groups, parental involvement, time spent on task, and study habits were identified as factors that contributed to academic success (Nickerson & Kritsonis, 2006). In addition, Ogbu (2003) suggested that the enhancement of the student's academic orientation through supplementary educational programs and the creation of a cultural context that increases the value of academic success are important factors to consider when examining academic achievement among minority communities. Furthermore, he suggests that visible academic role models, effective parental strategies, perseverance, and working hard are factors in achieving good grades.

The important role that teachers play with regard to creating an environment that fosters academic success cannot be ignored (Vandeyar, 2010). Teachers have to be aware of their own prejudices and engage in reflective practices where they critically assess the effect of their views and practices in the classroom. They must find ways to provide an inclusive, nurturing environment where learners from different backgrounds feel safe to express themselves freely (Ferrer, 2011; Sleeter & Grant, 1994). Teachers should use the learners' cultural and linguistic assets as a basis for providing positive and socially meaningful classroom experiences. Learning from and with their students can help teachers to be more effective (Michael, Andrade & Bartlett, 2007; Vandeyar, 2010).

The knowledge and insights gained through these and other studies can prove to be valuable in overcoming the challenges minority groups' experience. In order to truly achieve equality for all, the life experiences of all individuals have to be appreciated and catered to, to better inform future measures of support aimed at improving their academic performance (Nickerson & Kritsonis, 2006; Ogbu, 2003).

A bio-systemic theoretical framework guided this qualitative research project (Bronfenbrenner & Evans, 2000). This framework enabled the researchers to contextualize the study within the interacting systems that indirectly and directly influence the life experiences of the participants. The study was conducted within an interpretive qualitative research paradigm as the researchers needed to understand the life experiences of the participants that could possibly contribute to continued poor academic performance (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). Qualitative research is a scientific research design and is fundamentally interested in how the participants give meaning to their own situations (Merriam & Associates, 2002). This was particularly valuable as the aim of this research was to explore the meaning of phenomena as experienced by the learners themselves (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). Working within this framework provided the researchers the opportunity to understand the learners' unique experiences within the particular context of the school.

2. Methodology and Data Collection

This research was conducted at a previously whites-only school in South Africa. The school is well resourced in terms of facilities and experienced, qualified staff. At the time of the study there were 53 staff members, of whom 48 were white and five were colored educators. There were no black, Xhosa-speaking educators on the staff. The school is situated in an urban area and serves a learner population of approximately one thousand and four learners. Sixty-five of these learners are the black second-language learners who formed a minority of less than 7% at the time of the research.

The participants were purposely selected as information rich sources at the specific school. They were Xhosa-speaking learners in grades 9 to 11 (two learners per grade). They had all attended the particular school from grade 8 (SA high schools provide for grades 8-12). Only one of the six participants lived within walking distance of the school. The other five had to travel about five kilometers from the nearby township (black residential area from the previous dispensation). These learners commuted to school using public transportation, i.e. bus or taxi.

Data for this study was collected through individual semi-structured interviews and a focus group interview. These interviews were audiotaped with permission of the participants.

The semi-structured interviews were guided by an interview schedule that served as a basic checklist to ensure that key topics were covered (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999). The interviews were flexible and respected the way the participants structured their responses. This allowed the participants' views to unfold as they perceived them (the emic perspective) and not as the researcher views them (the etic perspective) (Patten, 2009).

The themes that guided the interviews, such as educational experience, school environment, work ethic, and motivation were identified through an extensive literature review and an evaluation of the various programs of academic support instituted by the school. These academic support programs are discussed in more detail under document analysis below. These interviews allowed the researcher to understand the meanings of everyday experiences in relation to their influence on the academic performance of the participants (Marshall & Rossman, 2011).

The focus group interview allowed the researcher to further explore the identified themes that emerged from the semi-structured interviews. The group discussed these particular themes while the researcher acted as a facilitator to ensure that the discussion remained on the themes of interest (Barbour, 2010). One benefit of a focus group interview is that it can be used as a means of revealing the development of perceptions in a social context. As more than one person participates in this interview, it allowed for a greater variety of information than can be obtained through the individual interview (Barbour, 2010). The focus group interview further allowed for immediate follow up and clarification of views and misconceptions (Patten, 2009; Merriam & Associates, 2002). This safe and supportive environment created in the focus group discussion enabled the researcher to explore themes that needed further clarification and to obtain consensus on the themes as identified by the researcher. The themes identified were: Learning in a second language, Ethos of the school, and Home environment. Participants were also given the opportunity to raise any other matters that might not have
been mentioned during the individual semi-structured interviews.

For this study, it was important to look at policy documents at national and school level as it related to inclusion and providing access to quality education for all learners. These documents included Education White Paper 6 (DoE, 2001), the academic support program, the schools' language policy, and the South Africans Schools Act (DoE, 1996) which provided guidelines to school governing bodies in determining the language policy of a school.

Although the school can decide on the language used for teaching and learning (LoLT), language may not be used as a barrier to admission. Governing bodies must stipulate how their schools will promote multilingualism, as failing a language will result in failing a grade (DoE, 1997). Since the school had predominantly English first language learners, the LoLT of the school was English.

The academic support program included extra lessons offered in various subjects and various reading support initiatives. The learners could access these on a voluntary basis. The value these policies and programs had for the participants were explored through the interview methods discussed previously.

3. Data analysis

The collected data was analyzed through the qualitative process of content analysis. Themes were identified that explained the patterns noted in the responses of the participants (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999). A process of coding was then undertaken to highlight and group information according to identified themes. This was done through examining the verbatim transcripts of the interviews to identify distinct categories that were then coded with individual names (Merriam & Associates, 2002). Themes identified were Ethos of the school, Learning in a second language, and Home environment.

4. Results and Discussion

The findings indicated that the respondents and their parents link the major reasons for continued poor academic performance of this minority group to discriminative attitudes of teachers and peers and feelings of inadequacy. Although the findings from this study indicated various factors affecting learner achievement, this came as an unexpected surprise since the country is almost two decades into the new democratic post-apartheid era. The focus of this paper will therefore be on the theme that emerged as:

Ethos of the school with specific focus on the categories identified as:

1. Peer relationships
2. Teacher attitudes and support

However, the theme Learning in a second language with categories 1) schooling, 2) loss of first language and 3) reasons for attending the school provided significant context for the discussion. The study revealed that the participants indicated that they did not have a problem learning in a second language as they had been attending an English school from grade one. However, they did indicate that this led to loss of development of their mother tongue.

When asked why they chose to attend this school and not the school in their township that is within walking distance and which has a majority of Xhosa learners, the responses of the participants revealed a perception that one has access to better opportunities if one attends a white school:

 Respondent 5: "My mother doesn't think the education is high and she thinks the standard there is lower . . . She thinks being here is a like a privilege because she did not get to go to a school like this."

 Respondent 3: "Things are better here. The facilities are better. There are good teachers."

These responses corroborate research findings (Mak Halemelele, 2005; Vandyar, 2010) that the choice of many parents to place their children in former white schools is based on the fact that these schools are better resourced. According to Mak Halemelele, despite the many efforts to redress the inequalities in education, the contrast between former white and former black schools seems to be largely unchanged. Even in instances where the gap between resources was not that large between schools, the perception and stereotyping of what better education comprises may still inform parents' decisions to send their children to these former white schools.

With regard to the theme Ethos of the school, peer relationships and teacher attitudes seemed to play a significant role in the academic success of the participants. Four of the participants indicated that they were not able to ask for help in certain classrooms, as there was constant teasing and ridicule of black students by certain white students. This prevented them from asking questions if they did not understand the work or discussion. These experiences were voiced in the following responses:

 Respondent 4: "Because, like, sometimes people always make funny comments, race jokes. They react different and weird towards you."

 Respondent 1: "Sometimes, if someone says something in class about black people, then I'm like, ok, now he's pointing out that I'm black and it's kinda irritating, so, like, I'll end up being upset the whole lesson, ... affects my concentration."

 Respondent 5: "Last year I did not ask questions. They laugh for everything. I would keep quiet or try and figure it out for myself."

 Respondent 6: "Sometimes if you say you don't understand they might end up laughing."

However, respondents 2 and 3 indicated that they did not let the comments bother them as they had realized that if they keep quiet it may affect their learning. This view was confirmed in the focus group interview.
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Furthermore, when given the choice, participants generally preferred to sit next to other Xhosa learners in class and to work with other Xhosa learners on classroom projects and assignments. This tendency flowed over into break time when they generally spent their breaks with other Xhosa learners.

In as much as an accepting and welcoming relationship with peers had an influence on the ethos of the school and consequently the learners' academic success, so too did the relationship with teachers. It was evident from the interviews that the participants perceived certain teachers as having favorites that did not include them as black learners. Some expressed that certain teachers made comments that made them feel inadequate. They therefore did not always experience the classroom as a safe environment to ask questions. The Xhosa-speaking learners sometimes met this with retaliation. This retaliation could, in turn, be experienced by teachers as lack of discipline on the part of the learners and could therefore add to discipline problems experienced within the classroom.

**Respondent 1:** "I hate the way some teachers sometimes ask if you need help. Sometimes it feels like, 'Why are you asking me?'"

**Respondent 2:** "If I ask a question and you don't take note of me and if someone else does ask and you respond, that means you don't respect me and I will then not listen to you as well."

**Respondent 6:** "Others will just say, 'I've just explained, what don't you understand?' Then you put your hand down or sit down."

On the other hand, some teachers were more approachable and supportive than others. Some teachers were able to create an environment in which the participants felt safe to ask questions if they did not understand. This was clearly illustrated in the following comments:

**Respondent 3:** "The teachers I have this year are approachable, especially Mr ... He has this whole system going. He has a good heart. He believes in everybody. That is what I like about him."

**Respondent 4:** "But it's like I can ask questions in Mr ...'s class."

Research (Goduka, 1999; Makhalemele, 2005; Vandeyar & Killen, 2006) clearly showed the important influence that teachers' attitudes and support can have on the academic success of learners. The creation of an accepting and welcoming environment, with an ethos of respect for diversity, is essential for learners to feel that they can be themselves. There is a clear need to create an environment in which learners can concentrate and feel safe and confident that they can achieve their potential.

According to Vandeyar and Killen (2006) multiculturalists believe that racism is the result of prejudice and ignorance and that it can therefore simply be eradicated by fostering personal contact between individuals of different cultural backgrounds, promoting understanding and exchange of information. However, critics of this perspective of multiculturalism view it as ignoring the power and structural dimensions of racism. An anti-racism perspective which not only calls for confronting overt attitudes and practices, but also insists on opposing subtle racism and stereotypical and patronizing views, is therefore proposed instead (Makhalemele, 2005; Vandeyar & Killen, 2006). Vandeyar and Killen (2006) distinguished between overt racism and covert racism as follows: Overt racism is identified as any obscene racist practice that can result in physical violence, while covert racism is a more subtle, permeating form of racism. Furthermore, institutionalized racism can take the form of covert racism and result from indifference or a refusal to challenge the way things are done within the institution (Vandeyar & Killen, 2006). Research (Goduka, 1999; Makhalemele, 2005; Vandeyar & Killen, 2006) showed that even many years after the end of Apartheid, some African learners are still given the message that they do not quite belong. According to Goduka (1999) the experiences and expectations of the minority learners, which may be influenced by power and status relationships, were consistent with those outside of school. Furthermore, Ogbu's (1986) view, as quoted in Goduka (1999), that years of discrimination and oppression have taught minority learners that working hard is an exercise in futility, seems to be supported by research into desegregated classrooms. These studies found that teachers not only tended to impose the predominant culture of the school onto their learners, but also undermined the culture of some learners by openly making derogatory statements about those cultures (Makhalemele, 2005; Vandeyar & Killen, 2006). Minority learners are therefore pressured to adapt to the culture of the school at the risk of negating their own culture (Kajee, 2011; Makhalemele, 2005; Mncube, 2009). This highlights the central concept of access in promoting a positive environment.

From an eco-systemic perspective, Vandeyar (2010) suggested that teachers could foster different micro and meso-systemic interventions. The micro-system refers to the close daily interactions between children and other significant and familiar people, such as the family, peers, and teachers (Bronfenbrenner & Evans, 2000). Within this system, learners could be supported and motivated through enabling the skills and attitudes, such as the unconditional acceptance, focused observations, adaptability, and flexibility of their teachers (Ferrer, 2011; Vandeyar, 2010). Kajee (2011) highlighted the importance of teaching occurring within a context that is compatible with the culture of the learners. In doing so, continuity and congruence between the home and the school were fostered. To maximize the potential of learners it is important to understand not only the challenges they experience, but also their perceptions of how these can be overcome to achieve academic success (Ferrer, 2011; Sleeter & Grant, 1994).

**5. Scholarly Significance of the Study**

This paper highlighted the fact that teachers and learners do not construct the social context of schooling in a vacuum. There are certain...
experiences and expectations that may be influenced by power and status relationships that are consistent with those in society beyond school. Classroom expectations that are limited to the predominant “white” culture seems to impede the cultural orientation and free expression of minority groups, which in turn seems to sustain incidences of covert racism (Vandayar & Killen, 2006). It is important therefore to realize that the more learners feel that their culture and language are validated and reinforced; the more likely it is that they will want to learn. The idea that the learners' voice is fundamental in working towards cultural democracy in an inclusive classroom needs to be fostered. When minority learners are continually silenced by their teachers, they are prevented from finding their voices. These learners may therefore be conditioned into being dependent on a system that they do not understand and are unable to influence, because they have not been given the opportunity to develop the critical skills needed to make their interests and concerns heard. This in turn may serve to re-enforce the feeling of not really belonging (Darder, 1991 in Goduka, 1999).

Recommendations on a micro-systems level in response to these findings are:

1. Teachers can support the growth and development of learners from different backgrounds through a willingness to learn more about the different languages and cultures of the learners in their classrooms. Efforts should be made to relate the curriculum to the experiences and interests of the learners.

2. Providing accurate information about racial and cultural diversity can be achieved through opportunities of direct contact with members of other groups during carefully structured situations. The aim is for learners to gain accurate information that can challenge stereotyping of groups. Another method that can challenge stereotyping of groups is cooperative learning. Learners are given opportunities to share the leadership responsibilities as well as to share the responsibility for each other's achievements. These cooperative opportunities are provided as a means to help learners develop group process skills such as conflict management and listening (Sleeter & Grant, 1994).

3. The implications for creating a safe and stimulating environment are that teachers and learners need to establish ground rules that espouse mutual respect. These rules should be enforced consistently without favoritism and prejudice so that everyone feels part of the classroom and wants to belong. Learners should be included and considered as co-constructors of an accepting environment.

These recommendations are limited to what teachers in their individual classes can do at a micro-systems level. However, if the trend of continued poor academic performance of minority groups in former whites-only schools is to be reversed, progressively narrowing and eventually closing the achievement gap, schools have to take cognizance of the covert racism that exist in schools and take appropriate systemic action.

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Related Items:

- Article References


An Exploration of Educational Leadership in Part C of IDEA: Voices From the Field

by Diana J. LaRocco, EdD

Abstract

Given the complexities of providing intervention services and supports to families of infants and toddlers with disabilities birth through 2 years of age, building educational leadership capacity from within the Early Intervention Program for Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities Education Act Part C is important. Nevertheless, this area of educational leadership is woefully understudied. This article provides a summary of key themes that emerged from a qualitative survey of 44 identified educational leaders from seven states and various levels of the Part C program. Participants’ understanding of effective leadership clustered into three areas: technical-functional knowledge that is unique to Part C, dispositions that have been identified elsewhere as characteristic of successful leaders, and skill sets that have also been recognized as important for leaders to possess. The article ends with a call to the field for additional research.

1. Part C Leadership: An Understudied Phenomenon

The Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities Program (Part C) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is a federal early childhood special education program administered at the state level. The national program was designed to provide early intervention services and supports to families of infants and toddlers with disabilities birth through 2 years of age. Every state and territory in the United States participates, and each has a unique family centered, community-based, comprehensive, coordinated interagency system designed to ensure the availability of services and supports to eligible children and their families. Although how the Part C service-delivery system is carried out at the local level varies among the states and territories, effective implementation requires collective action and leadership on the part of many stakeholders, including family members, individual service providers, and community-based agencies that provide services to children and their families.

Each state and territory has a designated lead agency that administers the Part C program, and this too varies from state to state. Regardless, within each lead agency, a designated Part C coordinator has responsibility for administering the early intervention program so that it complies with all federal and local requirements. In that capacity, Part C coordinators serve as formal systems leaders. At the same time, other individuals within the Part C service delivery system and in various roles—local program administrators, direct service providers, family members, and higher education faculty—serve as formal and informal leaders for this critically important early childhood special education program. A local program administrator might engage with other service providers in efforts to change state-level Part C system policies to better meet the needs of eligible children and their families. A special education teacher might use a coaching strategy to address a mother’s self-identified need to find an inclusive childcare setting for her daughter. To promote a team’s goal of using evidence-based practices, a speech therapist might lead team members’ self-study efforts by sharing an article. Each person in these illustrations demonstrates leadership by proactively influencing others “to act for certain goals that
represent the values and motivations—the wants and needs, aspirations and expectations—of both leaders and followers [emphasis in the original]" (MacGregor Burns, 1978, p. 19). In other words, leadership can be thought of as a process through which one person influences another to achieve common goals (Norhouse, 2012).

In general, empirical investigations of leadership in early childhood education are scant, and this has been well documented by several authors (Aubrey, 2007; Muijs, Aubrey, Harris, & Briggs, 2004; Rodd, 1996). What is available has been described by Aubrey (2007) as dominated by a few researchers and not well informed by theory. So too, the phenomenon of leadership within the Part C early childhood special education program is woefully understudied. An extensive search of several databases (Academic Search Premier, ERIC, Google Scholar, ProQuest, JSTOR Arts and Sciences I), using various combinations of descriptors (Part C, early intervention, early childhood special education and leader*), surfaced little about leadership in the context of the Part C program. Principally, authors have focused most often on program administration (McCracken Taylor, McGowan, & Linder, 2009) or master- and doctoral-level personnel preparation programs (Bricker, 2000; Spencer, Freund, & Browne, 2006). While these are critically important venues for skilled leaders, such conceptualizations restrict leadership to certain individuals in formal roles and within specified contexts. Moreover, a systematic search of roughly 20 years’ worth of journal abstracts that routinely publish empirical research related to early intervention (i.e., *Infants and Young Children, Journal of Early Intervention, Topics in Early Special Education*) brought similar results. Here again, although some authors offered opinions and emphasized the importance of leadership in Part C (Epley, Goto, Summers, Brotherson, Turnbull, & Friend, 2010; Rous, 2004; Woods & Snyder, 2009), studies specifically designed to examine leadership within this early childhood special education were absent.

### 2. Exploring the Concept of Leadership in Part C

In an attempt to begin to address the gap in the literature, an exploratory study was conducted. The guiding research question was: “How do individuals who work in Part C and are considered leaders generally understand effective leadership in early intervention?” The conceptual underpinnings of the study rested in the belief that “leader is not a role”; leadership could be “learned and is available to everyone” (Norhouse, 2012, p. 15). As Sharon Lynn Kagan (1993) suggested, we are all leaders and followers. The individuals who emerge as leaders are not always the persons who carry an official title or the one who “marches at the head of the band” (Albright, 2007, p. xvii). Individuals in various roles in the Part C special education program and at all levels of the system lead, take action, and positively influence the families with whom they work, their colleagues, policy makers, and others. They exercise personal agency (Bandura, 1986, 1997) and take initiative to transform the status quo through intentional actions and influence that inspires others to work toward transcending goals (MacGregor Burns, 2003).

### 3. Methodology

This exploratory study was expressly designed to draw out participants’ general understanding of leadership within the context of the Part C system. Exploratory research, as described by Marshall and Rossman (2011), “accepts the value of context and setting” and focuses on “understanding participants’ lived experiences of the phenomenon under study” (p. 93). Consideration is given to the “complexity of views” and the researcher deliberately chooses to “rely as much as possible on participants’ views of the situation” (Creswell, 2007, p. 20). The approach taken for this exploratory was constructivist, as described by Merriam (2009) and others (Creswell, 2007, 2008; Mertens, 2010). In a constructivist approach, the researcher sets out to interpret and make sense of the meaning of the phenomenon under study as expressed by those involved.

Data were collected using a researcher-developed, Internet-based survey comprised of a series of open-ended questions designed to draw out respondents’ general understanding of effective leadership in Part C. There was no limit (words or characters) set on the length of the responses. Each state and territory has a Part C system; thus, individuals working within the system are spread out across each state in various programs, agencies, and locales. Using an Internet-based survey method did not require that participants be co-located or meet face-to-face, thereby making it useful for gathering information from qualified people over a wide geographic area (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, 2009).

#### a. Participant Recruitment

A purposeful sampling strategy was used to recruit study participants. The goal of purposeful sampling is to generate a sample that is able to address the aims of study (Creswell, 2008). Specifically, individuals identified as leaders by state Part C coordinators and others working in the system were sought because they would be best positioned to share their perspectives on leadership within the Part C program. A series of three emails were sent to 50 Part C state coordinators inviting participation in the study. Follow-up phone calls were made to identify interest and answer questions. Six Part C coordinators agreed to nominate up to 16 individuals who had demonstrated exceptional leadership efforts on behalf of the Part C program or the families with whom they worked. Of the six Part C coordinators, four nominated 40 individuals. To broaden the pool of potential participants to other states and locals, additional participants, who met the above criteria, were recruited through *network sampling*, in which successive referrals are used to recruit participants (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Individuals who were knowledgeable about or engaged in Part C efforts were asked to share study materials. In all, 72 individuals were invited via email to complete the online, open-ended survey. To maximize participation, individuals who did not respond to the initial invitation were contacted by e-mail two additional times (Dillman et al., 2009).

#### b. Sample Description

Forty-four individuals representing seven states responded to the survey. The states were located in the northwestern, central, and eastern United States. Respondents were distributed unevenly across the seven states. Individuals self-identified as program administrators ($n = 13$), direct service providers ($n = 8$), higher education faculty ($n = 7$), Part C coordinators ($n = 5$), professional development providers ($n = 4$), family members ($n = 4$), and technical assistance consultants ($n = 3$). Five were male and 39 were female. Respondents’ mean age was 51.75 (range 29 - 66, $SD = 10.50$). Years of experience in early intervention ranged from 3 to 35 ($M = 19.77$, $SD = 8.67$). Participants indicated they had a broad depth and breadth of both formal and informal leadership experiences.
Examples included membership in state-level interagency coordinating councils and leadership positions in local and national professional organizations.

### Data Analysis

Verbatim responses to the open-ended survey questions were the data set for analysis. Procedures typically associated with qualitative research were used (Marshall & Rossman, 2011; Merriam, 2009). To enhance the credibility of the analysis, a colleague-researcher knowledgeable about the Part C system assisted with the data analysis, and data were examined and re-examined throughout the process (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). Using a *hand analysis* technique, data were analyzed independently on two levels. First, responses to each open-ended survey question were read several times to generate categories, themes, and patterns. Notes and memos were written to capture the initial themes and impressions. With each reading, categories, themes, and corresponding coding were refined and modified as necessary. Attention was paid to word repetitions and their synonyms and to terms used by respondents that were recognized as having a particular meaning or significance within the Part C setting. Second, the responses were analyzed across all survey questions using the same process. Finally, the independent data analyses were reviewed and consensus on the themes was obtained.

### 4. Effective Leadership in Part C

The leadership themes that emerged through the data analysis clustered into three areas: technical-functional knowledge that is unique to leading within the context of Part C, dispositions that have been identified elsewhere as characteristic of successful leaders, and skill sets that have also been recognized as important for leaders to possess. Notably, the respondents from each of the stakeholder subgroups evidenced little difference worth noting in their responses. Participants’ answers across the open-ended survey questions were remarkably consistent, with some respondents referencing their answers to earlier questions and expanding on those.

Emergent themes organized under three broad areas are presented. Relevant leadership literature was inserted throughout to place participants’ voices within broader discussions about effective leadership. Participant quotes were representative of responses and used to express their conceptualization of effective Part C leadership.

#### a. Technical-functional knowledge

The area of technical-functional knowledge reflects expertise that is particular to an area of work or profession, in this case Part C of IDEA. Within this broad area, three distinct themes emerged: in-depth knowledge of federal education laws and regulations, state laws and regulations, and state Part C system policies; working knowledge of child development; and expertise in family dynamics, systems, and support.

Study participants indicated that to be effective leaders at any level of the Part C system must have in-depth knowledge of federal education laws and regulations, state laws and regulations, and state Part C system policies. One respondent wrote that an effective leader “thoroughly understands the principles and policies of Part C.” While another stated, they should have “the ability to interpret these for others.”

The benefits of understanding IDEA and Part C regulations, as well as state laws and policies, cannot be overstated. To lead effectively, individuals must be knowledgeable about the policy context in which the work takes place. As with other federal education programs, Part C regulations and federal policies affect all aspects of service delivery. States must meet federal monitoring requirements, conduct program evaluations, and ensure accountability. At the same time, state laws, regulations, and agency policies append additional layers to the policy context. Individuals with expertise in relevant federal and state rules are more apt to be effective leaders because this knowledge provides a powerful tool for accessing resources and appropriate supports. Moreover, the knowledge situates individuals as able advocates for systems change, a necessary leadership skill identified by participants that is discussed later.

Participants wrote that effective leaders in Part C have a working knowledge of “child development—in all areas of development.” It is well established that the early years of life constitute a critical developmental period. This fact underpins a primary purpose of early childhood special education—to enhance the development of infants and toddlers with disabilities. Appropriate services and supports during the early years can enhance a child’s developmental gains, have the potential to prevent secondary problems, and can lead to improved long-term outcomes. Technical-functional expertise in child development is a basic building block in the provision of appropriate early intervention. As one respondent stated, “those that continue to educate themselves about children’s development, and how to support it, have the foundation for being quality leaders.”

Repeatedly, respondents explained that effective leaders needed to have expertise in “supporting families of young children with special needs.” They wrote about leaders needing to understand “family dynamics,” “family systems theory,” and “family-centered” approaches to service delivery. Children live in families. Families, whatever their configuration, are their children’s first teachers—helping them to develop and learn. A goal of early intervention is to recognize and advance family members’ competence and efficacy beliefs related to engaging their children in naturally occurring, development-enhancing learning opportunities. As one participant said, “In this field, understanding and supporting family-centered practices is essential.”

Part C of IDEA provides a statutory framework for focusing on infants and toddlers with disabilities within the context of the family. It codifies what is known about enhanced outcomes for young children whose families are involved in early intervention. The policy expectation is that professionals will facilitate the involvement of families and collaborate with them in the process of enhancing their children’s development. Providing the support, information, and education necessary to maintain and enhance the family system and meet the unique needs of individual families does this. As one participant wrote, an effective Part C leader “is well versed in family systems theory, practices, and strategies.” They have had “experience working with families.” They engage families in shared decision-making and commit to service delivery within the context of families’ routines and environments. Moreover, another respondent explained that Part C leaders “give[en] parents tools so that they can be successful” and are “flexible in adjusting support” based on family priorities.
A third theme that surfaced within the area of technical-functional knowledge was an expressed belief that effective leaders in Part C have “expertise in evidence-based practices.” Respondents wrote about the importance of having an understanding of “current research” in early intervention and being “knowledgeable about and committed to recommended practices for EI programs.” Evidence-based practices are interventions or strategies that are informed by research. For example, there is empirical evidence suggesting that a family centered approach to service delivery can have a positive effect on family satisfaction with the services and outcomes for the children and families (Bruder, 2010; Raspa et al., 2010). Individual with expertise related to evidence-based practices are better able to work with families and others to guide them in making informed decisions about early intervention services that would meet the unique needs of each child and family. They are poised to ensure that services build family members’ competence, capacity, and confidence in supporting their children’s development. As one respondent explained, being an effective leader means “being knowledgeable about current research and practice in Part C, practicing those skills, and helping others to attain them.”

b. Dispositions

The area of effective leadership dispositions encompasses values, beliefs, and personal attributes that have been identified by theorists and researchers as characteristic of successful leaders. Among the related themes that emerged were responsiveness to diversity, integrity, life-long learning, reflective practice, high standards, and great expectations.

Study participants indicated that effective Part C leaders were responsive to personal differences (culture, individual, unique strengths or needs) not only among families but also among staff. Effective leaders were said to be “respectful of family cultures”—“culturally aware, and non-judgmental.” As one respondent explained, effective leaders know “this is a unique world and that families are at all different places within the early intervention system.” Rubin (2002) explained that leaders who are responsive to diversity are “adapting to spanning boundaries of every type—between sectors, genders, races, religions, ethnic groups, and preferences” (p. 94).

Concerning staff, a participant wrote, an effective Part C leader “considers the unique knowledge and perspectives of team members.” As one respondent explained, they “understand individual learning styles and allow for individual strengths and differences, utilizing individual strengths.” Likewise, Kouzes and Posner (2012) asserted that effective leaders view difference as an asset and can take another’s perspective—understanding his or her aspirations and worries.

Effective Part C leaders were said to act with integrity and fairness; they “practice their profession ethically.” Personal integrity is reflected in “caring about how the well-being of people is affected by one’s actions. A two-sided portrait . . . one that includes certain habits of thinking and one that concern for others—empathy and perspective taking” (Luke, 1998, p. 228). Trust relationships and a leader’s ability to influence another are built on a foundation of competence, openness, reliability, and integrity (Hoy & Smith, 2007).

Study participants also explained that effective Part C leaders see the worth in lifelong learning and seek new knowledge for themselves and those with whom they engage. As one respondent made clear, a “leader must also be an engaged learner—always seeking new information.” Effective leaders were described as being characteristically self-aware, valuing reflective practice, and promoting the same in others. A leader who is self-aware “continually comes to understand his or her unique talents, strengths, sense of purpose, core values, beliefs and desires. It can include having a basic and fundamental awareness of one’s knowledge, experience, and capabilities” (Avolio & Gardner, 2005, p. 324). Effective Part C leaders, one respondent noted, “ask, ‘What can we learn’—Challenge people to try new approaches, search outside the group for innovative ways to improve.” In a similar vein, Presskirk and Brookfield (2009) identified learning tasks of leadership that included learning how to be open to the contributions of others, reflect critically on their practice, and support the growth of others. The study participants seemed to echo these tasks in their responses.

Participants identified effective Part C leaders as having “high expectations that are clearly communicated,” “high standards for self and others,” and “the ability to help others see their potential.” Moreover, effective Part C leaders were said to demonstrate the “belief that every child and family has potential;” thus, they recognize a family’s capabilities and competencies. In a similar way, Kouzes and Posner (1999) wrote, “positive expectations yield positive results. They also begin to create positive images in our minds, which yield other positive possibilities. Positive futures for self and others are first constructed in our minds” (p. 68). Study participants conceptualized effective leaders as supporting and encouraging others to achieve more than they believed they could achieve. In other words, leaders “strengthen others by increasing self-determination and developing competence” (Kouzes & Posner, 2012, p. 22).

c. Skills

Participants described several sets of skills needed to be an effective leader in Part C. Often cited competencies included those related to being a team member and advancing a team approach. Interpersonal skills were also mentioned frequently, especially the ability to communicate well.

Study participants wrote that effective leaders should have an “in depth understanding of team building.” As on person explained, “teaming is vital to early intervention so the leader must be able to work within and to maintain a high functioning team.” The identification of team skills as necessary for successful leadership in Part C is not surprising because teams are integral to early intervention policy and service provision. The regulations provide for a multidisciplinary team assessment of a child and the child’s family. As a team, the child’s family and Part C personnel plan, implement, and evaluate the effectiveness of services designed to address the child’s and family’s unique priorities, needs, and resources. Required team competencies, as described by participants, included building team members’ commitment to a “vision of an ideal service system” and motivating them to implement that vision. An effective leader, one participant wrote, “shares her unique knowledge and perspective and considers the unique knowledge and perspectives of team members.” They “know what they don’t know and utilize the expertise and experience of team members—experts in the field.”
Effective Part C leaders were described by participants as having the ability to advance collaboration and being adept at “involving the whole team in making decisions about how things will be done, making sure that everyone takes ownership for greater buy-in.” Similarly, researchers have identified the importance of leaders having the ability to foster collaborative relationships (Armstrong, Kinney, & Clayton 2009; Kouzes & Posner 2012; Rodd, 2005). As one participant observed, “a leader must have the interpersonal skills that allow them to work well with others and . . . bring people together to accomplish goals.” Demonstrations of collaborative interpersonal behaviors are fundamental to building and sustaining productive relationships with early intervention staff, families, and other stakeholders. Having well-developed interpersonal competency and the capacity to engage productively with others are hallmarks of emotionally intelligent leaders (Goleman, 2000). In fact, George (2000) proposed that the ability to appraise and express emotion, use emotion to enhance cognitive processing and decision-making, understand emotions, and manage emotions all contribute to effective leadership (p. 1039). The study participants likewise expressed an understanding that these abilities help individuals carry out the tasks of a leader.

Critically important interpersonal skills, reported participants, are the ability to listen actively (non-evaluative and appropriately supportive) and communicate effectively orally and in writing. One respondent wrote, an effective leader “listens without judgment.” Kouzes and Posner (2011) explained that leaders “build relationships through listening” (p. 70) deeply to others and learning about their hopes, beliefs, fears, and aspirations.

Participants also indicated that effective leaders establish strong networks of information sharing (regular, clear, and consistent) and maintain strong lines of communication among early intervention staff, families, and other stakeholders (horizontal, top down, and bottom-up). Effective Part C leaders were described as being skilled at “communicating with [the] entire range of stakeholders, engaging relevant parties in problem-solving, consistently building systemic-capacity.” Kouzes and Posner (2011) similarly wrote, “sharing information is a critical determinant in developing people’s capacity” (p. 125).

Effective Part C leaders were described by participants as having “the commitment and determination to advocate for children and families” and “for what is right.” To be effective, Part C leaders must act to influence local, district, state, and national decisions affecting early intervention. They “know when to engage families, which should be early on in the process, not thinking about family input as an afterthought, but involving families at all levels to influence policies and practices.” Today’s times, Hesselbein (2004) wrote, call for leaders who do not push from the rear, but lead from the front. Effective leaders harness the power of individual action to promote change and make a difference. They work with others and support them in making their voices heard.

5. A Call for Researchers to Examine Leadership in Part C

This exploratory study provided a broad-brush picture of how one small group of individuals working in the Part C special education program generally understand effective leadership. Although this study is limited by the method used to collect data and the sample size, the results provided beginning insights into the knowledge and skills considered necessary for effective Part C leadership, a woefully understudied phenomenon. By bringing participants’ understanding of leadership to the fore, “a certain flow of meaning begins . . . and a larger conversation begins to form” (Jaworski, 1996, p. 185). This exploration was intended to ignite conversations, and the paper serves as a call to other researchers to examine various aspects of leadership in Part C. Future research is central to building leadership capacity within the Part C program and to fulfilling its promise. Additional research with a more representative sample should be conducted. Strategies could include national surveys, in-person interviews, or group discussions. Case studies of leaders at all levels of the Part C system could also be informative. Finally, other researchers should explore whether particular system structures facilitate or inhibit expressions of leadership within and across the levels of the Part C program.

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**Related Items:**

- Article References


Rous, B. (2004). Perspectives of teachers about instructional supervision and behaviors that


Guns, Campus and the Courts

by Joseph Cernik, PhD

Abstract

The Newtown shooting opened up (again) the issue of guns on school grounds, both at the K-12 level and university level, and whether teachers and administrators should be armed. The Newtown shooting also focused attention again on the shootings at the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in Blacksburg. In that incident, 32 people were killed and 17 wounded on April 2007. The shooter, Seung-Hui Cho, a senior, ended his killing spree by committing suicide. Following Cho's shooting spree, the National Rifle Association (NRA) created NRA-U, or National Rifle Association University, an organization that reaches out to college students interested in having guns on campus or learning about having guns on campus. In addition to NRA-U, an organization called Students for Concealed Carry was established to promote the cause of students, or more specifically students 21 and over, who want to have a concealed gun on campus. This organization has chapters on various campuses in a number of states. Since 2007, they have held Open Holster protests on campuses, which is as it sounds—students wearing open holsters to demonstrate their desire to carry guns on campus. The push to allow students 21 and over to have guns inevitably involves court cases. The point is that school administrators and teachers are not the only focus of who should be allowed to have guns on campus: There is a broad-based push to allow many to have concealed guns on campus, even people who are not students, administrators, or faculty members, as will be noted in a case from Virginia. This article looks at federal court cases (two United States Supreme Court cases and one Court of Appeals case) and briefly examines how they open ways to examine the issue of guns and schools.

1. The Shadow of the United States Supreme Court

In 1972, Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas wrote, "A powerful lobby dins into the ears of our citizenry that these gun purchases are constitutional rights protected by the Second Amendment. . . . There is no reason why all pistols should not be barred to everyone except the police" (Adams v. Williams, 1972, p. 150). Douglas was on firm ground at the time. In 1939, the Supreme Court in United States v. Miller addressed the Constitutionality of the Firearms Act of 1934 and noted that with regard to a 12-gauge double-barrel shotgun, less than 18-inches long, "We cannot say that the Second Amendment guarantees the right to keep and bear such an instrument" (United States v. Miller, 1939, p. 178). Even earlier in 1886 in Presser v. Illinois the Supreme Court stated, "The [Second] amendment is a limitation only upon the power of congress and the national government, and not upon that of the state" (Presser v. Illinois, 1886, p. 265). In other words, it would be hard pressed to find legal support for the notion that the Federal government could be turned to as the source for the right to keep and bear arms.

Relatively recent Supreme Court cases and a Court of Appeals case out of Chicago, however, can, and no doubt will, have an impact on how we begin to understand the Second Amendment. It is not just that one reads the opinions of these cases, but also reads into the cases, since more often than not, the impact of
Supreme Court cases unfolds over a number of years as additional court cases (within both Federal and state courts) give more substance to what we understand are the ramifications of rights under the Second Amendment.

In a significant 2008 case, the Supreme Court in *District of Columbia v. Heller* recognized that individuals have the right of gun ownership. But this was the District of Columbia, and not a state, so it was not clear whether this right was now recognized as extending to citizens living in the states. Furthermore, this case addressed a District of Columbia ban on guns in the home and added, "[The District of Columbia] must permit [Heller] to register his handgun and must issue him a license to carry it in the home" (*District of Columbia v. Heller*, 2008, p. 64). A door was opened slightly with individual gun rights recognized but limited to home possession and limited to a non-state. It was inevitable, and certainly no surprise, that challenges would mount to extend the boundaries of what constitutes the right to keep and bear arms under the Second Amendment.

In 2010 in *McDonald v. Chicago*, the court extended the right of individual gun ownership to people living in states. The process of extending that right took place through linking (incorporating) the Second Amendment to the Fourteenth Amendment, since the Fourteenth Amendment starts with the words, "No state shall . . ." So states have to now pay attention to a part of the Bill of Rights that previously had little impact on them. As they did in previous cases incorporating the First, Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Amendments into the Fourteenth Amendment, the court used the Due Process Clause in the Fourteenth Amendment.

It is perhaps instructive to point out to readers who do not spend countless hours poring over the opinions written in Supreme Court cases that it is normal for the average citizen to refer to "the Constitution" and assume that means something, whereas the more precise method is to refer to specific clauses (groups of words) that exist within the Constitution. For example, the 45 words that comprise the First Amendment can really be seen as six different clauses (establishment of religion, freedom of religion, religion of speech, freedom of the press, right of assembly, right of petition).

Again, in *McDonald v. Chicago* (2010) the Court incorporated the Second Amendment within the Fourteenth Amendment using the Due Process Clause and not the Privileges or Immunities Clause, as Justice Clarence Thomas had wanted. Thomas wrote a concurrent opinion, which meant he agreed with the other four justices in the majority that the Second Amendment should be incorporated, just not the way they all agreed. This issue of how to incorporate the Second Amendment, through the Due Process Clause or Privileges or Immunities Clause, has the potential to cause much heartburn to states, local governments, school districts, and universities in the future. As with the Court cases of *Heller and McDonald*, where the impact they will have on gun laws and gun ordinances is unclear, the notion of some case eventually giving substance to the Privileges or Immunities Clause and causing the Court to look at the Second Amendment with reference to this clause could bring about a wide variety of challenges to gun regulations, gun ordinances, and gun prohibitions.

If the Privileges or Immunities Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment were used as the basis to incorporate the Second Amendment, then some indication of the potential problems to state government gun regulations, local government gun ordinances, and state university policies prohibiting guns on campus is indicated by a law review article in which the author voiced support for using the Privileges or Immunities Clause to incorporate the Second Amendment (this written prior to the *Heller* case). As the author wrote: "Like it or not, the Second Amendment protects the people's right to keep and bear arms - as well as other enumerated and unenumerated rights, privileges, liberties and immunities - from infringement by American government, federal and state alike" (Lawrence, 2007, p. 3).

"Enumerated" refers to spelled-out rights, while "unenumerated" refers to implied rights or rights possessed but not spelled out by the Constitution. The way to understand this is that the Due Process Clause recognizes that governments and governing bodies (such as school districts and Boards of Education) still have a role in gun regulation, while the Privileges or Immunities Clause can be seen as opening up more challenges to that role. In the *Heller* case, Justice Antonin Scalia, writing for majority (hence, the Opinion of the Court), wrote: "[W]e do not read the Second Amendment to protect the right of citizens to carry arms for any sort of confrontation, just as we do not read the First Amendment to protect the right of citizens to speak for any purpose" (*District of Columbia v. Heller*, 2008, p. 22).

Elsewhere in this case he wrote: "Many early 19th-century state cases indicated that the Second Amendment right to keep and bear arms was an individual right not connected to militia service, though subject to certain restrictions" (p. 38). Finally, Justice Scalia wrote: "Like most rights, the right secured by the Second Amendment is not unlimited. . . . [N]othing in our opinion should be taken to cast doubt on longstanding prohibitions on the possession of firearms by felons and the mentally ill, or laws forbidding the carrying of firearms in sensitive places such as schools and government buildings" (p. 54). Contrasting what Justice Scalia wrote with Justice Thomas's support for using the Privileges or Immunities Clause gives an indication of the degrees of difference that a local government, school board, or state university would have regarding gun regulations. In Justice Thomas's concurrent opinion in the *McDonald* case, for example, some insight into the greater degree of challenges that local governments and school boards could face can be understood: "The question in this case is whether the Constitution protects [an individual right to bear arms] against abridgment by the States" (*McDonald v. Chicago*, 2010, p. 2). Furthermore, Justice Thomas called upon Natural Law thinking - which is a way of saying that citizens possess certain rights that pre-date the creation of the United States government (although it is never clear what these rights are): "[T]he reasons the Framers codified the right to keep and bear arms in the Second Amendment - its nature as an inalienable right . . . pre-existed the Constitution's adoption. . . ." (pp. 4-5). Furthermore, Justice Thomas in his opinion indicated that the Due Process Clause was more limiting on individual rights: "[A]ny serious argument over the scope of the Due Process Clause must acknowledge that neither its text nor its history suggests that it protects the many substantive rights this Court's cases now claim it does" (p. 8). Finally, he wrote: "A separate question is whether the privileges or immunities of American citizenship include any rights besides those enumerated in the Constitution" (p. 51).

These nuances, whether the Due Process Clause or Privileges or Immunities Clause are used to incorporate the Second Amendment within the Fourteenth Amendment, do matter and can have an impact on school districts and state universities and how they approach the issue of gun regulations on their school grounds and campuses. School officials need to be cognizant of this issue, and that now that it has been opened up, they should not be satisfied that the Due Process Clause has triumphed. One law review article referred to the Privileges or Immunities Clause as the "Doctrine of Unenumerated Rights" (Blackman & Shapiro, 2009, p. 69, 87). Its potential to
seriously challenge school gun regulation policies is a real possibility.

2. Heller and McDonald in Lower Court Cases

The impact of the Heller and McDonald cases can be seen in a December 2012 case decided before the Seventh Circuit United States Court of Appeals in Chicago (Moore v. Madigan, 2012). In this case, the Appeals Court said that Illinois needs to allow the carrying of concealed handguns. Illinois was the last state to not allow individuals to carry concealed guns; the other 49 states had laws allowing concealed weapons. The Court noted that New York has, perhaps, the most restrictive access to concealed guns when it stated, "New York places the burden on the applicant to show that he needs a handgun to ward off dangerous persons" (Moore v. Madigan, 2012, p. 17). In this case, the Court referred to a case a year earlier which raised the issue of degrees of restrictions on where handguns could be allowed. The Court cited the language from United States v. Masciandaro (2011) that:

It is not clear in what places public authorities may ban firearms altogether without shouldering the burdens of litigation. The notion that 'self-defense has to take place wherever [a] person happens to be,' appears to us to portend all sorts of litigation over schools, airports, parks, public thoroughfares and various government facilities. . . . *(pp. 30-31)*

Elsewhere the Court stated:

[T]he Supreme Court would deem it presumptively permissible to outright forbid the carrying of firearms in certain public places, but that does not mean that a self-defense need never arises in those places. The teacher being stalked by her ex-husband is susceptible at work, and in her school parking lot, and on the school playground to someone intent on harming her. *(Moore v. Madigan, 2012, p. 32)*

Language in this case might serve to open the cracks to approach the issue of guns on campus in federal courts or state courts.

The issue of guns on campus has already been addressed in several state supreme court cases (Utah prior to Heller and McDonald, Colorado, and Oregon). In the Colorado and Oregon cases, the Heller and McDonald cases were not addressed. One case out of the Virginia Court of Appeals did rely (somewhat) on the Heller and McDonald ruling.

Rudolph DiGiacinto filed a complaint that he wanted the right to carry his concealed gun into the library at George Mason University (GMU) in Fairfax County. DiGiacinto was neither a student nor employee of the university but as the court case stated, "he visits and utilizes the university's resources, including its libraries" *(DiGiacinto v. The Rector and Visitors of George Mason University, 2011, p. 2)*. While most of this case addressed the statutory authority of the university to regulate guns on campus and whether that authority resided with the state legislature (issues similar to those addressed in Utah, Colorado and Oregon), there is reference and reliance on the Heller and McDonald cases. In fact, DiGiacinto referred to the Second and Fourteenth Amendment as part of the reasons why he had the right to carry his gun into the school's libraries. This case does not refer to the use of the Due Process Clause or the Privileges or Immunities Clause, but addresses the Second Amendment limitations when it stated: "In Heller, the Second Amendment does not prevent the government from prohibiting firearms in sensitive places" *(p. 5)*.

In this case, the term "sensitive places," which was brought up in the Heller case, is given some substance. The court noted that more than 350 incoming freshmen were under the age of 18 and that approximately 50,000 elementary and high school students attend summer camps at the university. Furthermore, the court added, "parents who send their children to a university have a reasonable expectation that the university will maintain a campus free of foreseeable harm" *(DiGiacinto v. The Rector and Visitors of George Mason University, 2011, p. 10)*. While the case seemed to be a victory for the university, the court stated:

The regulation does not impose a total ban of weapons on campus. Rather, the regulation is tailored, restricting weapons only in those places where people congregate and are most vulnerable-inside campus buildings and at campus events. Individuals may still carry or possess weapons on the open campus of GMU and in other places on campus not enumerated in the regulation. *(p. 11)*

That a state court case began the process of interpreting the term "sensitive places" with much wiggle room where guns can be allowed on a campus would indicate we might see reference to this case in future legal action. The Virginia Supreme Court heard the case on appeal and agreed with the lower court ruling.

3. Conclusion

Four points are important to consider. First, for many, the Second Amendment is read often disassociated from the rest of the United States Constitution. We are led to believe that an incredibly broad and expansive reading of the Second Amendment exists. It is doubtful whether those who take this approach to interpreting the Second Amendment are going to be equally as supportive of an atheist group that files legal action against a municipal government when it uses public funds to display a nativity scene at Christmas because they read the words in the First Amendment: "Separation of church and state." Or, it is as equally doubtful they will support a gay organization that refers to Article 4. Section 1, "Full faith and credit shall be given in each state to the public acts, records, and judicial proceedings of every other state. And the Congress may by general laws prescribe the manner in which such acts, records, and proceedings shall be proved, and the effect thereof" *(U.S. Const. art. IV, § 1)*. In fact, the reason for the Defense of Marriage Act coming into existence was because a number of people were uncomfortable with having to live with what "full faith and credit" meant after a court in Hawaii looked as though it would legalize gay marriage (Hawaii recognizes a civil union). So, the argument that the words in the Second Amendment matter to many is nonsense; it is just a way to rationalize incredibly unlimited access to guns and not having to reasonably approach gun regulations. When you address the implications of what a very broad reading of the Second Amendment means in relationship to broadly reading other parts of the Constitution - and that other individuals and groups have as much right to their freedom to literally read the Constitution anyway they want - then you begin to look at the Second Amendment with a different perspective.
Second, the term "gun control" is a problem. The notion of being forced to choose "for" or "against" gun control may make sense when examined from the perspective of a silly cable television news show where "liberal" and "conservative" are at loggerheads with each other and what is created is an either/or distinction that is completely false and as far removed from in-depth policy analysis as you can get. Using the expression "degrees of gun regulation" might be a mouthful (and less conducive to a short television news segment) but is closer to what is needed to develop an understanding about issues raised in this article. The term "gun control" helps to avoid a substantive way of examining gun regulations. Television news (despite 24-hour channels) is more like old computers with no hard drives, where everything was lost once the computer was turned off. The next time the computer was turned on, everything had to be re-loaded again. You cannot build from one news segment the night before and have the news person say, "We will begin where we left off last night." As a result, the nuances and complexities addressed here cannot be discussed easily on a television news show segment. How do you advance the discussion of gun regulations when television news (through which most people get their news as opposed to reading) cannot help to advance the level of conversation?

Third, as can be understood from the George Mason University case, a state court can rely upon United States Supreme Court opinions and expand upon them. The term "sensitive places" was not really developed in the *Heller* case the way it was in the GMU case: A state court expanded upon what the United States Supreme Court said. As can be seen from the GMU case, simply saying "no guns on campus" is not enough. Addressing guns in dorm rooms, administrative and faculty offices, classrooms, within parked cars, and while walking across campus - each may need to be approached separately, and might well be through future court cases. The differences between a tailored ban and total ban will become important - and can make public universities examine their gun regulation policies (Kozlowski, 2011).

Robert Warden sued the City of Seattle over whether he could carry his concealed gun. In fact, no doubt like DiGiacinto, he deliberately wanted to push the limits of where he could try to carry his weapon. In Warden's case, he told people at city hall that he was bringing his gun into the Seattle Southwest Community Center. When he entered the building he was asked to leave after it was determined he was carrying a weapon. In this case, the federal district court stated: "*Heller* provides limited guidance as to how to evaluate the constitutionality of gun regulations under the Second Amendment" (*Robert C. Warden v. Gregory J. Nickels and City of Seattle*, 2010, p. 9). Moreover, the court added, "the Court sees no logical distinction between a school on the one hand and a community center where educational and recreational programming for children is provided on the other" (p. 10).

If future federal court cases (whether at the district, court of appeals, or Supreme Court level) begin to lean more toward Justice Thomas's desire to link parts of the Bill of Rights to the Fourteenth Amendment through the Privileges or Immunities Clause - particularly the Second Amendment - then expect a variety of challenges to all sorts of gun regulations (state and local government, schools). Furthermore, the words "sensitive places" will matter and, as can be understood from this article, it is beginning to be developed as more than just vague words in a United States Supreme Court case. It is advisable that public universities not feel comfortable with their blanket bans regarding guns on campus and that they learn to address the tailored ban versus total ban distinction that, most likely, can arise in future court challenges.

Finally, insurance is an issue. In Texas, a state seen as the "big prize" by the Students for Concealed Guns on Campus because of its more than 500,000 students at 38 public universities, the possibility of higher insurance premiums stopped the momentum that looked likely to allow guns on campus in 2011. The Houston Community College Board of Trustees passed a resolution urging state legislatures to not allow guns on campus. The possibility of premiums going up by $780,000-to $900,000 a year was cited as a "fiscal burden" (Gonzalez, 2011). If state universities or community colleges were required to let students bring concealed guns into the classroom (which in the Texas situation was being considered), this began to look like an "unfunded mandate" where the cost allowing guns on campus would be passed along to every student in higher tuition costs. Even the Students for Concealed Guns on Campus estimated few students would actually possess a gun. For example, a statement from their own web site indicated what they expected:

> At the University of Texas - a major university with over 50,000 students - a quick comparison of campus housing statistics and concealed handgun licensing statistics reveals that there would likely be no more than ten to twenty concealed handgun license holders living in on-campus housing. (Students for concealed carry, n.d.)

In others words - the many paying for the few. How this might lead to lawsuits can be understood once tuitions were seen as rising because of guns on campus. This appears to be more of a state court issue than a federal court issue but, as can be seen from the George Mason University case, Supreme Court cases can impact a state court case.

Furthermore, regarding insurance, it might seem inevitable that insurance companies might "rate" campuses and students in particular when it comes to them possessing a gun on campus (whether remaining in their cars, in a dorm room, or carried into a classroom or other facility on campus). After the Virginia Tech shootings, the U.S. Department of Education awarded the school a $960,685 grant to help the university develop efforts to identify troubled students. In the case of Seung-Hui Cho, he had displayed a long history of serious problems. For example, in high school he praised the April 1999 shootings by two Columbine High School students that lead to 15 dead and 23 wounded. Cho called the two shooters "martyrs." While at Virginia Tech, a well-known poet from whom he was taking a class threatened to resign if Cho was not taken out of her class since she stated his behavior in class was "menacing." He eventually withdrew from the course. The police told Cho to stop contacting a woman he seemed to be stalking. A campus police prescreener evaluated him as a danger to himself and others (Green & Cooper, 2012).

Gun liability insurance is being debated in the aftermath of the Newtown shootings, and it seems to be gaining some support (Wasik, 2013). Assuming this notion gains no immediate traction, the idea of insurance companies rating individuals or universities might develop out of this thinking. For example, one study that examined students who own guns stated: "[S]tudents with guns were more likely than students without guns to have alcohol-related problems, such as getting into fights attributed to drinking alcohol and being arrested for driving while intoxicated" (Miller, Hemenway, & Wechsler, 2002, p. 57). Elsewhere, a different study examined the relationship of gun possession to gun assault and concluded, "[A] gun may falsely empower its possessor to overreact..." (Culhane, 2009, p. 4). This study noted there was an increased likelihood that someone with a gun was more likely to be shot than someone without a gun during an...
assault.

The California Supreme Court ruled in a 1976 case that there is a duty-to-warn. Mental health professionals have an obligation to warn of potential dangerous actions by a patient - the patient-doctor privilege does not appear to apply (Tarasoff v. Regents of University of California, 1976). If students with guns are rated differently for insurance purposes than other students, how much more vigilance on the part of the university is called for?

Training, despite the process to obtain a concealed gun permit, is questionable. The chancellor of the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, in testimony before the Committee on Education in the Arkansas House of Representatives, stated:

There was a recent example—not hypothetical—of a shooting at a gasoline station in West Little Rock. A person nearby with a concealed weapon decided to take out his handgun and fire it, no doubt with the intent to be helpful, but this person's bullet hit the wrong car. (Anderson, 2013)

Questioning the actual depth of the training to receive a concealed gun permit might be raised from an insurance perspective. A law professor noted the dubious level of training she went through to receive a concealed gun permit:

You can have little-to-no knowledge about a firearm and obtain a [Concealed Handgun License]. To prove this point, I applied for a [license], in Texas, having never touched a handgun in my life. In fact, I did not even own one. Despite knowing very little about a firearm, including how to load or fire one, I passed the multiple-choice and shooting proficiency tests required to obtain a [license]. In Mississippi, a person need only pass a criminal background check, 'Vouch' that they do not suffer from substance abuse or mental illness, and pay a fee to obtain a [license]. No gun-handling or safety class is required. (Lewis, 2011, p. 9)

While universities may have security committees that address all aspects of security on campus, from lighting to locks on dorm entrances to call boxes for emergencies, would administrators, faculty, and students with concealed guns be required to be addressed by such a committee? The above quote raises serious concerns about how well trained individuals are to actually react with a gun in situations where they face live fire. In Texas, a police officer was fired after he shot at a fleeing suspect in a car chase 41 times. The suspect died after being hit three times, with 38 bullets landing elsewhere. The officer, a seven-year veteran, said he feared for his life (CBSNews.com, 2013). In New York City, police training changed after the Columbine High School shootings in April 1999. A former chief with the New York City police department said, "Training, from the brass on down, was, 'Slow down when you get to these scenes. Don't rush in. We'll talk them out.' That all changed after Columbine" (Wilson, 2012). The SWAT team in Littleton, Colorado, was seen as moving too slowly through Columbine High School. What type of liability would universities be held to if they failed to address guns on campus? Would administrators, faculty, and students with guns be required to receive some regular training - beyond the basics required to obtain a concealed gun license - imposed by insurance standards? (Binder, 2008). In the aftermath of the Virginia Tech shootings, the university made significant changes regarding its mental health evaluation of students, public safety, and emergency alert system. All told, one report estimated the cost, not just to the university but to the state of Virginia and to taxpayers, as approximately $48.2 million (Green & Cooper, 2012). Assuming public universities might need to undertake certain precautions before guns are on campus, not after a tragedy, the degree and depth of those actions might be determined by what university insurers would require.

The conflict between perceived Second Amendment rights, in their broadest sense, and insurance standards is a possibility. Ironically, while extreme supporters of the Second Amendment might be thinking in terms of guns as protection from potential threats to themselves and maybe others, insurance companies might be approaching them as an insurance risk. Here is where the push to allow guns on campus, whether by administrators, teachers, students, or just those passing through, can lead to unintended consequences: The insurance perspective. The reason for this, say, reverse thinking is because of something known as premises liability. The thinking behind this is: "If you let guns onto your campus, then you could reasonably foresee that they would go off by accident" (Shaikh, 2011). Usually this might be associated with someone slipping or falling, but a standard applied in court cases is the foreseeability of an accident or injury. Does a university then warn students and visitors of the presence of guns on campus? Would administrators, faculty, and students with guns be required to receive some regular training - beyond the basics required to obtain a concealed gun license - imposed by insurance standards? (Binder, 2008). In the aftermath of the Virginia Tech shootings, the university made significant changes regarding its mental health evaluation of students, public safety, and emergency alert system. All told, one report estimated the cost, not just to the university but to the state of Virginia and to taxpayers, as approximately $48.2 million (Green & Cooper, 2012). Assuming public universities might need to undertake certain precautions before guns are on campus, not after a tragedy, the degree and depth of those actions might be determined by what university insurers would require.

"If you let guns onto your campus, then you could reasonably foresee that they would go off by accident" (Shaikh, 2011).

The range of legal - if not Constitutional - issues that exist to complicate guns on campus is only beginning.


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Support for School Leadership: Who is Feeding the Principal?

by Barbara Stacy Rieckhoff, PhD

Abstract

Neila Connors’ well-known book, *If You Don’t Feed the Teachers, They Eat The Students* (2000), serves as a favorite read for new and aspiring principals. It contains much sage advice for mentoring teachers and supporting their transition in the profession while offering wisdom to protect them from the ills and evils of the outside world. While the entertaining style gets the point across, the message underscores the fact that supporting teachers is a key role of a school administrator. Since the book was published, tremendous strides have been made to provide teachers, both new and veteran, resources to mentor and foster their continued development as professionals. While this process is not a finished effort, the work of supporting teachers will continue and has been forever included in the role of the school leader. Establishing professional learning communities, developing teacher leaders, and other methods for sustaining teachers are well-established in schools today. As this role along with numerous others continues to expand the work of the principal, however, it does beg the question, “Who is feeding the principal?” If Connors’ logic continues, we are led to believe principals might eat the teachers if they don’t get the proper care and attention. Clearly, accountability efforts at all schools have reached heightened levels with more and more expectations placed upon school leaders. In the current school climate, principals serve as the front line and CEO who keeps all aspects of the school running smoothly. Efforts to meet school improvement goals, improve student learning outcomes, and turn schools around at a rapid pace fall on the principal. Only recently (Wahlstrom & Seashore-Louis, 2010) has the research shifted from indirect impacts of the principal to more direct impacts on student achievement. Clearly, the principal is poised to make all of this happen; however, it is a lot to expect of one individual.

There are many good reasons to take care of the principal. School leaders continue to leave the field in rapidly growing numbers. The National Association of Elementary School Principals reported a 42% turnover in principals that is to continue into the next decade (Doud & Keller, 1998). This current and future shortage of applicants makes retaining principals even more critical. Johnson (2005) suggested the main reasons principals leave are cultural issues, where strong faculty groups were accustomed to doing things a certain way, thus impacting the principal’s ability to make changes; workload, the many hours needed to attend school and community functions and meetings while supervising large numbers of employees; bureaucracy, including central office directives, restrictive union contracts, and frivolous lawsuits; and student discipline and irate parents. More recently, the 29th Annual Met Life Survey of the American Teacher (2013), which included interview data from 500 principals, suggested that 75% of those polled feel the job is too complex, with nearly half, 48%, under great stress. Job satisfaction has declined nine percentage points in the last four years. “These unsung heroes own the responsibility of everything that happens in the school building … at least 9 out of 10 of them do” (Berkowitz & Myers, 2013). As a result, many principals are even returning to the classroom to avoid the stress, long hours and all that is expected of today’s 24/7 leader. Such data present a strong case for ongoing principal mentoring and coaching, providing school leaders with the necessary tools and resources to effectively lead schools so they don’t leave the field. Principals are expected to turnaround, transform, remediate, support, create, and implement a vision for their schools.
As the principal’s importance has grown, the need to mentor and coach the principal to be proficient has gained prominence (Daresh, 2004; Gray, Fry, Bottoms & O’Neill, 2007; Saban & Wolfe, 2009). The last decade has experienced the development of effective mentoring models throughout the country, with 32 states requiring mentoring of new principals (Spirio, 2004; Villani, 2006). While funds have been allocated to support beginning principals, often resources end after the first or second year. What becomes essential is a mechanism of professional growth and training to sustain the principal throughout an entire career. Bush & Chew (1995) emphasized the importance of developing human capital, with mentoring poised as a means for expanding these skills. Bloom et al. (2005) suggested key areas for mentoring that include self-awareness and relationship management. Clearly important, all of these skills cannot be developed fully within one year, suggesting the need for mentoring and leadership training to evolve into a career-long process.

Current models of leadership emphasize its shared nature and its relevance as a process or leadership practice. If we truly believe that leadership is a practice, similar to the medical practice and other professions, then we need to build ways to foster its development. That model requires methods to learn the practice, with opportunities to lead, reflect, gain feedback from a coach, and practice various aspects of leadership in a continuous cycle. Initiatives that include this practice element are crucial. While instructional coaching provides for one aspect of the leader’s role, a principal needs coaching in a multitude of other areas.

A number of models help the leader better manage the job and all that comes with it; some involve direct support to the principals, while others may include partnering with the whole school. Most importantly, these models provide a good solution to the reasons principals are leaving the field. The National School Administration Manager (SAM) Project, funded by the Wallace Foundation, provides direct support to the principal through a professional development process. Using a unique set of tools to change a principal’s focus from school management tasks to instructional leadership-activities, the goals connect directly to improving teaching and learning. The process gives principals time and skills to focus on instruction by delegating time-consuming activities to a building manager or other staff members. This shift of the role of the principal to focus less on management duties and more on teaching practice, student learning, and school improvement is critical for effective, lasting change to occur. While this puts principals in a unique position to transform schools, they must have more time for instruction to be effective. This model helps the principal share various non-instructional items with other members of the staff.

Leadership Academies represent another mentoring model gaining in popularity. Many offer peer support for assistant principals to ease them into the profession with help along the way. The Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) has developed a State Leadership Academy Network comprised of six leadership academies who work with the board and school districts to redesign how principals and others school leaders are tapped, trained, certified, and supported as school teams work to improve learning and student achievement. Additionally, SREB runs a University Leadership Development Network in collaboration with eleven universities and school districts to redesign how university leadership preparation programs train aspiring school leaders. Additional redesign efforts focus on changing how leaders are tapped, certified, and supported in their work. As a result, universities are designing curriculum and instruction based on more practical content that provides more challenging assignments and new performance assessments.

The Professional Development School (PDS) Model is one framework for school-university partnerships and can provide much needed support for mentoring and coaching school leaders. A PDS provides a template for urban school reform efforts, where issues of accountability, improvement of practice, and limited resources are present. New roles are thus defined as teachers become part of a collaborative inquiry process and system. PDS goals are often described in terms of impact on preservice teachers, practicing educators, and P-12 student learning (Holmes Group, 1997). Such school-university partnerships provide a logical reciprocal relationship for students at both organizations as well as a real-life training ground for students at the university; classroom-based experiences connect with the realities of the school instead of learning in isolation. In addition, outcomes for leadership support are at the early stages with the opportunity for new and veteran principals to engage in dialogue and also participate in university and network learning. New and veteran principals can engage in professional learning to keep them current, knowledgeable about best practice, and emotionally supported. Within such a structure, there is time to reflect on the fast pace of the work with opportunities for non-evaluative conversations with former school administrators serving in university positions. Mentoring within a professional development school model supports the ongoing learning that exists with other stakeholders in the school and provides support for the person who has the most responsibilities on his/her own shoulders. This multi-tiered model is one in which resources can be shared and roles are divided and overlap. A university faculty member may assist in school curricular issues while the principal participates in student teaching seminars. The opportunity to seek advice and counsel from outside of the schoolhouse and away from those who will evaluate is invaluable. The need for leaders to reflect upon their decisions and consider how they can do things differently in the future is also critical. As a result, they need a time and place to go for reflection, and a mentor can provide that support.

Support from the district level and central office staff is another less formal way principals are helped. Professional organizations, conferences, and online resources continue to grow in popularity and use. The principal’s workload leaves limited time to gather information on new initiatives or practices they are supposed to lead.

Leadership preparation programs need to consider how to follow their graduates into the field and partner with districts to offer much needed support to principals in year 1, 2, and beyond. Considerations must be given for a reflective process and reflective model. Green (2010) provided a model emphasizing the four dimensions of principal leadership: understanding of self and others, understanding the complexity of organizational life, developing relationships, and engaging in leadership best practices. This model provides a template for principals to see their strengths and areas for growth. It builds upon traditional and current 360 evaluations; the opportunity for reflection allows the time and the process for learning to occur and facilitates the practice aspect of leadership.

Leadership is a key factor in operating effective schools. Moving forward, it is necessary to create structures and processes for principal support. Instead of replacing principals in rapid fashion, or allowing them to eat the teachers, wouldn’t a much better model involve providing them support and resources at every step along the way?
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