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SCOPE Education Services is a not-for-profit, private, voluntary organization permanently chartered by the New York State Board of Regents to provide services to school districts. Founded in 1964 by school superintendents, it is a cooperative venture for sharing resources to deal with common concerns. It is governed by a Board of Directors of school superintendents and college representatives and serves as a regional School Study Council and School Board Institute.

JLI Podcasts Spring 2025

From Study to Story: Transforming a COVID-19 Literacy Learning Loss Research Study into Children's Literature	Dr. Rachel Yudin's research, From Study to Story: Transforming a COVID-19 Literacy Learning Loss Research Study into Children's Literature, investigated the thorny issue of learning loss that characterized the challenging COVID-19 period and provides suggestions about how these might be overcome.	
The Impact of Implicit Racial Bias on Students' Grade Point Average in Predominantly White Colleges and Universities	Dr. Edwin Mahieu offers provocative research findings that reveal possible implicit biases in predominantly white colleges and universities that may suggest a hard review of how this factor may affect affect minority students.	
Embedding Financial Literacy Skills and Content in Higher Ed	Drs. Kelly Burlison, Morgan O'Sullivan, and Brittany E. Kiser, offer clear structure and direction about both the need for and value or embedding financial literacy skills and content into higher order reading and critical thinking goals. The podcast discussion wove around curriculum planning and interdisciplinary design that would enrich and recreate instructional approaches to include real-world relevance to learning.	
The Future of Peer-to-Peer Education: The Student Perspective (Part 1 & 2)	Dr. Gabriella Franza (Parts one and two) and her author colleagues, Myla Jackson, Mia Randazzo, Jordan Hall, and Maekyla Massey provided not one, but two podcasts where we explored their unique article that had explored the premise that students can and should contribute to their curriculum / instructional decisions. Two related but different perspectives are provided here, by both high school and by now college freshman as they reflected about educational practices might look differently of we restructured schooling to look more nearly like the premise they reflect about.	
Bonus Episode 1: Dr. Joseph Famularo	Our first of this series features an interview of Dr. Joseph Famularo, one of our "own" as a peer editor for our journal and on the SCOPE Board. More than that we bask in the honor of his selection as New York State Council of School Superintendents' Superintendent of the Year where he is recognized for his many accomplishments that include several books, an Eighteen-year (and continuing) superintendency, and many national and regional presentations about matters of leadership and effectiveness from the core outward.	

Editor's Note

The Age-Old Feud Between the Theory McCoys vs. the Practice Hatfields

A Scenario

"Dr. B, all these theories, are they really necessary for us to learn them? Are we only learning them because of the certification exam?"

Dr. B sighed. He knew that theory can be esoteric, despite the fact he had striven mightily to create activities and presentations to enable leadership students to translate from the abstract to the real-world applications they preferred to parse.

And he said so. "Actually, it isn't as though you need to match a theory to an issue for the sake of showing that you can connect the two worlds, it is more a matter of having internalized their themes so that you can have them in your leadership decision making arsenal."

Rob Student raised his hand. "You know - I'm sure you know, we all do - that in our internship experiences or when we are shadowing our Cooperating Administrators, they are too busy, way too busy, to stop to realize to actively pinpoint what kind of decision theory they are implementing to stop students who are in a hallway brawl."

Heads nodded. Dr. B smiled. "Actually, they are probably using a bundle of decision theories to make the best choice. Let's go around the room and identify issues and actions that you see in your internship, and I will help you link them with research and theory."

Rob Student, smiled. "Hmm, sounds like a blood feud challenge, Dr. B, let's have at it," he said good naturedly.

***

Having taught my share of leadership theory courses in post graduate world I can set my watch with the inevitable question that finds its way to the front of any leadership class.

And yet, this Dr. B would hold his ground and argue for their importance, not as isolated multiple-choice items, rather for their value in prompting, cuing, catalyzing, and supporting real-world application decisions making that is grounded in well-researched thinking.

Certainly, the *Journal for Leadership and Instruction* has always worked hard across its twenty-five years to assure that principle, i.e. the research we accept for publication, is grounded in strong theory and quality research to enable educators at all levels to improve their leadership structures and practices.

The same is the case for this Spring 2025 issue where we offer splendid examples of research whose foundation is sound and whose implications for quality leadership have ripple effects across our readership.

This begins with Drs. Kenneth Forman and Craig Markson, whose extensive use of data analysis in their article, "The Opt-Out Movement Revisited," substantiates learning and expenditure gaps among

school districts. Their analyses pose decision points for leaders and policy makers across the board.

Molloy University's Rebecca Y. Martinez's article, "Exploring Aspirations: A Review of the Career Decision Influences for Chinese American College Students" highlights a need to recognize how these variables must be factored into sensitive counseling and advice.

We have an international contributor's efforts for your consideration in this issue. Jordy van den Berg of The Netherlands, offers a spectrum dimension in his article, "Development of Leadership in Children who Experience(d) Domestic Violence: A Self-Efficacy Perspective."

"Beyond Instruction: A Framework for Balanced Literacy," by Dr. Andy Szeto of Brooklyn and of Russell Sage Colleges, contributes research about the effective implementation of balanced literacy that has leadership lessons for how any organizational change warrants careful consideration.

Dr. Nisha Acharya Julen of Fordham University accents her research about "The Power of Teacher Beliefs in Effective Learning of Students with Disabilities in Inclusion Classrooms;" She has valuable insights about this important topic. What *is* the optimum way to combine the many elements of instruction in Inclusion classrooms?

"The Underrepresentation of Female Superintendents," offered by Dr. Sharon Deland of St. John's University is a topic that paints a profile of hiring practice that deserve much attention and understanding

.

Navigating an IOU School Inspire to Aspire: An Inside-Out Approach to an Upward Dynamic Positive Culture by Dr. Joe Famularo is reviewed here by Dr. Barry McNamara of Touro University. This book is part of Dr. Famularo's series about re-creating a school organization by infusing it with many connected parts!

In closing, we note with great professional pride and unwavering commitment both to effective, world-class instruction and scholarly research that we will have completed our twenty-fifth year. Over that span, the journal continues its mission and grows in investigating relevant matters of interest on all learning leadership fronts. These times demand it. Look for our podcast that commemorates both its history and its future.

Have a safe and great summer!

Dr. Richard Bernato,

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THE OPT-OUT MOVEMENT REVISITED: A DEEP DIVE INTO THE 2023 DATA

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationships between opt-out rates, poverty, and results on the English Language Arts and Mathematics assessments for grades 3 – 8 in New York State. The setting included 102 school districts that were in two adjacent suburban counties in New York State: Nassau and Suffolk. A series of Pearson Product-Moment correlation analyses were conducted, with the alpha level set at .05, to determine the relationships between the opt-out rates, poverty, and Levels 3 and 4 achievement on the grades 3 – 8 ELA and Mathematics assessments. A series of multiple regression analyses were performed, with the alpha level set at .05, to analyze the extent to which poverty and opt-out rates predicted Levels 3 and 4 achievements on the grades 3 – 8 English Language Arts and Mathematics assessments. The opt-out rate combined with poverty clearly predicted results on both the ELA and Mathematics assessments. Increases in the opt-out rates and poverty rates put downward pressure on both assessments. The researchers recommended a deemphasis on the current testing modality so that ongoing formative assessments would be more directly linked to the instructional program, as a means to decrease the opt-out rates.

Keywords: Opt-Out, English Language Arts and Mathematics assessments for grades 3 – 8, and poverty.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationships between opt-out rates, poverty, and results on the English Language Arts and Mathematics assessments for grades 3 – 8 in New York State. The Opt-Out Movement has been defined as the percent of eligible students who declined to take the English Language Arts and Mathematics assessments for grades 3 - 8. New York State was considered the "hub" of the Opt-Out Movement, accounting for approximately 50% of the Opt-Out Movement nationwide. Long Island, New York's Nassau and Suffolk counties continued to hold the record for having the highest opt-out rates by county in New York State (Hildebrand & Valeeva, 2024; Strauss, 2016). Forman and Markson (2015, 2016) found that poverty was the major impediment to student achievement on New York State assessment results for English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics proficiency for grades 3 - 8. Levy and Edelman (2016) characterized the Opt-Out Movement as stemming primarily from middle-class suburban families. As a result of the ongoing debates in the research literature, the purpose of the current study was to determine the extent to which opt-out rates intersected with poverty levels to predict outcomes on the English Language Arts and Mathematics assessments for grades 3 – 8 in New York State.

Literature Review

The New York State Education Department (NYSED) defined test refusal as students who were eligible to take an assessment and did not sit for the examination. The state further broke down reporting on the populations opting out to include students with disabilities, English language learners, economically disadvantaged, and all others (NYSED, 2024a).

New York State accountability systems included a set of policies and practices used to measure how schools have been performing for students, providing recognition to those that served all their students well, and prompting improvement in those that did not. This federal legislation via the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) delineated that schools make

achievement progress with all groups of students, not just some (Lindblom et al., 2019). When any subgroup has been struggling, schools cannot simply sit by and watch; accountability regulations have prescribed that they must act (The Education Trust, 2016).

Data from the New York State Education Department revealed a large ethnic disparity in opt-out rates. In 2016, the overall opt-out rate in New York State stood at 21.7%. This compared to a White opt-out rate of 51.4%, Black opt-out rate of 10%, a Hispanic opt-out rate of 16.0% and an Asian opt-out rate of 7.0%. What factors could explain this wide disparity? The results indicated that factors affecting the White opt-out rate included whether the county was situated within New York City, county median income, and county political affiliation. Factors impacting the Black opt-out rate were influenced by county "ruralness" and county median income. More specifically, the findings revealed that White opt-out rates in NYS were significantly positively impacted by median family income (higher median income results in higher White opt-out rates), political affiliation (with conservative counties with White majorities having higher opt-out rates), and whether the county is in New York City (with New York City counties having lower White opt-out rates). Again, these results conformed to national data surveys revealing that higher income families were more likely to opt-out and that conservatives had a less favorable view towards opting-out compared to liberals. The finding that those students residing within the five counties comprising NYC were less likely to opt-out evidences the fact that NYC middle and high school schools placed a greater emphasis on standardized tests as compared with the other 56 NYS counties (Goch, 2018).

Regarding Black opt-out rates, the findings showed that Black opt-out rates were significantly positively impacted by median family income. However, political affiliation (percent conservative voters) did not show any statistical significance in explaining the Black opt-out rate. In addition, the Black opt-out rate was significantly and positively related to the percentage of county residents living in rural areas. This was most likely related to a greater Black presence in non-rural counties (Goch, 2018).

ESSA has allowed states greater leeway in designing their own accountability systems. However, the law has required that states establish student performance goals, hold schools accountable for student achievement, and has included a broader measure of student performance in its accountability beyond test scores. Moreover, states have had to set goals for increasing the percentage of students in all subgroups including low-income students, students with disabilities, and English language learners to reach state standards in English language arts and mathematics, and raising graduation rates. States must have determined exactly how much each indicator (academic achievement, other academic indicators, English language proficiency, and indicators of school quality) counted in school accountability ratings. However, the first three indicators carried substantial weight, and together, carried much more weight than additional measures of school quality (Lindblom et al., 2019).

ESSA legislation barred the federal government from punishing states for opt-out families, but the state-level response to this development was not yet clear. Opting out as a strategy might also be a matter of scale. If opt-out actions continued to grow in size, states might be forced to engage in the issue of opt-out more directly in the public sphere even if the new regulations allowed amnesty for opt-out families. Policymakers might eventually be forced to make critical choices regarding the added value of forcing all families to participate in accountability systems or allowing flexibility for families to choose to participate (Mitra et al., 2016).

Berliner (2009) argued that the various impacts of poverty "are more responsible for the problems we see in our schools than are teachers and administrators. That is, the problems of achievement among America's poor are much more likely to be located outside the school than in it" (p. 4). Berliner further argued that schools whose attendance boundaries include dysfunctional neighborhoods, which face far greater challenges in nurturing student achievement than those that draw students from healthier neighborhoods. Additionally, Berliner (2013) argued that the source of America's educational problems has been outside the school, primarily a result of income inequality and food insecurity. He contended that 60% of the variance in achievement scores were due to out-of-school factors including food insecurity and poverty.

Children raised in poverty achieved at lower levels than their more advantaged peers. Researchers found that income level was one of the most powerful predictors of students' academic performance (Blazer, 2009). Most research concurred that schools with high concentrations of students living in poverty should be expected to increase the achievement of all their students. Burney and Beilke (2008) noted that the condition of poverty may be the most important

of all student differences in relation to high achievement. The authors reviewed the literature on poverty, including its relationship with ethnicity and locale, searching for commonalities that showed the relationship between poverty and high achievement, and underscored the need to provide individual support and the development of resilience to low-income, high-ability students.

Forman and Markson (2015; 2016) found low socioeconomic status or poverty, as measured by the percent of students receiving free or reduced lunch, was the major impediment to student achievement on New York State assessment results for English Language Arts and Mathematics proficiency. Tienken (2012) reported that a single static measure did not consider growth of student learning at the classroom and school levels throughout the school year. The study suggested that even pretests and post tests were a better measure of annual achievement. Tienken indicated that academic differences based on results from state mandated high school English Language Arts and Mathematics tests administered to disadvantaged and advantaged peers yielded a 12 to 36 point variance. In a Miami-Dade study, researchers agreed that eliminating the pervasive effects of poverty on student achievement is outside the reach of public schools (Blazer, 2009).

Education Next hosted a discussion "Making Sense of the Opt Out Movement" (Levy & Edelman, 2016). Levy and Edelman indicated that this movement reflected the genuine concern of parents, with 20% of New York City parents opting their children out of standardized testing. However, the movement became characterized as a middle-class suburbanite and teacher union issue. Levy and Edelman further suggested that opting out was a legitimate parent concern because parents were uncomfortable with exams. However, some school districts reported to parents that opt-out schools would be considered "in need of improvement" (p. 56).

Test refusal was low in urban centers, around 20%, compared to elsewhere around the state, around 30%. In addition, the statewide teachers' union (NYSUT) endorsed test refusal and indicated that curriculum was not aligned with assessment. Test refusal continued, parents wanted reasonable measurement and accountability and were dissatisfied with the rapid change foisted upon their children, especially in not meeting the needs of special education youngsters. Levy and Edelman (2016) reported that although most test refusals happened in middle class and wealthy communities, the test refusal advocates believed they were protecting all students from a measurement system that did more harm than good. The test refusal movement also pointed to the financial strain that new instructional programs and assessments had on school districts across the state. Levy and Edelman further reported that test refusal students tended to be White and less likely to be economically disadvantaged coming from other than urban areas. Urban areas, where opt-out rates have been lower, had a disproportionate number of English Language Learners and disadvantaged students, and parents were less involved in their children's education (Levy & Edelman, 2016).

Bennett (2016) reported that parents who opt their children out appeared to represent a distinct subpopulation. In New York, opt-outs were more likely to be White and not to have achieved proficiency on the previous year's state examinations. Opted-out students were less likely to be economically disadvantaged, to come from districts serving relatively large numbers of poor students, and to be English language learners. Similar associations for race and SES occurred in Colorado and Washington (Bennett, 2016).

Bennett further indicated that a powerful motivator in New York State up until present, appears to have been an increase in the role of student test results for teacher evaluation, a use with both limited support among the public and in the educational research community. While the mechanisms leading from that increase to opt-out have not been systematically documented, it has been suggested that the trigger was the combination of test use on which notably lower percentages of students were expected to achieve proficiency (Bennett, 2016).

However, some states, like California, did not link teacher evaluation to student test scores. Other states making such linkages but did not make test scores the preponderant evaluation criterion got Department of Education permission to delay implementation, such as in Connecticut, Delaware, and Idaho. Additional states stepped back from their original policies altogether, such as Wisconsin. Finally, most states avoided direct confrontation with teacher unions (Bennett, 2016).

Belew (2023) examined the opt-out in Colorado. Belew indicated that studies found that parents determined whether letting their children participate in annual assessment would benefit their children each school year. Political considerations of their decisions were at best a second thought for parents. Additionally, parental opt-out in Colorado carried no consequences for students, teachers, schools, or school districts following the dramatic increase in parental refusals to allow students to participate in the standardized assessments in the spring of 2015. After the acceptance of Colorado's

Consolidated ESSA plan by the United States Department of Education in 2018, Colorado was freed from concerns about loss of federal funds due to parental opt-out. Additionally, the research suggested that parents did not consider the political ramifications of opting out or of allowing their children to participate in testing. Parents made the decision whether to let their children participate in the annual assessments based on what they believed would better benefit their children. Belew interviewed parents a broad sample of parents who indicated that they made the "choice" to opt-out because they wanted to protect their child from stress or because the tests did not count towards their child's grade or grade promotion.

Belew (2023) argued that the data produced by this research study suggested that schools in the most affluent neighborhoods were predicted to have higher levels of ELA opt-out than schools in the lower 70% of neighborhood affluence. This research also suggested that students attending the highest performing schools were less likely to opt-out than those attending lower performing schools. However, Belew argued that students attending high performance schools were more likely to be well prepared for the annual assessments.

Data Sources

The New York State Education Department Data Site (2023) was the source for much of the data used in this study and the data analyzed were from the 2022/2023 school year. The school districts selected for the analyses were from Nassau and Suffolk County, New York, two large adjacent counties located in the Eastern suburbs of New York City. Suffolk was the fourth largest county by population in New York State and Nassau was the fifth largest out of 62 counties (Carney, 2024). State reporting on 102 school districts from these two counties were included; however, several school districts were excluded for having a population of less than 100 test takers on the ELA and Mathematics assessments and/or for not being school districts that included grades 3 – 8 test takers. The New York State Education Department Data Site (2023) was used to compile the following data: (a) the percent of students by school district who were classified as "Economically Disadvantaged" (NYSED, 2024b); and (b) the percent of students by school district who obtained scores from Levels 3 and 4 on the grades 3 - 8 English Language Arts and Mathematics assessments. The source of the 2023 data for the opt-out rate by district was obtained from *Newsday* (Hildebrand & Valeeva, 2024) and reported as the percent of students by school district.

Method

A series of Pearson Product-Moment correlation analyses were conducted, with the alpha level set at .05, to determine the relationships between the opt-out rates, poverty, and Levels 3 and 4 achievements on the grades 3 – 8 ELA and Mathematics assessments. A series of multiple regression analyses were performed, with the alpha level set at .05, to analyze the extent to which poverty and opt-out rates predicted Levels 3 and 4 achievements on the grades 3 – 8 ELA and Mathematics assessments.

Results

Table 1 illustrated the relationships between the 2023 Opt-Out percentages for the grades 3 – 8 ELA assessments, the percentages for economically disadvantaged students, and the percentages for students with Levels 3 – 4 achievements on the ELA assessments.

Table 1

Relationships Between the ELA Opt-Out, Economically Disadvantaged Students and ELA Level 3-4 Achievement (N = 102)

	2023 Level 3-4 ELA	*2023 ELA Opt-Out*
2023 ELA Opt-Out	-0.19	
r^2	3.72%	
2023 Eco. Disadv.	-0.77	-0.17
r^2	58.67%	2.80%

ELA Opt-Out did not have a statistically significant relationship with achievement on the ELA assessments, $p > .05$. Poverty, as identified by the percentage of students classified as economically disadvantaged by school district did have a statistically significant relationship with ELA achievement, $p < .05$. Poverty had an inverse relationship with ELA achievement. As poverty went up, ELA achievement went down by 58.57%.

Table 2 illustrated the relationships between the 2023 opt-out percentages for the grades 3 – 8 Mathematics assessments, the percentages for economically disadvantaged students, and the percentages for students with Levels 3 – 4 achievements on the Mathematics assessments.

Table 2

Relationships Between the Mathematics Opt-Out, Economically Disadvantaged Students and Mathematics Level 3-4 Achievement (N = 102)

	2023 Level 3-4 Math	*2023 Math Opt-Out*
2023 Math Opt-Out	-0.045	
r^2	0.20%	
2023 Eco. Disadv.	-0.81	-0.15
r^2	65.27%	2.36%

Mathematics opt-out percentages did not have a statistically significant relationship with achievement on the Mathematics assessments, $p > .05$. Poverty, as identified by the percentage of students classified as economically disadvantaged by school

district did have a statistically significant relationship with Mathematics achievement, $p < .05$. Poverty had an inverse relationship with Mathematics achievement. As poverty went up, Mathematics achievement went down by 65.27%.

Results from further Analyses

The researchers observed that school districts with extremely high percentages of students living in poverty were opting in to taking the State ELA and Mathematics assessments. Furthermore, school districts with extremely low levels of poverty were also opting in to taking the Assessments. Levy and Edelman (2016) similarly characterized the Opt-Out Movement as stemming primarily from middle-class suburban families. To test these observations, along with Levy and Edelman's findings, the researchers sought to filter out these extremes. The mean percentage of economically disadvantaged was 34.14%. One standard deviation from the mean was 21.88%. The researchers filtered out the extremely high and low poverty districts by approximately one standard deviation above and below the mean, including a range of economically disadvantaged between 13 and 55%. This filtering included 68 school districts with a percentage of economically disadvantaged students ranging from 13 to 55%.

Table 3 illustrated the relationships between the 2023 opt-out percentages for the grades 3 – 8 ELA assessments, the percentages for economically disadvantaged students, and the percentages for students with Levels 3 – 4 achievements on the ELA assessments among the more middle-class school districts.

Table 3

Relationships Between the ELA Opt-Out, Economically Disadvantaged Students and ELA Level 3-4 Achievement (N = 68) Among Middle-Class School Districts

	2023 Level 3-4 ELA	*2023 ELA Opt-Out*
2023 ELA Opt-Out	-0.47	
r^2	22.56%	
2023 Eco. Disadv.	-0.68	0.077
r^2	46.02%	0.59%

2023 ELA opt-out had a statistically significant relationship with achievement on the 2023 ELA assessments, $p < .05$, accounting for 22.56% of the variance. As the ELA opt-out rate went up, achievement on the ELA assessments went down by 22.56%. Similarly, the 2023 economically disadvantaged students had a statistically significant relationship with achievement on the ELA assessments, $p < .05$., accounting for 46.02% of the variance. As the population of economically disadvantaged students went up by school district, achievement on the ELA assessments went down by 46.02%.

Table 4 illustrates the multiple regression analysis which was run to ELA Level 3 – 4 achievements from 2023 ELA opt-out rates and economically disadvantaged student population percentages by school district. This resulted in a significant model, $F(2, 65) = 57.83$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .64$. The individual predictors were examined further and indicated that the 2023 opt-out rate ($t = -5.70$, $p < .001$) and the 2023 economically disadvantaged student population rates ($t = -8.65$, $p < .001$) were significant predictors of Level 3 – 4 achievements on the ELA assessments.

Table 4

ELA Regression Analysis for the Summed Score

					95% CI	
Variable	*b*	*SE*	*t*	*p*	*LL*	*UL*
Intercept	90.96	3.36	27.05	0.000	84.25	97.68
2023 ELA Opt-Out	-0.32	0.06	-5.70	0.000	-0.44	-0.21
2023 Eco. Disadv.	-0.72	0.08	-8.66	0.000	-0.89	-0.56

A school district's predicted ELA Level 3 – 4 achievement is = 90.96 + -0.32 (2023 ELA opt-out rates) + -0.72 (2023 Economically Disadvantaged student rates).

Table 5 illustrates the relationships between the 2023 opt-out percentages for the grades 3 – 8 Mathematics assessments, the percentages for economically disadvantaged students, and the percentages for students with Levels 3 – 4 achievements on the Mathematics assessments among the more middle-class school districts.

Table 5

Relationships Between the Mathematics Opt-Out, Economically Disadvantaged Students and Mathematics Level 3-4 Achievement (N = 68) Among Middle-Class School Districts

	2023 Level 3-4 Math	*2023 Math Opt-Out*
2023 Math Opt-Out	-0.37	
r^2	14.03%	
2023 Eco. Disadv.	-0.73	0.09
r^2	53.79%	0.75%

2023 Mathematics opt-out had a statistically significant relationship with achievement on the 2023 Mathematics assessments, $p < .05$, accounting for 14.03% of the variance. As the Mathematics opt-out rate went up, achievement on the Mathematics assessments went down by 14.03%. Similarly, the 2023 economically disadvantaged students had a statistically significant relationship with achievement on the Mathematics assessments, $p < .05$., accounting for 53.79% of the variance. As the population of economically disadvantaged students went up by school district, achievement on the Mathematics assessments went down by 53.79%.

Table 6 illustrated the multiple regression analysis which was run to Mathematics Level 3 – 4 achievements from 2023 Mathematics opt-out rates and economically disadvantaged student population percentages by school district. This resulted in a significant model, $F(2, 65) = 56.62$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .64$. The individual predictors were examined

further and indicated that the 2023 opt-out Rate ($t = -4.17$, $p < .001$) and the 2023 economically disadvantaged student population rates ($t = -9.39$, $p < .001$) were significant predictors of Level 3 – 4 achievements on the Mathematics assessments.

Table 6

Mathematics Regression Analysis for the Summed Score

					95% CI	
Variable	*b*	*SE*	*t*	*p*	*LL*	*UL*
Intercept	100.18	3.49	28.71	0.000	93.22	107.15
2023 Math Opt-Out	-0.27	0.06	-4.17	0.000	-0.39	-0.14
2023 Eco. Disadv.	-0.83	0.09	-9.39	0.000	-1.00	-0.65

A school district's predicted Mathematics Level 3 – 4 achievement is = 100.18 + -0.27 (2023 Mathematics opt-out rates) + -0.83 (2023 Economically Disadvantaged student rates).

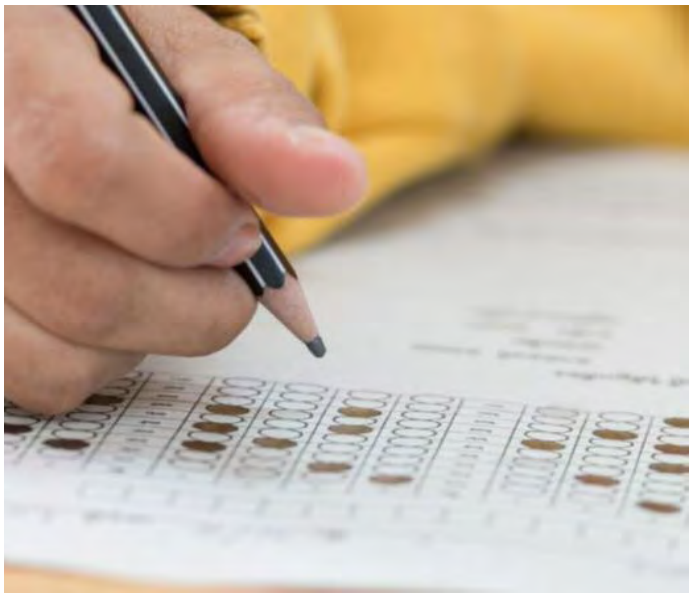
Conclusion

The opt-out rate combined with poverty clearly predicted results on both the ELA and Mathematics assessments. Increases in the opt-out rates and poverty rates put downward pressure on both assessments. The results of this study coincided with Levy and Edelman's (2016) findings that the Opt-Out Movement was particularly problematic in school districts with a greater percentage of students from more middle-class families.

School district leaders should consider working with state education departments to develop more creative ways of incorporating assessments into instruction. Creating alternative formative assessment systems could be a potential pathway for promoting opting-in.

Implications of the Research

The researchers recommend a deemphasis on the current testing modality so that ongoing formative assessments are part of the instructional program. As we integrate Artificial Intelligence into education, we should be able to decommission annual standardized testing. The researchers envision that a formal testing procedure will be formative, integrated with Artificial Intelligence so that learning takes place in an ongoing manner. Whatever future assessment models emerge, school leaders, parents, and other stakeholders should encourage students to opt-in to the assessment system. Failure to do so could put their future academic achievement at risk. Students who opt-out from early standardized testing will mean they are less equipped to succeed on future standardized testing to be considered for higher education (Levy & Edelman, 2016). To be sure, the Regents Diploma with Advanced Designation has nearly twice the number of standardized tests as the Regents Diploma, and colleges or universities highly value the Regents Diploma with Advanced Designation when they review applications for admission in New York State. This could have lasting consequences for these students as standardized testing remains a criterion for ongoing academic advancement (Markson et al., 2023).



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EXPLORING ASPIRATIONS: A REVIEW OF THE CAREER DECISION INFLUENCES FOR CHINESE AMERICAN COLLEGE STUDENTS

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Abstract

This paper examines the complex factors influencing career choices among Chinese American college students, with a focus on cultural and familial dynamics. The rapidly growing Asian American population, particularly Chinese Americans, faces unique challenges in navigating career development within the context of traditional Confucian values and the process of acculturation in the United States. The study explores how Confucian principles of filial piety, collective family success, and emphasis on education shape parental expectations for their children's career paths. Through a review of current literature, it also investigates the impact of acculturation on intergenerational relationships and career decision-making processes. By examining these complex dynamics, this study contributes to a more nuanced understanding of Chinese American students' career development, challenging stereotypes and informing more effective support systems in educational and professional settings.

Keywords: Chinese American, cultural values, career decisions, college students

Introduction

The Asian population is growing, as the number of people who identify as Asian in the United States has tripled in the last three decades, and Asians are now the fastest-growing of the nation's four largest racial and ethnic groups (Gebeloff et al., 2021) and is expected to surpass 46 million by 2060 (Budiman & Ruiz, 2021). For this paper, an Asian American is defined as someone living in the United States of Asian birth or descent. In 2021, the estimated number of people of Chinese descent in the United States was 5.2 million, the largest Asian group. (U.S. Census Bureau, 2024).

In the Census's American Community Survey in 2021, of Asian Americans aged 25 or over, 56.4% had earned a bachelor's degree or higher, Asian American Pacific Islander higher education enrollment has increased 8.5% from 1.28 million to 1.39 million since the fall of 2010, and 52% attended public four-year institutions, with 77% of Asian American students graduating within six years in four-year institutions (Postsecondary National Policy Institute, 2023). Though the Asian population has grown, much remains to be learned about their unique challenges and career and occupational development. (Kantamneni et al., 2018; Ma et al., 2014; Ma & Yeh, 2010; Okubo et al., 2007), especially with Chinese Americans, the oldest and one of the most significant subgroups of Asian Americans (Liu, 1998).

Problem Statement

Many Chinese parents immigrate to the United States to provide a better life for their children, often wanting them to choose careers in the medical, legal, or engineering fields where it is perceived that they will have a substantial income so that they can support themselves and their families (Kao, 1995; E. Kim, 2014; Louie, 2001; Ma et al., 2014; Rosenbloom & Batalova, 2023; Shen, 2015; Shen et al., 2014; Shen & Liao, 2022; Tang, 2002). Chinese families view higher education as a way for their children to compensate for their perceived discrimination and upcoming economic mobility (Chen & Fouad, 2013; Kao, 1995; Kiang et al.., 2013; Kim, 2014; Louie, 2001). To combat their discrimination, parents perceive that their children will have an easier time if they choose careers that Asian Americans have already excelled in (Leong & Chou, 1994; Leong & Serafica, 1995). These careers include

physician, nurse, pharmacist, lawyer, and civil or mechanical engineer.

Chinese culture is embedded in Confucianism, which has one of its central tenets of filial piety, or devotion where children are taught to respect and listen to their elders. The relationship between parent and child is paramount, and the family unit is the focus rather than the individual (Park & Chesla, 2007). The good of the family is prioritized over individual desires, thus leading to a collectivist way of thought. Confucianism emphasizes economic well-being and education (National Geographic, 2023; Nisbett, 2003). As Chinese American families spend more time in the United States, more future generations tend to assimilate and adopt a Western Eurocentric outlook. This often leads to miscommunication and misunderstandings as acculturation affects different aspects of a person's life, including food choices, language spoken, family relationships, media preferences, and career choices (Chen & Fouad, 2013; Liu et al., 2019). While some adolescents may conform to their parents' career decision wishes despite their desires, some will not, causing much strife in the family (Kim, 2014; Liu et al., 2019; Ma et al., 2014; Okubo et al., 2007). However, if it is a career that adolescents are not passionate about, this can lead to feelings of anxiety and resentment, leading to mental health issues. Consistent with Confucian beliefs, many Chinese American adolescents are expected to attend college by their parents, and they must navigate familial pressures and individual desires. As adolescence is a time of great exploration and decision-making (Sawitri & Creed, 2017), it is imperative to learn from Chinese American college students during this critical period of their development, as Chinese Americans are the oldest and one of the most significant subgroups of Asian Americans they have unique career and occupational development challenges that need to be further explored and studied.

Significance

Asian Americans have historically been viewed as the perpetual foreigner, which depicts Chinese Americans as alien in appearance, work ethic, and food preferences. (Leong & Tang, 2016), and as fresh-off-the-boat immigrants learning English, forgetting that Chinese Americans have significantly contributed to healthcare, entertainment, STEM, business, political, and educational industries (Jang, 2022). Chinese Americans have been scapegoated for the loss of jobs during various points in American history, as well as the COVID-19 pandemic. The passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 was the only one in United States history that ever targeted a specific race, banning Chinese workers from entering the United States and excluding Chinese immigrants from American citizenship.

Since the pandemic and the rise of anti-Asian hate crimes, there has been an increase in Asian voices expressing their demand for equality and acceptance as Americans. The anti-Asian hate and acts of violence have galvanized Asian American youths as they are no longer keeping their heads down and accepting how society treats them, as shown by the many protests and demonstrations following the hate crimes. Asian American youths speak out on college campuses and in the workplace and stand up for their parents and older family members (Mineo, 2021). Asian American history is important to learn as their experiences give Chinese American students a voice and the confidence to say they matter, allowing them to be seen, heard, and valued.

Chinese American students may have changed their career trajectories based on ethical and moral concerns. The implications following this affect career counseling and higher education. Knowing more about 21st-century Chinese American college students and how they make career decisions can help career counselors understand them and their familial backgrounds to help better guide them in career decisions, undermining existing stereotypes and biases.

This review of literature focused on the external factors that influence Chinese American college students' career decisions, such as cultural factors and family influence. These different lenses give a complete background on the factors that go into a career decision for a Chinese American student.

Methodology

For finding research on factors that influence the academic, career, and familial dynamics shaping the experiences of Chinese American college students in navigating their aspirations and parental expectations, I found articles through Google Scholar, Scopus, ProQuest, and the Molloy University JET Library. Additionally, I read books to delve further into a specific topic. I chose the following search terms: "Chinese American," "Asian American," "parents," "career," and strings: "Chinese American" OR "Asian American" AND "parents" AND "aspirations" OR "career."

Literature Review

Factors Influencing Career Choice among Chinese American Students

A career is generally viewed as a way to express your passions and interests (Fouad et al., 2008; Kim et al., 2023);

however, in a collectivist culture, like Asians, it is seen as a means for obtaining financial security and social status to fulfill family needs (Kim, 2014; J. Liu et al., 2019; Ma et al., 2014; Shen & Liao, 2022; Tang et al., 1999; Tao et al., 2018). In Asian cultures, a person's career is not only a personal achievement but one shared by the family to fulfill expectations and to bring honor to the family (Chen & Fouad, 2013; Tang, 2002). While some Chinese American college students may conform to their parents' wishes despite their desires, some will not, causing much strife in the family.

Many factors influence career choices among Chinese American college students. These factors can be culture—or family-related, including Confucianism, acculturation, parenting styles, communication, language barriers, and differing values between parents and their children. These dynamics can be very influential in their career decision-making process.

Cultural Factors

Confucianism. Chinese culture is deeply rooted in Confucianism, which emphasizes the importance of family and community. Established by the philosopher Confucius, this ideology promotes values such as respect for parents and elders, the care of the elderly, and the nurturing of children (Park & Chesla, 2007). Confucianism places supreme value on respect for parents and grandparents, fostering the virtue of filial piety, which expresses a child's reverence for their elders (Hill et al., 2022; Huang & Gove, 2015; Liu, 2013). This collective familial orientation underscores the view of the family as the fundamental unit of society, prioritizing economic and social functions over individualism, with each member's role focused on bettering the family as a whole (Huang & Gove, 2015).

Confucianism also advocates for economic well-being and the pursuit of education (E. Kim, 2014; National Geographic, 2023; Nisbett, 2003; Park & Chesla, 2007). Park and Chesla (2007) posit that Confucius believed education and self-cultivation were the route to goodness, as they broaden the mind and foster kindness toward others. Historically, from 770 BC to the 1910s, success in Chinese society was defined not by wealth but by social class linked to occupation, with scholars occupying the highest stratum (Huang & Gove, 2015; Louie, 2001). This elevated status was attributed to their "mental labor," which shaped societal decisions and moral character (Huang & Gove, 2015, p. 43). Many Asian families still regard education as a pathway to achieving scholarly status, reinforcing the cultural emphasis on academic achievement to secure higher social standing and economic stability.

Acculturation. As Chinese American families spend more time in the United States, they and their future generations tend to assimilate and adopt a Western Eurocentric outlook, which puts more emphasis on individual career desires rather than following familial collective success or pressures. According to Leong and Chou (1994), assimilation views the process of cultural change as linear and unidirectional. In contrast, acculturation is viewed as a more complex process with multiple choices and outcomes with the question of how Chinese Americans view their culture and their dominant host culture. Using John Berry's 1980 model, Leong and Chou (1994) presented four categories and identities: Integrationist, Assimilationist, Separationist, and Marginal Identities. Integrationists hold favorable views of both their own culture and host culture, taking the best that both cultures have to offer; Assimilationists hold a positive view of the host culture but a negative view of their own culture; Separationists view their host culture negatively, and their own culture positively; and a Marginal person holds a negative view of both their host and own culture (Leong & Chou, 1994). Based on how Chinese American college students ethnically identify themselves impacts their career decisions.

Family conflicts within immigrant families are often due to acculturation gaps between parents and children, as children raised in the United States generally acculturate at a faster rate than their parents. Generational status also affects acculturation. According to Pong et al. (2005), first-generation adolescents are those who were born outside the United States and who have at least one biological parent who was foreign-born; second-generation adolescents were born in the United States and had at least one foreign-born parent; and third-generation adolescents were born in the United States and had native-born parents. Some adolescents identify as 1.5 generations as they immigrated as a child with their parents and grew up in the United States (E. Kim, 2014). As Asian Americans become more acculturated, they may choose to give up their own culture and refuse to meet their parents' expectations (Kim et al., 2023; Leong & Leung, 1994).

Intergenerational cultural conflicts occur due to the acculturation gap between parents and children, often leading to disagreements in values and beliefs (Kim, 2014; Liu et al., 2019; Ma et al., 2014; Okubo et al., 2007). This conflict often leads to miscommunication and misunderstandings as acculturation affects different aspects of a person's life, including food choices, language spoken, family relationships, media preferences, and career choices (Chen & Fouad, 2013; Liu et al., 2019). Lee and Liu (2001) suggested that Asian

American parents and children who experienced the fewest cultural differences, as they were all highly acculturated, reported less likelihood of family conflict; however, children who were more acculturated than their parents will encounter intergenerational family conflicts. Parental pressure also leads to intergenerational family conflicts because they emphasize financial security, family unity, and future outlook (Ma & Yeh, 2005).

Family Influence. According to Pong et al. (2005), there are four parenting styles based on "demandingness" and "responsiveness," including authoritarian, permissive, authoritative, and neglectful. Authoritarian parenting is high on demandingness and low on responsiveness, showing high parental control and supervision with an emphasis on obedience and respect for authority; permissive parenting is low on demandingness and high on responsiveness, in which they are very accepting of their children, making few demands for mature behavior, and allow their children substantial self-regulation; authoritative parenting is high on both demandingness and responsiveness, in which they firmly enforce rules and standards while encouraging their children to be independent and have open communication. Neglectful parenting is low on both demandingness and responsiveness, in which parents are unengaged, non-directive, and do not monitor their children's activities (Pong et al., 2005). Pong et al. (2005) states that parenting styles are not gauged by the frequency of interactions but by the strength and quality of the interaction. Parental communication varies among permissive, authoritarian, and authoritative parents as permissive parents may allow their children to dominate the conversation; authoritarian parents may dominate the conversation; authoritative parents allow children's feedback while giving guidance and direction (Pong et al., 2005). In Park et al.'s (2010) study of perceived parenting styles and family conflict, they found that authoritarian parenting increased, integrated, separated, and assimilated participants reported increased family conflict. In contrast, the marginalized group reported lower family conflict as assimilated Asian American college students reported fewer family conflicts at higher levels of authoritative parenting in comparison to the integrated, separated, and marginalized groups.

Generational Differences

Language barriers and value differences due to acculturative factors between parents and children affect family cohesion (Gim Chung, 2001; Leong et al., 2004; Okubo et al., 2007). Some children may learn or maintain their language skills, whether through conversations in the home or other cultural activities. However, some children may lose their native tongue or not learn their parent's language at all (Qin et al., 2008). Finding the correct phrase to convey meaning is often hard, leading to frustration and disappointment.

Many Chinese parents immigrate to the United States for better economic opportunities for themselves and their families. (Gim Chung, 2001; Lee, 2016; Louie, 2001). They often took menial jobs to make money to support their families and worked long hours in restaurants and laundromats (Lee, 2019). They feel that having a job that supports the family is more important than finding a job that matches their skills, abilities, and values (Leong & Tang, 2016). Since these industries have extended hours, starting early in the morning and lasting late at night, it leaves little time for parents and children to spend together. Qin et al. (2008) Interviewed Chinese American students who said they did not see their parents because of their work schedules. Often, parents would leave before the children went to school and return after the children had gone to bed.

Due to racism and discrimination faced by first-generation families, parents often push their children to a practical job, one with financial security. Often, they want them to choose careers in the medical, legal, or engineering fields where it is perceived that it is stable and secure, they will have a substantial income so that they can support themselves and their families (Kao, 1995; Kim, 2014; Louie, 2001; Ma et al., 2014; Rosenbloom & Batalova, 2023; Shen, 2015; Shen et al., 2014; Shen & Liao, 2022; Tang, 2002).

Asian American parents place high expectations on their children for academic excellence. Foreign-born minority parents have higher educational expectations for their children than native-white parents (Kao, 1995; Kim, 2014; Louie, 2001; Okubo et al., 2007; Pong et al., 2005; Song & Glick, 2004). Higher than any other ethnic group, Asian American parents expect their children to complete an average of 16.7 years of education (Tsai-Chae & Nagata, 2008). However, these expectations can lead to many conflicts at home due to the extreme academic pressures Asian American students feel, as their parents were primarily focused on their studies and not on other aspects of their lives (Qin et al., 2008).

Conclusion

Chinese culture is embedded in Confucianism and emphasizes filial piety, economic well-being, and education. (National Geographic, 2023; Nisbett, 2003; Park & Chesla, 2007). Many Chinese parents immigrate to the United States to

provide a better life for their children, often encouraging careers in medicine, law, or engineering where they are perceived to have financial stability. While some adolescents may conform to their parent's wishes despite their desires, some will not, causing much strife in the family.

Many Chinese American adolescents are expected to attend college by their parents, and they must navigate familial pressures and individual desires. As adolescence is a time of exploration and decision-making (Sawitri & Creed, 2017). Understanding Chinese American experiences is crucial, as Chinese Americans are the oldest and one of the most significant subgroups of Asian Americans. Understanding their mindsets can help higher education institutions develop curricula and resources for academic success, belonging, and engagement on campus.

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DEVELOPMENT OF LEADERSHIP IN CHILDREN WHO EXPERIENCE(D) DOMESTIC VIOLENCE: A SELF-EFFICACY PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

There is a growing demand for new leaders. Academic interest in leadership and leadership development has surged in recent years. Most studies focus on leadership development in general, neglecting leadership development among children and/or leadership development among children growing up in specific contexts, such as domestic violence households. Existing research highlights a relationship between parental leadership and self-efficacy in children, as well as between levels of self-efficacy and successful leadership. Self-efficacy is an important factor in leadership development; however, domestic violence experience often leads to lower levels of self-efficacy in children. This review shows that further research is needed to understand the mediating role of self-efficacy in the leadership development process, especially about children growing up in domestic violence households.

Keywords: Self-efficacy, domestic violence, leadership development

Introduction

The background of this literature review is the observation that multiple studies focus on leadership development and the influence of parent leadership on the development of leadership in children, yet research regarding child leadership development is deficient. This is particularly the case when it comes to child leadership development in specific contexts, such as domestic violence households. This literature review aims to gain insight into the leadership development and the role that self-efficacy plays in the leadership development of children who experience(d) domestic violence.

Methodology

This literature review focuses on the development of leadership in children who are exposed to domestic violence. A wealth of research indicates that leadership development begins at an early age and that self-efficacy is closely related to the development of leadership abilities. However, experiences of domestic violence often result in lower levels of self-efficacy, suggesting that children exposed to such environments may develop fewer leadership abilities compared to those who are not exposed (Avolio et al., 20009, Ferguson et al., 2006, Hartman et al., 1992). Given the scarcity of research on leadership development in children within specific contexts, this article aims to explore the relationships among child leadership development, parental leadership influence, domestic violence exposure, and self-efficacy. To conduct this exploration, the researcher reviewed scientific journals accessed through the Google Scholar and WorldCat databases. Utilizing keywords related to these concepts, such as "child leadership development," "parent leadership," "self-efficacy," "social cognitive theory," and "social learning theory," the researcher selected journals that featured the most influential sources, the most recent publications, and fundamental works from the past century. Our analysis included examining over 100 sources, complemented by a quantitative analysis.

Problem Statement and Aim for this Review

Leadership remains a relevant yet complex concept to define. There is an increasing demand for new leaders due to globalization, advances in technology, intensified competition, the mass retirement of baby boomers, and declining birth rates, all of which contribute to the growing need for motivated individuals to assume leadership roles (London, 2002; Riggio, 2008). In recent years, interest in leadership has surged along with the volume of related publications (Dinh et al., 2014; Ford

et al., 2007; Gunter, 2015; Samul, 2020), yet the definition of leadership varies widely in academic literature (Bennis, 1995; Volckmann, 2012). Leadership is interpreted differently across various fields such as business, psychology, and pedagogy, encompassing roles in occupations, task projects, or self-leadership. Opinions also differ on when leadership development occurs, whether early in life or later. Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) suggests that leadership begins to develop at an early age and that parental leadership significantly influences children's leadership skills (Avolio et al., 2009; Ferguson et al., 2006; Hartman et al., 1992). Child leadership pertains to the process through which young children exhibit abilities that enhance problem-solving efficiency or elevate group thinking (Hailey, 2020). Hartman et al. highlight the impact of parental leadership on child leadership, noting that children often mirror their parents' leadership styles, even if they disagree with those styles. Other studies have linked specific parental leadership styles with the development of child leadership abilities (Avolio, 2005), with the authoritative style being positively associated with traits that foster advancement into leadership positions (Bass, 1990; Yukl, 2006). Despite ongoing interest in leadership, research on child leadership, particularly in specific contexts such as domestic violence households, is notably scarce (Kudo et al., 2012; Lee et al., 2005; Morda et al., 2010; Murphy et al., 2011a). Therefore, the influence of parental leadership on child leadership development in these environments remains largely unexplored.

Most existing research on the matter of leadership and domestic violence concentrates on policing domestic abuse, by social workers or law enforcement agents, and little research has been done regarding leadership abilities of domestic violence victims. Existing leadership programs focus primarily on women, such as a peer leadership training intervention among immigrant Latina woman domestic violence survivors, a program that is found to be effective in improving the self empowerment process of participants (Serrata et al., 2016). However, research regarding the leadership abilities and development of children with domestic violence experience is lacking as less attention is given to children as victims of the destructive parenting behaviours of domestic households (Humphreys et. al., 2019). Research indicates that experiences of domestic violence can adversely affect children's cognitive skills, language development, and educational attainment (Lyod, 2018), while high verbal abilities and communicative skills are key traits of child leadership (Fu, 1979; Fu et al., 1982; Kemple, 1991; Perez et al., 1982). In these environments, parental leadership can shape child leadership development in various ways. Children often emulate their parents' leadership styles, and these early childhood experiences can influence their conceptions of successful leaders (Keller, 2003). Another factor affecting child leadership development in such settings is the reduced levels of self-efficacy stemming from exposure to domestic violence (Haj-Yadia, 2019). Research has shown a correlation between higher levels of self-efficacy and the development of child leadership (Anderson et al., 2008; Aviolo, 2005; Chemers et al., 2000). Self-efficacy, a term used by Bandura, refers to one's confidence in their ability to execute specific tasks. Higher self-efficacy increases the likelihood of success in completing tasks, as it encourages tackling more challenging tasks and exerting greater effort, thereby enhancing resilience to obstacles (Bandura, 1978, 1986, 1997; Gist et al., 1992). From this perspective, greater self-efficacy is associated with a higher probability of developing leadership abilities.

The focus of this paper is to explore the literature regarding parental leadership, child leadership, domestic violence, and self-efficacy in children. This study addresses the increasing recognition of how parental leadership impacts child leadership development. According to the Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), learning is related to observing interactions between people, their behavior, and their environments (Bandura, 1986). As children are exposed to the leadership behaviors of their parents, parental leadership may influence the leadership development of children, as this is often the first experience of children with leadership. The leadership development of children who grow up in domestic violence households is likely influenced both by their direct experiences with domestic violence and by modeling their leadership on those of their parents. In this literature review, the researcheraim to highlight gaps in the literature and emphasize the need for new perspectives in the leadership debate. This effort seeks to aid those working with children in better understanding the effects of parental leadership on child leadership within the context of domestic violence households.

Literature on key concepts

The review of the literature is organized into two main sections: the first focuses on the key concepts of parent leadership and child leadership, and the second discusses domestic violence and self-efficacy in children.

Parent leadership and child leadership

The concepts of leadership and parenthood are closely linked in leadership and developmental studies. Typically, parents are the initial leaders for children (Anderson, 1943).

Family is the first place where children gain experience with a leader, learning about obedience and authority. A study from Keller (1999, p. 601) shows that people idealize leadership images that mirror perceived parental traits, “regardless of whether parents were characterized as dedicated or tyrannical”. The metaphor of the leader as a father was introduced by Freud in the 1930s, positing that the dyadic nature of leadership mirrors the parent-child relationship (Freud, 1939, p. 109–111). Although the connection between leadership and parenthood is recognized, debates continue over the precise meaning of parental leadership. In the literature on parental leadership, the terms 'parenting styles' and 'parenting practices' are often used interchangeably (Maccoby et al., 1983). Bellon et al. (2016, p. 2) define parental leadership as "the intentional intermingling effect of parental support, involvement, aspiration, and monitoring of their children". However, Hailey (2020) suggests that the influence of parental leadership on child leadership development, particularly in building leadership skills, is not always a deliberate act by parents. Whether intentional or not, parental leadership significantly impacts children's development and behavior in various ways. Childhood and adolescent experiences are directly related to adult leadership behavior (Schneider et al, 1999) and early life events play a crucial role in the developmental leadership experiences of children (Van Velsor, 2011) as children’s attitudes and behaviors are heavily influenced by their perceptions of their parents’ behaviors and attitudes (Zacharatos et al., 2020). Thus, the way parents act and lead greatly influences the leadership development of their children.

In previous studies, various leadership concepts have been linked to parental leadership. Drawing on the work of Baumrind (1967, 1971), Kaniusonyte et al. (2020), Lavric & Naterer (2020), Maccoby et al. (1983), and Vasiou et al. (2023), authoritative parenting has been identified as an effective parenting practice. There are notable similarities between the qualities of effective parenting and the developmental aspects of transformational leadership (Morton et al., 2010; Morton et al., 2011; Oliver et al., 2011; Popper et al., 2003). Transformational leadership theory emphasizes developmental processes, distinguishing it from other leadership forms (Burns, 1978). Although parental leadership styles have been studied and compared to existing leadership theories, child leadership remains relatively under-researched.

Leadership is acknowledged to be connected to developmental phenomena from childhood through adulthood (e.g., Bass, 2008; Keller, 2003; Murphy, 2011; Popper & Mayless, 2007; Reichard & Paik, 2011; Schneider et al., 1999). However, there is a lack of a clear definition of child leadership, as early child leadership has received minimal attention in academic literature (e.g., Bisland, 2004; Hailey, 2020; Murphy, 2011; Popper & Amit, 2009; Popper & Mayseless, 2007; Stavans & Diesendruck, 2021; Woodrow & Busch, 2008). Child leadership can be subdivided in different age groups (Murphy & Johnson, 2011), with early childhood ranging from birth to age 8 (Nicholson et al., 2018). The Council for Exceptional Children (1990, p. 165) provides a broad definition of child leadership, namely: "the ability to influence individuals or groups toward a common decision or action." Hailey et al. (2020) define early child leadership in terms of the ability or process in which young children influence others towards a common goal or action. Both definitions do not encompass self-leadership. Children experience leadership daily in interactions with their families, peers, and community organizations (Bisland, 2004), and research indicates that children as young as five years old can identify leaders based on various cues, such as being imitated (Over et al., 2015), offering advice in a friendly tone, or having their opinions sought (Kajanus et al., 2020). More research into child leadership is necessary, as it can be beneficial for educators designing programs to develop leadership skills in children (Oakland et al., 1996). Understanding child leadership development is crucial as children are the leaders of the future, and insights into this area help us enhance the leadership abilities of upcoming generations.

In the field of child leadership development, there are two types of ranking hierarchies regarding leadership among social scientists, zero-sum interactions between individuals with conflicting goals or achieving a goal at the expense of others (Stavans & Diesendruck, 2021). This distinction connects with the findings of Parten (1933) in one of the earliest studies regarding child leadership in which Parten concludes that there are two types of classes of preschool leaders, those who control others by means of indirect suggestions, “diplomats”, and those who control others by enforcing brute force, “bullies”. Research suggests that bullying is an effective strategy during early adolescence to gain a powerful position in a group, as intense bullying is associated with higher levels of social dominance (Reijntjes et al., 2013). Each leadership style provides a lens through which to view positive or negative aspects of early child leadership (Sun Shin et al., 2004, p. 302). In attempts to identify child leadership, researchers defined traits or characteristics that link with child leadership, such as social and cognitive capabilities (Daly et al., 2015; Fu, 1979); high verbal skills (Chevaleva-Ianovskaia, 1929; Fu et al., 1982; Hensel,

1991; Leib, 1928; Mehrotra, 2022; Sun Shin, 2004; Terman, 1904) sensitivity to the needs and concerns of peers (Certo, 2011; Perez et al., 1982), age (Dhuey et al., 2006; French, 1984; Stright & French, 1988) and physical power (Sun Shin et al., 2004). Earlier research indicates that IQ is an important factor in child leadership development as well. Hollingworth (1942, p. 264 -265) found that among children with a mean lQ of 100, the lQ of the leader is likely to fall between 115 and 130 IQ. These traits and characteristics can be understood of indicators which attribute to successful child leadership.

Domestic violence and self-efficacy in children

Research on child leadership focuses on identifying specific traits and characteristics of children, often overlooking the contexts that shape their leadership development and self-perception. Domestic violence households represent one critical context where the nature of parental leadership plays a significant role. Domestic violence, known by various terms such as intimate partner abuse, family violence, wife beating, battering, marital abuse, and partner abuse (Horner, 2005), exposes children to traumatic experiences in multiple ways. These exposures can include witnessing violence, hearing it, being used as a tool by the perpetrator, and dealing with the aftermath of violent episodes (Edleson, 1999). The impact of parenting and parental leadership within the context of domestic violence significantly affects children's emotional and behavioral development. Numerous studies have documented the harmful effects of exposure to domestic violence on children, leading to emotional and behavioral problems (Davies et al., 1994; Edleson, 1999; Harrison, 2021; Holt et al., 2008; Katz et al., 2007; Onyskiw, 2003; Sousa et al., 2010). Age is also a critical factor; preschool-aged children are shown to have a higher risk of developing behavioral problems compared to older children due to such exposure (Hughes, 1988; Hughes et al., 1983). When both witnessing and experiencing physical abuse due to domestic violence, Sternberg et al. (2006) found that age moderated the effects on externalizing behavior problems of children, but not on internalizing behavior problems.

Despite the age of children who witness domestic violence, research consistently shows that exposure to violence during childhood contributes to negative self-efficacy beliefs (Haj-Jahia et al., 2019; Sachs-Ericsson et al., 2006; Sachs-Ericsson et al., 2011). Self-efficacy beliefs are shaped by experiences, and parents and caregivers play a crucial role in providing experiences that influence these beliefs in children (Bandura, 1997; Meece, 1997). Self-efficacy is considered a protective factor that can mitigate the negative impacts of exposure to domestic violence. Although having higher levels of self-efficacy can mitigate the adverse effects, the experience of violence in childhood inherently diminishes self-efficacy. Research focusing on self-efficacy and children's exposure to family violence remains limited (Sachs-Ericsson et al., 2011). Self-efficacy beliefs are found to influence leadership development. Leadership requires learning and facing challenges, which influences the self-efficacy levels of leaders.

Machida et. al. state that it is common for leader self-efficacy to deteriorate in the short term when challenges are not met successfully, and therefore it is "critical for their continued development for these leaders to possess high learning self-efficacy that is resilient to the challenges leaders face during their development" (2011, p. 463). When examining self-efficacy, the social cognitive theory posits it as a key cognitive variable, suggesting that human achievement depends on interactions among behaviors, personal factors (e.g., thoughts, beliefs), and environmental conditions (Bandura, 1986, 1997). Self-efficacy is defined in several ways: as a person's belief in their capability to successfully perform a particular task (Bandura, 1977; Heslin et al., 2006; McCormick, 2001), as personal judgments of one's ability to organize and implement behaviors in specific situations (Schunk & Miller, 2002; Schunk & Pajares, 2009), or as orchestrating performance by successfully executing behaviors and mobilizing resources like motivation and cognitive resources necessary for desired outcomes (Bandura, 1977; Gist et al., 1992; Wood & Bandura., 1989). According to Bandura (1981, 1982, 1986), efficacy beliefs are derived from four major types of experiences: self-performance accomplishments (achieving success in challenging activities), vicarious experiences (improving task capabilities through exposure to models, increasing skills, and observing similar others succeed, which boosts efficacy beliefs), verbal persuasion or positive feedback (from a credible source such as a coach, teacher, or parent), and psychological conditions and mood states (reflecting one's emotional and physical state). Parents, often viewed as credible figures by their children, play a crucial role; verbal persuasion or positive feedback from a parent during the developmental stages of early childhood, or the absence thereof, can significantly influence a child's self-efficacy. Parent self-efficacy and parent competence are linked as well, "parents who feel efficacious use more positive parenting practices, which in turn increase their efficacy" (Glatz et al., 2023, P89). Past performance accomplishments in relevant tasks are considered the most potent determinants of self-efficacy and can be a strong

predictor of future self-efficacy (Bandura, 1986; Bandura, 2012; Sitzmann & Yeo, 2013).

A high level of self-efficacy contributes to various factors such as motivation and persistence. Academic research indicates that individuals with strong self-efficacy beliefs are more likely to be motivated, exert more effort towards their actions, and persist through difficulties (Bandura, 1991, 1997; Gist et al., 1992; Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2021). Conversely, a low level of self-efficacy can lead to motivational issues; if individuals believe they cannot succeed at a specific task, they are likely to not attempt it or only make a superficial effort (Margolis & Mccabe, 2006). Bandura (1973, 1977) notes that efficacy expectations determine the amount of effort people will expend and their persistence, as stronger perceived self-efficacy correlates with greater effort. Additionally, the higher the perceived efficacy, the longer individuals will persist on insoluble tasks (Bandura, 1978; Lunenburg, 2011). A higher perceived efficacy enhances performance as it leads people to set difficult goals, work hard to attain them, and persist (Bandura 2012; Bandura et al., 2003; Heslin et al., 2017).

Bandura's self-efficacy theory has also been extended to leadership studies. Different conceptualizations of leadership self-efficacy exist, with McCormick (2001) defining it as a self-perceived capability to perform cognitive and behavioral functions necessary for regulating group processes toward goal achievement. Paglis and Green (2002) describe leadership self-efficacy as one's judgment regarding their effectiveness in exerting leadership by setting a direction for a group, building relationships with followers to gain commitment, and fostering collaboration. Research shows a positive relationship between the level of self-efficacy and successful leadership, suggesting that high leadership self-efficacy, while not the sole factor, is necessary for effective leadership performance (Bandura, 1986). Studies indicate that leaders with high leadership self-efficacy set higher goals and employ better task strategies, leading to improved group performance (Kane et al., 2002). Self-efficacy also affects leaders' decision-making abilities (McCormack et al., 2002), and leaders with high leadership self-efficacy are more likely to undertake leadership actions. However, Chemers(2002) found that leaderswith low leaership self-efficacy struggle with challenging tasks and problem-solving. Given that parent leadership influences child leadership development, and that self-efficacy is related to successful leadership development, the question arises: how do children exposed to domestic violent environments develop leadership abilities?

Discussion

Previous research highlights a relationship between parental leadership and self-efficacy in children, as well as between levels of self-efficacy and successful leadership. Additionally, experiences of domestic violence have been shown to impact children's self-efficacy. While there is a substantial amount of research on self-efficacy in leadership, studies specifically focusing on self-efficacy in the context of parental or child leadership are limited. Self-efficacy beliefs are shaped by experiences, and parents and caregivers play a significant role in providing experiences that influence these beliefs in children. Experiences, particularly those involving domestic violence, can impact children's self-efficacy levels. Although self-efficacy can act as a protective factor in managing adverse circumstances (Haj-Jadia et al., 2019), there is a broad consensus among researchers that exposure to domestic violence leads to lower levels of self-efficacy in children.

When considering the influence of parental leadership on the development of children who have experienced domestic violence, it appears that these children's self-efficacy levels decrease (Sachs-Ericsson et al., 2011). Higher self-efficacy levels are associated with better chances of successful leadership development, while experiences of domestic violence typically result in lower self-efficacy. Self-efficacy is found to influence motivation and persistence. Individuals with higher self-efficacy beliefs typically set more difficult goals and work hard to attain them, in contrast to individuals with lower perceived self-efficacy. Past accomplishments in relevant tasks are an important determinant of self-efficacy and a predictor of future self-efficacy. It seems likely that lower self-efficacy may lead to fewer attempts and fewer successful experiences in undertaking and succeeding in matters relevant to leadership development. Research regarding influencing factors of leadership development during childhood is scarce. Our review found no specific scientific research focusing on the dynamics of parental leadership and child leadership development within the context of domestic violence households. However, it seems likely that the reduced self-efficacy levels observed in children exposed to domestic violence could negatively impact their leadership development.

Given the growing need for individuals motivated to lead (London, 2002; Riggio, 2008), it is crucial not to overlook the potential for early leadership development in children who have been exposed to domestic violence. Further research is needed to explore how parental leadership affects child leadership development in these settings, and to determine how

developmental programs can support the leadership development of children who have experienced or are exposed to domestic violence.

Conclusions

The conclusion of this literature review is that studies concerned with child leadership development are scarce, in particular when it comes to leadership development among children in specific contexts, such as domestic violence households. Children's experiences of domestic violence are likely to hinder their leadership development. One primary reason is that exposure to domestic violence typically results in lower levels of self-efficacy, which is crucial for successful leadership development. Additionally, children often model their leadership styles on those of their parents, which can be problematic in violent households. Our review found no specific studies on the impact of parental leadership on child leadership development within domestic violence contexts, highlighting a significant gap in the literature.

A wealth of research indicates that leadership development begins at an early age. Self-efficacy, a key indicator of successful leadership, tends to be lower in children who experience domestic violence during a critical developmental period. Consequently, the leadership development of these children is likely to differ from that of those who do not experience such trauma. Specific leadership development programs exist for survivors of domestic violence, however, such programs are not available for children who have experienced domestic violence.

There is a growing concern and a recognized need for more empirical evidence regarding the leadership development of children exposed to domestic violence. Given the increasing demand for leaders and individuals willing to lead due to various socio-demographic changes (Oakland et al., 1996), it is essential to explore how domestic violence impacts child leadership development and the mediating role of self-efficacy in this process. Enhancing our understanding of child leadership development can assist pedagogical professionals in including all children in leadership development programs, ensuring that those affected by domestic violence are not overlooked.

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BEYOND INSTRUCTION: A FRAMEWORK FOR BALANCED LITERACY

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Introduction

The role of a school principal is both challenging and multifaceted. While instructional leadership remains a critical focus, the growing administrative demands can often feel overwhelming and detract from this primary mission. Many principals experience these dual responsibilities as competing priorities, with limited time, resources, and personnel adding to the struggle.

To further understand the evolving role of principals, Hallinger (2005) reviewed the literature regarding the evolving definitions of instructional leadership to identify the characteristics principals should possess to be effective instructional leaders. The characteristics discussed were goal-oriented, strong directive leaders, and culture builders. He asserted that principals indirectly contributed to the schools' success by influencing school and classroom conditions. Building on Hallinger's insights, subsequent studies by May et al. (2012) and Marzano et al. (2005) expand on the balance between instructional and administrative tasks.

Research by May et al. (2012) explored how principals' activities affected student performance. Their three-year longitudinal study suggested that focusing on instructional tasks over administrative ones did not guarantee positive changes in student achievement. Marzano et al.'s (2005) meta-analysis of principals' duties found that twenty-one leadership responsibilities affected student achievement. These included communication, culture, discipline, instruction, and supervision. Like May et al., the authors acknowledged that all these duties were important and that school leaders should seek balance in the approach to each of these responsibilities. Studies on effective school principals concluded that school leaders are most successful when balancing their instructional and administrative duties. For example, Bennis (2009), Murphy et al. (2007), and Blase et al. (2010) asserted that effective principals must use an integrated, systems-driven approach to create conditions for student learning and continuous improvement. The authors argued that stable and predictable conditions were important for a successful school. The behaviors associated with both instructional and administrative leadership could be exhibited in isolation, but they needed to be part of an integrated and complex process.

Grissom and Loeb (2011) suggested that the increased burden of school leadership roles serves as a rationale for seeking balance in administrative and instructional efforts. The authors asked their participants to complete a survey to identify the leadership skills principals deemed most critical in affecting student outcomes. The skills were organized into five categories: Instruction Management, Internal Relations, Organization Management, Administration, and External Relations. The principals believed that effectively addressing tasks in the Organization Management category provided students and staff with a positive learning environment.

The research above demonstrates that an effective school leader must have the skills to balance instructional responsibilities with administrative ones. Possessing those skills may be an important solution to the high attrition rate for educational leaders. Recent (2020-2021) data from the U.S. Department of Educational Statistics (Taie & Lewis, 2023) suggests that over one in ten school principals are likely to leave the profession in a given year – and the number is climbing annually. An added concern in their findings was that

more experienced principals leave at a higher rate than their less-experienced counterparts. These findings are not just statistics; they represent a potential crisis in our educational leadership. A 2021 survey by the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) revealed, "One out of two school leaders claim their stress level is so high they are considering a career change or retirement" due to burnout (p. 1). The survey found that 70% of principals spent over six hours weekly on paperwork. These numbers point to a serious misalignment between current responsibilities and mandated priorities, leading to burnout and a potential mass exodus of principals from the profession. The struggles of being an effective principal impact attrition rates. Research by Jacob et al. (2015) showed that practicing balanced leadership skills positively impacted lowering attrition. School leaders must be supported and trained in the many complex skills demanded of the position. We must find ways to make the job more doable and enjoyable.

The Principalship: Balancing Instructional Leadership and Administrative Tasks

Any principal's role as an instructional leader requires understanding that such attention is key to improving student outcomes. Research, such as Waters et al.'s 2013 study, supports this perspective. The study found that principals who focus on instructional leadership are more likely to see significant gains in student performance. Other scholars have found that balanced leadership is critical for educational excellence and student success (Grissom & Loeb, 2011; Horng et al., 2009; and Kirtman, 2013).

Research by Grissom and Loeb (2011) highlights the consequences of this imbalance, showing a direct correlation between the time principals spend on administrative tasks and lower student achievement. Conversely, prioritizing instructional leadership fosters academic excellence (Horng et al., 2009; Kirtman, 2013; and Waters et al., 2013).

Balancing these roles is a constant challenge, compounded by barriers such as limited time, resources, and personnel. Effective leadership requires attention to instruction and administration, but striking this balance remains one of the most difficult aspects of a principalship.

The Need for Better Preparation and Support

To support principals in achieving this balance, it is essential to address gaps in their preparation and ongoing support. The author's qualitative research involved interviewing 12 high school principals with over 5 years of experience and less than 10 about the administrative challenges of their jobs (Szeto, 2019). The responses revealed that while we prioritize instructional leadership, administrative tasks often intrude into that focus. The findings indicated notable deficiencies in leadership training programs, which many principals perceive as outdated and misaligned with the actual demands of their roles. Some respondents, for example, mentioned that shadowing a principal for a semester was insufficient. Graduate students need more information on the complex issues principals encounter, like special education law, social service needs and solutions, employee evaluations and employment law, and dealing with difficult student behavior.

Instead, the respondents relied heavily on experiential learning and guidance from more seasoned peers. There was a unanimous agreement that more practical, comprehensive development opportunities were urgently needed to equip school leaders better. This underscores the need for higher learning institutions and policymakers to prioritize developing and implementing structured, detailed leadership programs. With these changes, we can look forward to a future where school leaders are better supported and prepared for their challenges.

The Role of Districts

Given the challenges principals face in balancing leadership responsibilities, district-level support becomes crucial. Before selecting new principals, school district leaders should conduct a baseline assessment of their administrative experience and abilities with a written evaluation tool. This ensures that new principals are well-prepared for their roles and can effectively balance instructional and administrative duties. The assessment should thoroughly review administrative tasks and responsibilities. Supervision by experienced principals could provide ongoing learning and additional information about the needs and support a principal requires.

Delegating certain administrative tasks to specialized staff could help principals focus more on instructional leadership. Tasks such as programming, data analysis, and budgeting are critical to supporting educational excellence but need not be done by a principal. School district leaders should streamline principals' obligations to alleviate their administrative burdens. Assigning some responsibilities to

central office staff members within the district could help mitigate these issues.

The Wallace Foundation's School Administration Manager (SAM) Project has shown that shifting key administrative responsibilities away from principals can maximize their instructional leadership time (2011). Research by Gibson (2008) and Lovely (2004) also recommended hiring additional staff to support administrative demands. The SAM model demonstrated that by introducing administrative support personnel, principals spend more time on instructional leadership, such as observing classrooms, mentoring teachers, and implementing curriculum improvements.

District leaders should actively assist principals in balancing the demands of their roles. A task force could brainstorm the needs and potential feasible changes. Strategic strategies, such as offering professional development opportunities and implementing mentoring programs, must be developed to support principals in achieving this balance.

Introducing the Szeto Lighthouse Framework for Balanced Leadership

To support principals in managing both instructional and administrative responsibilities, the Szeto Lighthouse Framework offers a structured approach (2019). Balancing instructional leadership with administrative responsibilities can feel overwhelming, demanding significant time and focus. Based on the author's research, the Szeto Lighthouse Framework for Balanced Leadership provides a visual analogy to help principals navigate these competing demands by illuminating six key leadership strategies (Szeto, 2019). By following this framework, principals can effectively manage their time, energy, and resources to improve both school management and student outcomes.

1. Lighthouse Vision: Clear Purpose and Mission

Analogous to a lighthouse shining to show a safe passage for ships through treacherous seas, school leaders must have a clear vision of where they are heading. The primary light of leadership should be focused on instructional leadership for student success. This clear vision helps principals prioritize instructional responsibilities amid substantial administrative demands, serving as a guiding light that enables them to confidently steer their schools, even when the workload becomes overwhelming.

2. Balance the Rays: Instructional and Administrative Responsibilities

In leadership, as with sunlight, balance is key. Principals must spend time and energy on instructional leadership and administrative tasks. These rays should cover both areas to ensure that neither is neglected to foster academic excellence and operational efficiency.

3. Reflect and Refrain: Delegate and Empower Others

Principals cannot do everything. Building on the importance of balanced responsibilities, principals must also delegate tasks to ensure efficient management and effective instructional leadership. Just as mirrors reflect light to guide ships safely, principals can enhance their leadership impact by entrusting administrative tasks to capable staff members. This delegation allows principals to concentrate on core instructional duties, while also fostering a shared sense of ownership among staff. Empowering team members to handle areas like programming, data analysis, or budget management not only lightens the principal's load but also creates a collaborative environment where each member contributes to the school's success. By leveraging the strengths of others, principals can better maintain the balance required for both academic excellence and operational efficiency.

4. Illuminate the Shadows: Address Gaps in Preparation and Support

Leadership training programs frequently overlook the practical competencies essential for the daily demands of school administration. Principals must proactively pursue supplementary training and mentorship to bridge these knowledge deficits like a lantern illuminates obscured pathways in darkness. Such efforts will empower them to navigate the intricate challenges of their position with enhanced assurance and proficiency.

5. Sustained Light: Self-Care and Resilience

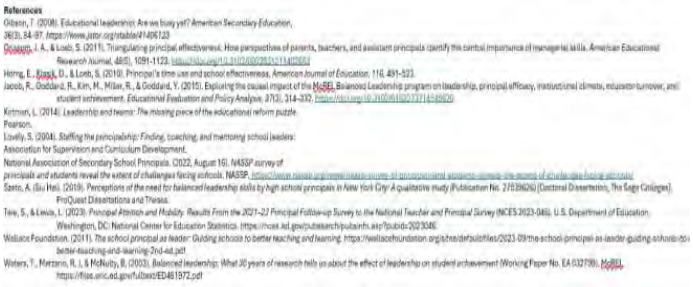
Like lighthouse keepers, school leaders must diligently nurture their well-being to sustain their guiding light. This necessitates regular self-care practices and the cultivation of resilience. By prioritizing their personal and professional growth, principals can effectively navigate the demands of their role without succumbing to burnout. Effective self-care strategies encompass setting healthy boundaries, reflecting on accomplishments, and seeking support when necessary.

6. Prism of Leadership: Flexibility and Adaptability

A prism breaks light into different colors, representing the adaptability required in leadership. Principals need to be flexible, adjusting their leadership style to meet the demands of any situation. Whether dealing with a crisis or focusing on long-term instructional goals, the ability to adapt ensures effective leadership. By embodying both adaptability and balance, principals can fulfill their roles effectively.

Conclusion

The role of the principal requires a careful balance of instructional and administrative responsibilities, and targeted support is essential to helping leaders manage these demands. By prioritizing balanced leadership, we can reduce principal burnout and turnover, contributing to more stable and supportive learning environments for students.



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THE POWER OF TEACHER BELIEFS IN EFFECTIVE LEARNING OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES IN INCLUSION CLASSROOMS

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Abstract
The purpose of this article is to address the importance of beliefs middle school general education teachers hold and how those beliefs have an impact on students they are teaching, especially SWDs within the inclusion classroom. This article considers the following: (a) defining inclusion classrooms; (b) how are teacher beliefs constructed; (c) how do these constructed beliefs impact student learning; and (d) future recommendations to disrupt internal systemic issues failing to consistently and effectively address learner diversity within urban middle school environments.

Keywords: Students with disabilities, inclusion classrooms, middle school

Introduction

While the K-12 United States federal education system undergoes changes within the next four years due to presidency and policy shifts, students with mild to moderate disabilities are still placed in inclusion classroom settings locally. That results in general education teachers tasked with effectively supporting the academic and social-emotional learning (SEL) of students with disabilities (SWDs). Reality is that middle school aged SWDs are still underperforming academically and social-emotionally despite federal mandates like the Every Child Succeeds Act (ESSA) and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) (Strassfeld, 2017). Standardized testing results displayed disparities in achievement between SWDs and non-disabled students, especially with SWDs in racially minoritized populations especially those who identified as Black and/or African American (Randall, 2022; Ravitch et al., 2022).

There are a myriad of factors as to why there are these disparities at the state and district level. At a local level, one factor includes a shift from students with mild to moderate disabilities once in self-contained classrooms shifting to inclusion classrooms. In the 2018-2019 school year, 65.9% of SWDs in New York City (NYC), an urban environment, were placed in the least restrictive setting, the inclusion classroom (Fanscali & Farley, 2018). In that same year, SWDs were found to be performing lower than their non-disabled peers, especially in middle school settings. With this shift teachers generally did not receive appropriate support to successfully integrate learner diversity in classroom composition. Thus unintentionally furthering the disconnect between general education teachers (gen-ed teachers) and beliefs held when supporting all students, especially SWDs, assigned to their classrooms (Jagers et al., 2019).

To be clear, gen-ed teachers are not the root cause of this systemic academic and social-emotional disparities. This issue is part of a much broader systemic issue. However, in order to disrupt these systems internally right now effectively it is important to explicitly examine and name what these beliefs and experiences are of gen-ed teachers, most often created and cyclically continued due to systemic issues (Fiere, 1972). Understanding what gen-ed teachers believe and how they perceive their roles can help understand context and challenges in which these teachers operate, given that they are often required to make shifts in their practice due to external factors. By recognizing and addressing these factors at a local level, teacher voices are listened to and empowered for meaningful support. While systematic changes are essential to address root causes of inequities in achievement and social-emotional

development of racially minoritized SWDs, the focus of this article is to offer practical support now. Both teachers and students require help immediately, and lasting systemic change takes time

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Defining Inclusion Classrooms

While there is not a universally agreed-upon definition of inclusion education (Madhesh, 2023) an inclusive classroom in this article is defined as varies in learner diversity. In other words, students with mild to moderate disabilities and students without disabilities are placed in the same classroom where there is learner diversity (Madhesh, 2023; Toke, 2023). Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) is defined as a setting where SWDs are educated in the general education classroom alongside non-disabled students and there are two teachers present in the same classroom to support both SWDs and students without disabilities in this one classroom setting (Madhesh, 2023; Okpareke & Salisbury, 2017). This classroom model, when implemented correctly, provided SWDs the opportunity to be participants in a larger learning environment and be effectively challenged (Mackey, 2014; Okpareke & Salisbury, 2017; Solomon & Scott, 2013; Udvari-Solner, 2009). The ICT model supports gen-ed teachers with integration of SWDs due to two teachers assigned to the classroom; usually one teacher is the gen-ed teacher while the other is a special education teacher. While all students, including SWDs, can be placed in an inclusion classroom, some classrooms only have one teacher versus the ICT model where there are two teachers to support students (Williams et al., 2022). This difference is important to note because oftentimes, gen-ed teachers are independently attempting to support SWDs in their inclusion classrooms, without a second teacher who is already trained to support SWDs.

How are Teacher Beliefs Constructed?

Teacher beliefs are defined as the beliefs a person holds about themselves, their context (including students and their demographics), environment, and their knowledge of specific teaching practices, approaches, and strategies (Schmid, 2018). They are often constructed subconsciously and consciously through learned values, norms, and experiences (Vygotsky, 1962). Another way the beliefs are created are from a lens of social constructivist learning theory (Berkeley Graduate Division, 2020; Vygotsky, 1962) where interactions teachers have with people within their communities influence their beliefs. Social constructivist theory places the teacher as a key driver in student learning, though the primary driver of learning are students (Walqui, 2006). Teachers can impact student interests and student future successes because of the power teachers hold. For example, when a teacher dismisses a student's interest or reinforces the interest, power is enacted, which impacts the learning potential of the student (Moje & Lewis, 2007). As a result, critical sociocultural theory posits that these beliefs impact teacher beliefs and actions towards SWDs abilities, which has a relationship with student academic performance (Schmid, 2018).

A teacher who held positive beliefs generally considered SWDs when planning their curriculum, instruction, and assessments (Schmid, 2018). Furthermore, the beliefs that general education teachers hold, whether positive, negative, or mixed, about supporting and being responsible for the academic achievement of SWDs directly influence their actions and interactions with these students, both intentionally and unintentionally (Kratochwil & Peltonen, 2017).

How Do Constructed Beliefs Impact Student Learning?

There are multiple implications of gen-ed teacher beliefs into aspects of the inclusion classrooms (Sawyer, 2022; Solomon & Scott, 2013). A teacher's beliefs can implicitly impact their practices, and then in turn, these practices are actions impacting students within the classroom dictated by existing belief systems. Some of these actions influence the social development of SWDs and strategies implemented to promote growth in the learner.

Social Development of SWDs in the Inclusion Classroom

Gen-ed teacher beliefs towards inclusion practices impact SWDs socially in and out of the inclusion classroom setting (DeVries, 2000; Hunt et al., 2023; Irwin, 2022; Mackey, 2014). Students, including SWDs, with positive experiences in the classroom environment were more likely to develop social-emotional intelligence in a socially healthy environment (Hunt, 2023; Okpareke & Salisbury, 2017). An example of a socially healthy environment includes positive experiences and relationships with teachers in the classroom. These positive interactions and relationships influence a students belief and view of themselves of what role they have as a contributing classroom community member. Teachers who held positive beliefs identified and utilized helpful and effective inclusion practices where SWDs had opportunities in the classroom to

have equal status and meaningful interactions with others (Hunt et al., 2023; Okpareke & Salisbury, 2017). These effective practices often stem from held beliefs in students' abilities and collaboration with others, such as parents and fellow teachers. Positive interactions and strong relationships play a key role in helping SWDs succeed academically and develop social-emotional skills.

Relationship Between Teacher Beliefs and Strategies Implemented

There is a connection between academic achievement of SWDs and teacher practices and strategies implemented (DeSimone, 2006; Hunt et al., 2023; Monsen & Ewing, 2014; Ragusa et al., 2022). An example of this connection between beliefs and strategies/practices implemented is seen through Cook (2001) & Ragusa et al. (2022) study. In these studies students that teachers believed were a pleasure to teach received less negatively framed criticism and more positive praise and process-based critical thinking questions. Conversely, students not believed to be a pleasure to teach received more negatively framed criticism and less process-based critical thinking questions. Generally, teachers who believed in student-centered learning intentionally reflected on their own beliefs and practices to determine how to create those spaces (Udvari-Solner, 2009). In these classrooms where gen-ed teacher beliefs were examined and shifted to be more positive, disabilities appeared as a consideration of the child versus the primary factor when considering addressing learner diversity (Gay, 2000; Hunt et al., 2023).

Many gen-ed teachers were unaware of the full scope of their beliefs and how their beliefs impacted their actions in the classroom (Harrison & Lakin, 2018; Hunt et al., 2023; Lane et al., 2023). There are a multitude of reasons why gen-ed teacher beliefs and their actions have a disconnected relationship. For one, they were not aware of gaps in positive beliefs held for SWDs (DeSimone & Parmar, 2006). For example, some gen-ed teachers believe they have the right tools and knowledge to support SWDs but oftentimes did not understand how to evaluate whether a strategy implemented was effective or not (Udvari-Solner, 2009). In DeSimone & Parmar's study, more than half of the survey respondents viewed themselves as comfortable with their abilities to adapt instruction and meet the academic needs of students with a learning disability. In teacher interviews, teachers used terms like "differentiated instruction" yet struggled to name concrete strategies and examples when asked to expand on what they meant by differentiated instruction. Teachers have beliefs built and developed early in an individual's teaching career, which is not easy to deconstruct and shift. Some of these beliefs that exist include beliefs on which students gen-ed teachers hold high expectations of and which students they hold low expectations of. Overall students perform in the way their teacher expects them to perform (Dignat et al., 2022). If teachers hold negative or neutral beliefs about inclusion practices in the classroom, this trickles into their actions.

Future Recommendations

Missing Urban Middle School Context

Data gathered on teacher beliefs had a minimal focus on an all-urban middle school setting in the United States (Galaterou et al., 2017; Woodcock, 2021). A focus on middle school is important because middle school is a pivotal moment in a child's life (Klehm, 2014; Yeung & Xia, 2023) where the academic achievement of a child can predict student high school graduation (Moore et al., 2016) and future successes beyond high school (Department of Education, 2017; Ravitch et al., 2022). Some of the future successes include on-time high school graduation, positive student self-efficacy, and self-motivation (Telfer & Howley, 2014; Yeung & Xia, 2023). In general education settings, SWDs are held to the same accountability and standards in academic achievement with scaffolding embedded through legal mandates (Irwin, 2022). One mandate can be utilizing a student's standards-based IEP as a scaffolding to meet general education standards. Previously, inclusion perspectives focused on specific classroom placement to achieve equity for SWDs. However with the incorporation of SWDs in the general education setting, the focus shifts to available support and services to match student needs (Sailor et al., 2020). Equity-based inclusion for SWDs focuses on incorporating the whole school and all teachers rather than focusing on specific classrooms or specific teachers. Gathering data on teacher beliefs in urban middle school settings pushes equity and justice when considering the context relevant to this specific environment (Gay, 2000; Sulaimon & Schaefer, 2022).

Future Research Study Focus

Urban settings are typically composed of racially and ethnically diverse minoritized populations (Lichter et al., 2023). When addressing the intersection of existing systemic inequities within the education system, there has to be an understanding of the context, environment, resources allocation and distribution, and diverse learning needs of students with disabilities (SWDs) who are also members of racially minoritized populations (Au, 2016; Gay, 2000; Jagers et al., 2019). Conducting an

assessment to understand beliefs is a necessity to do with people part of the community in order to suggest relevant and responsive equitable learning environments for SWDs. Presently, research examines gen-ed teacher beliefs of teaching SWDs in a mix of settings: urban, rural, and suburban K-12 classes where context, environment, and resource allocation and distribution is different (DeSimone & Parmar, 2006; Gilmour, 2020). However, it is important to consider reliability and validity in replicating similar strategies from one setting in a research study conducted to another. There are different needs, resources, and contexts to consider when general education teachers are serving in an all-urban setting that may not be found in a rural and/or suburban setting. To address educational inequity for SWDs intersected with being a member of a racially minoritized population, it is important to focus on urban settings where intersectionality plays a significant role on context, environments, resources, and learning experiences (Au, 2016; Galaterou et al., 2017; Gay, 2000).

Pre-service Teacher Training

Overall, current pre-service training is not sufficient to prepare gen-ed teachers to serve SWDs in the inclusion or ICT setting (Bender, 1993; Christison, 2023; Kosko & Wilkins, 2009). Kosko & Wilkins (2009) conducted a study where general education teachers surveyed stated that they did not study inclusion practices in their college coursework. Teachers indicated that general education teachers had taken a few courses on teaching SWDs, but these courses did not provide concrete and effective instructional strategies to implement in the classroom (Christison, 2023; Kosko & Wilkins, 2009). As a result, when considering pre-service teacher training, reflective practices embedded into training are essential to shift already constructed beliefs. Other practices include role-playing and case studies during training when considering how to identify the learning needs of SWDs, how to apply strategies to support SWDs, and determining how effective those strategies are in helping SWDs achieve and grow in inclusion classrooms. In the suggested practices of role-playing and case studies, pre-service teachers having an opportunity to identify learner diversity, identify a strategy, evaluate how effective the strategy is based on predetermined data points will provide pre-service teachers with a foundation in serving SWDs in inclusion classrooms.

In-service Teacher Training

In-service teachers with more training in inclusion practices for SWDs hold positive beliefs towards SWDs (Bender, 1993; Sawyer, 2022). Gen-ed teachers may have access to inclusion practices, but struggle to use them to facilitate SWDs learning successfully. When training was conducted, results indicated that teachers with more hands-on coursework and professional development held more positive attitudes and beliefs (Bender, 1993; Sawyer, 2022). These gen-ed teachers also stated a hunger to grow in how to effectively support SWDs in their inclusion classrooms. These teachers with positive attitudes and beliefs iterated strategies based on student outcomes and feedback where their students experienced greater levels of learning, understanding, and social-emotional growth since their input in the learning process was solicited (Dignath et al., 2022; Hunt et al., 2023).

As a result, research demonstrates the importance of training and how it can positively impact teachers so much that teachers made a greater effort and felt more prepared to identify instructional methods effective for their learner diversity (Kosko & Wilkins, 2009; Monsen & Ewing, 2014; Stairs-Davenport, 2023). When considering in-service teacher training, professional learning communities (PLCs) that support accountability in reflective practices through journaling, video protocol, and discussion protocols are important in shifting already existing practices and beliefs. Additionally, implementing case studies in graduate courses and professional development sessions, including school-based professional development sessions, on most frequently identified learning needs of SWDs within the school population help shift practices by building a stronger conceptual understanding of what effective strategies and practices look like.

Conclusion

Despite increased accountability for educating SWDs in inclusive settings, gen-ed teachers are left to navigate how best to support their academic and social-emotional growth. Teachers bring their own beliefs, which influence instructional practices that directly affect SWD development. With unexamined beliefs and limited support, gen-ed teachers often end up fending for themselves or relying on school communities and districts. The goal to disrupt the educational system within is to empower urban gen-ed teachers by valuing their perspectives and identifying the support they need to better serve SWDs, especially those with intersectional identities. While addressing these beliefs doesn't solve broader systemic inequities, it reflects the reality many teachers face. Given the growing placement of SWDs in inclusive settings, targeted support is essential to help gen-ed teachers effectively meet the needs of all students.

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THE UNDERREPRESENTATION OF FEMALE SUPERINTENDENTS

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Abstract
This study examined the issue regarding the disparity of female public-school superintendents. The findings contribute to the current knowledge base regarding the underrepresentation of women in the chief executive position for a school district. It utilized Lent, Brown & Hackett's (2002) social cognitive career theory as its conceptual framework in that the dearth of female superintendents may be correlated to the differences in one's self-efficacy and self-imposed limitations. This study revealed that the underrepresentation of female superintendents is the result of two conditions. One is an ambition gap as a statistically significant difference existed between the percentage of males versus females who aspired to the superintendency. The second is the impact of the participants' self-evaluation and multiple roles balancing on their self-efficacy.

Keywords: Self-efficacy, superintendents, female representation, underrepresentation

Introduction

Although women dominate the role of public-school educator the position of school superintendent continues to elude them. Female superintendents have expanded from 6.7% in 1950 to 26% in 2023 (Cruz, 2023), yet there still exists a dearth of women in this position. Although illuminating, prior research studies may prove to be insubstantial in revealing the causation of the documented gender inequality. While Björk (2000) revealed that many of the existing studies on female superintendents focused on the magnitude of the disparity, the lives of accomplished female superintendents, external barriers, and females' perspectives on the phenomenon, these negate the impact of female administrators' decisions on their career paths.

Bonitz et al.'s (2010) assertions that various factors in one's life, from interest to confidence, can act as barriers to one's career paths; they are the underpinning of this study. Therefore, developing a profile for female educational leaders to include interests, self-efficacy, and their influence on professional goals is central to this study.

Theoretical Framework

Social cognitive career theory (SCCT) is a framework that attempts to understand the course through which individuals shape and achieve educational and professional pursuits (Lent et al., 2002). Its philosophy is rooted in the interactions of an individual's self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and goals and their ability to enable them to exercise self-agency in their career development. Lent & Brown (1996) identified self-efficacy as having the greatest impact on outcome expectations as individuals who view themselves as capable are more likely to expect positive outcomes.

Review of Literature

Although there has been a steady upsurge, the disparate percentage of female superintendents is startling given that, at the start of the 21st Century, 65% of all public educators, 43% of principals, 57% of all central office personal, and 33% of all assistant superintendents were female (Grogan, 2008; & Kowalski et al., 2011). An inequitable distribution of superintendents is undeniable. It has been postulated that sex segregation in the field of education is one of the most obvious of all careers (Mahitivanichcha & Rorrer, 2006; Young et al., 2006). Brunner et al. (2002) posited that the school superintendency is one of the most white and male-dominated positions for any career.

Research has also noted differences in the modal male superintendent versus the modal female. Male superintendents

taught an average of five years whereas females ten years; thus, improving male mobility (Glass et al., 2001, Kowalski et al., 2011). Young et al.'s (2006) research identified that women's commitment to learning as one of the root causes to their increased time spent in the classroom. The participants in their study revealed that they initially believed that teaching and leading were separate and distinct roles.

Charol Shakeshaft (1991) reported that many of the female participants in her study elected not to pursue the superintendency due to the challenges of balancing multiple roles and responsibilities of family and home. The familial superintendents that participated in Walker's (2002) study acknowledged that one of their self-imposed barriers was familial commitments. Additionally, the work of Sperandio & Devdas (2015) divulged that many women reported that lifestyle choices prevented them from applying for the superintendency; specifically relocation, a long commute, and the managing household responsibilities. It is evident that there is no single endorsement of whether the paucity of female superintendents is the result of career paths or self-imposed barriers.

Methodology and Research Questions

This study used a social justice mixed methodology where the researcher's main objective was to gather quantitative data from a closed-ended survey and then to interview participants in order to understand their views, values, and beliefs in an attempt to extend and garner more detailed information and to triangulate and converge the two sources of data on the phenomenon, the underrepresentation of female public-school superintendents.

To quantitatively measure the impact of gender on self-efficacy and career development, a revised version of the short form of the Career Decision Self-Efficacy Scale (CDSE) was administered online, to then current New York State School Administrators who were, at the time of the survey, non public-school superintendents. The second phase of the process was the collection of qualitative data. As the researcher intended to garner an understanding of both the content and meaning that a participant associated with aspiring or not aspiring to the superintendency, the Seiderman process, a three phase process of interviewing was used. Upon completion of each interview, the researcher transcribed and coded the data and sent each data set to each participant before the following session to allow the participant to review and reflect on the data without losing the thread of the previous discussion

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Research Questions

Do lived experiences and reported self-efficacy explain the current disparity between genders for public school superintendents?

a. To what extent does gender impact self-efficacy in aspirants and non-aspirants to superintendency?

b. To what extent does gender impact outcome expectations in facilitating or compromising aspirations to the superintendency?

c. To what extent does gender impact adaptive career behaviors (skills, competencies, self-regulation, and coping skills)?

d. Among current school leaders, what patterns emerge for aspirants versus non-aspirants to the superintendency?

Analysis and Synthesis of the Findings

The data collected was scored for each of the five subscales embedded in SCCT as well as for the sum of these subscales, which measured career decision self-efficacy. Based on the quantitative data collected and analyzed from the survey the findings were as follows:

- With respect to the impact of gender on self-efficacy between aspirants and non-aspirants to the superintendency, no statistically significant difference was found.
- With respect to the impact of gender on outcome expectations and aspiring to the superintendency, no statistically significant difference was found.
- With respect to the impact of gender on adaptive career behaviors and aspirations to the superintendency, no significant difference was found.
- With respect to the impact of gender on aspiring or not aspiring to the superintendency, a significant relationship was found.

This research is consistent with existing literature, yet is distinctive as its focus was for women rather than about them. The goal was to deemphasize the dominate discourse about androcentric bias and to add female knowledge that does not compare women and men. This aspect of the study sought to find an explanation for the underrepresentation of female school superintendents. The preponderance of existing literature focuses on career paths and the external barriers and obstacles that women experience; however, these discount women's self-agency in shaping their career paths. As a result, this research fills in the gap of knowledge regarding how social cognitive career theory (SSCT) can account for the dynamic process of career shaping. At the epicenter of this theory is the bidirectionality of intentional actions and adaptive career and purposive behaviors on self-efficacy. Lent & Brown (1996)

included work-family roles and gender identity as adaptive career behaviors.

For the qualitative portion of this study, five data sets were coded into ten concepts which were then broken down into categories and subcategories to answer the final sub question, amongst current female school leaders, what patterns emerge for aspirants and non-aspirants to the superintendency. Through this analysis two propositions emerged. The first proposition to emerge revealed that both aspirants and non-aspirants believed that additional responsibilities of assuming the role of school superintendent would strain their personal lives. These women indicated that it would impact the time spent with their family and their ability to focus on philanthropic or personal interests. The two oldest leaders intimated that, given their age, they were not inclined to pursue the position, "… I just don't know if at this point in my life I want to have to learn that much more".

Although the aspirants revealed that they had self-agency in their lives and could influence their career trajectory, all delayed administrative roles due to familial responsibilities, which included childcare, medical insurance, guaranteed salary, and their spouse's career. Thus, suggesting that despite the feminist movement, women still put their partner's careers before their own and still do most familial responsibilities. Educators make choices between work and family. These choices and self-agency influence our career trajectory. This is consistent with Charol Shakeshaft's (1991) findings that female school leaders found it challenging to balance multiple roles. More than twenty-five years later, female leaders still experience the same challenges. This suggests a lack of parity in the division of home-family responsibilities between partners. This imbalance can also be accredited with societal norms and expectations as up until recently, 2018, public policy reinforced this gender disparity as the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) considered the biological mother of an infant as the responsible parent. Perhaps with the revision of FMLA, which now identifies both parents as responsible, there will be a shift in time off to care for a newborn as well as the division of home-family responsibilities.

Although the recent changes to FMLA (2018) acknowledge both partners as a newborn's legal parent, thus allowing either or both parents time off to care for the infant. Only until men are encouraged and respected for making this choice will there be equity. Women and men must commit to the collaborative and equitable sharing of family-home responsibilities to work towards the elimination of traditional social norms. "If more children see fathers at school pick-ups and mothers who are busy at jobs, both girls and boys will envision more options for themselves. Expectations will not be set by gender, but by personal passion, talents and interests" (Sandberg, 2013, p. 169).

Three of the participants from this research study were intrigued by the pursuit of the position and have begun to plan for the possibility; just not soon as they intuited the need for additional experience. Thus, the second proposition emerged, an innate belief that an increase in their professional competencies was warranted for them to pursue the position. All three aspirants have worked in multiple school districts to increase their competencies and attain vertically aligned positions. The role of superintendent is a multi-faceted one, requiring strong interpersonal skills and a background in curriculum and instruction, which all three of these aspirants possessed. This assumption is not only held by these female public school administrators but by female leaders across other professions. A 2014 Hewlett Packard study found men will apply for a position they feel 60% qualified for while women hold themselves back unless they have 100% qualified (Clark, 2014).

The results presented are consistent with the literature review of women in leadership roles, across all professions, in that while women outpace men in educational achievement, their progress to the top leadership role is limited (Sandberg, 2013). Therefore, women's influence on education policy, decision making, practice, and communities at large is greatly reduced. The solution is not to simply increase the number of women, but to develop and improve their sense of self-agency. As the ebb and flow of self-agency is dependent on mass discourse, women, in all professions, would benefit from discourse surrounding the reality of the impostor syndrome and its self-fulfilling prophecy of limiting one's career trajectory. Additionally, all people would benefit from discourse on collaborative relationships and the sharing of home-family responsibilities, both of which defy social norms.

The ability to exercise self-agency and control over these internal barriers is directly related to strong self-efficacy. Self-efficacy can excel or limit one's career trajectory (Bandura, 1997). Actions that can be taken from this study to address the underrepresentation of female superintendents is to encourage women to (1) aspire and apply to the position and (2) participate in the collaborative distribution of family and home responsibilities by making one's partner an equitable partner. Sandberg espouses that women must address their underlying assumptions and core beliefs to begin to make conscious decisions, which will aggregate significant long-term changes.

It has been more than fifty years since legislation guaranteed the establishment of gender equity via the *Equal Employment Opportunity Act*, *Education Amendments* and *Title IX* and more than twenty years since the initiation of *The White House Project of 2004* yet the paucity of female school superintendents, and leadership in other professions, continues to exist. Part of the issue may be attributed to the myth of doing it all. Although the concept of having it all is inspirational, the reality has fallen short. No one person can have it all: career, children, and relationships. Therefore, to truly excel in these facets of life, partners must find an equitable distribution of responsibilities and families should begin to model this for their children for if we know better, we should do better.

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NAVIGATING AN IOU SCHOOL CULTURE: INSPIRE TO ASPIRE: AN INSIDE-OUT APPROACH TO AN UPWARD DYNAMIC POSITIVE CULTURE

A Book Review

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Navigating an IOU Culture is not a typical book on the roles and responsibilities of school leaders. It does not provide simple solutions to complex problems related to schools and their communities. Rather, it challenges the reader to go deep, to be introspective and intentional in all they do. That is not a simple "ask," but it is rewarded by a roadmap (a nautical chart, if you will) for modern school leaders who must navigate the many issues, concerns, and challenges that they never thought they would have to address. Dr. Famularo is a seasoned educator, who has an exceptional grasp of the complexities of the task, and he shares his experiences, expertise, and problem-solving skills in this thorough, thoughtful, and thought-provoking book.

The clever use of a nautical journey serves to enhance this text. It enables the reader to use a host of strategies that increase comprehension, even if you know absolutely nothing about boating. He guides you through every step of a complex process that enables you to learn more about yourself, constituents, and your role as a leader. In full disclosure, I get seasick, not thrilled about boating, but was intrigued by the method that Dr. Famularo employed in such a consistent manner throughout the book. He provided a wealth of information and enhanced retention and increased the appeal of the content, through the use of graphics, visuals, prompts, cues and examples. It is an excellent mechanism to provide structure, predictable and a well-developed process that yields significant change. This is not a quick read, rather it forces you to think hard about what it means to be a leader and how it can be achieved through a thoughtful exploration of this complex role.

The book is divided into four parts:

1. Internalizing the IOU Principle: Inspire to Aspire
2. Developing Your IOU Strategic School Map: The 12 Essential School Anchors
3. Reaching Your IOU Destination
4. Navigating Your IOU Strategic School Map

It is written in such an engaging manner that you feel transported in this journey. You cannot be a passive reader, as it requires interacting with the text, as you strive for constant growth and reflection. The author uses this framework to guide, discuss, develop, and explore strategies to enable you to develop and implement a culture of continuous improvement and excellence in your school. And in yourself.

There are 6 Essential Inward Anchors. These are essential for creating a culture where everyone thrives.

1. Self Culture
2. School Vision
3. Daily School Vision
4. School Leadership Principles
5. School Core Values
6. School Goals

There are 6 Essential Outward Anchors. These enable you to form your Outward School Map

1. Inspire IOU Trust
2. Practice Positive Communication
3. Create Common Language
4. Construct a Cohesive Environment
5. Establish Everlasting Traditions
6. Develop a Mindset of Propelling PH2E

The 6th anchor is particularly important, in that it encourages continuous improvement in school leaders'

peacefulness, happiness, healthiness, and excellence. This emphasis on taking care of yourself so you can take care of others is essential, and sets this book apart from others. I do not think it is a stretch to suggest that all of us are in a better position to support and be available for others if we take care of our physical and mental health. It was refreshing to see this as an essential component of excellence in Leadership.

Each section of the book provides opportunities for discussion and lists examples of key components of the program that serve as prompts and cues for the reader to be employed in their schools. This can be valuable because it is focused and meaningful and it is a useful tool for effective and efficient professional development. The author provides consistent structure for each component of the text. There are school mindset questions, school anchors strategic thinking questions, anchor statements, and practical examples

An example of the major components of the sixth Outward Anchor, Develop Mindset of Propelling PH2E is below:

- A brief introduction of the importance of being committed to working towards higher levels of peacefulness, happiness, healthiness, and excellence.
- A description of each component
- Ways to maintain a balanced and fulfilling life
- Emphasis on intentional thinking
- Strategic thinking questions, such as how do we currently promote these values in our school community? What barriers exist? How can we create a culture where continuous improvement is a shared responsibility?
- Specific actions and how to measure the impact.
- What role can each member of the school community play in this process and how can they be integrated into daily routines?

The author recommends a draft of the mindset, examples of statements and a visual model.
Finally, the reader is provided with specific suggestions for implementation. This guidance is helpful to school leaders who are ready to develop and implement such a comprehensive, conceptual shift to their style of leadership. You are provided with prompts and cues, as well as potential examples of responses followed by space to develop your schools' responses. Everything in this book models effective instructional strategies and encourages collaboration and a positive, respectful environment where all input is valued from all constituents. Dr. Famularo has thought through this process like an excellent teacher who anticipates where some may have difficulty and then provides ample guidelines and support.

In summary, *Navigating an IOU School Culture* will enable you to realize your potential as a school leader, it will reaffirm the need to collaborate, to listen to and treat others with respect and to have a plan that is a transparent, working document. It provides the opportunity for continuous improvements as a work in progress.
This is a valuable addition to the professional literature on school leadership for those who value the contributions of others and provides a template for introspection, aspirations, and being intentional in all we do. This is a book that you will refer to frequently, share with others and will serve you well, whether you are new to your position or an experienced school leader.

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