EDITOR'S NOTES

This edition of the *Journal for the Liberal Arts and Sciences* features research that examines a number of issues of great concern to American educators, research that touches all levels of education: elementary, secondary, and higher education. The late Seth Clark, an adjunct instructor at the host school of the *JLAS,* and Nancy Miller examine one of the most distressing topics in education today, that of bullying. In their in depth study, they look at the effectiveness of one anti-bullying program in a rural setting.

Lindon Ratliff, Joshua Wilson, and Lisa Johnson tackle another area of great concern in education, focusing on the sentencing of public school educators convicted of sex offenses against students. They argue that a stronger knowledge of educator sexual misconduct will enable schools administrators to better educate and hopeful protect their students.

Indiana State University professor Terry McDaniel shares an important three-year study concerning the disturbing problem of teacher shortage in Indiana. The study suggests that "Indiana must find ways to encourage more students to enter the teaching profession and find ways to keep good teachers in the profession."

A study involving pre-service teachers integrating literacy knowledge and practice for struggling readers is the focus of Chanda Islam's research efforts, while Tony Sanchez revisits a once popular approach in the social studies area, presently limited by test-driven curriculum: the study of values and heroes to teach key social studies objectives. Finally, Steve Custer shares the insights garnered from his study of five university deans regarding their thoughts and feeling about Work-Life Balance issues as defined as the "dilemma of managing work obligations and personal/family responsibilities."

Randy Mills, Editor
Journal for the Liberal Arts and Sciences

Students Perceptions of the Effectiveness of a Four-Year Anti-Bullying Program in a Rural School System Setting

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"The first gulp from the glass of natural sciences will turn you into an atheist, but at the bottom of the glass God is waiting for you."
– Werner Heisenberg

Abstract

A student's perceptions of safeness in his or her school, especially concerns over bullying is an important factor for any school official or teacher looking to maximize the effectiveness of instruction. Among popular culture, however, there often exists a perception that rural schools, due to their size and community adhesiveness, are more immune to bullying and other violent acts so that students in these schools therefore feel safer. This study suggested and this may not be the case. Through Federal grant funding, two rural school corporations in Southern Indiana implemented a series of popular programs with a goal to enhance a safer and healthier environment for students. Over a four-year period (2011-2014), this study looked at the safety perception programing of 2,723 students in third through 12th grade. The safety programing included anti-bullying, school refusal, and anti-violence training for staff and students. Of primary concern for this study was the perceptions of students regarding the effectiveness of the anti-bully element of these safety programs.

Introduction

Since the early 1990s, concern in the areas of bullying, violence, and school safety has greatly risen. These concerns

have been driven by school shootings and attacks and bullying instances that have often been at forefront of media, national attention and educational leaders (Bosworth, 2011; Astor, Meyer, Benbenishty, Marachi, & Rosemond, 2005; Birkland & Lawrnce, 2004). Steinberg, Allensworth, & Johnson (2011) noted concerning this problem,

> In schools across the country, students routinely encounter a range of safety issues—from overt acts of violence and bullying to subtle intimidation and disrespect. Though extreme incidents such as school shootings tend to attract the most attention, day-to-day incidents such as gossip, hallway fights, and yelling matches between teachers and students contribute to students' overall sense of safety and shape the learning climate of the school. (p.1)

Bullying and victimization of peers as a focuses of research in education have been growing for the past two decades. Since the 1990's, bullying has been linked to anger, aggression, violence, hyperactivity, as well as to later delinquency and criminality (Olweus, 1993). Researchers from the late 1990s through 2000s reported bullying negatively impacted academic functioning, caused psychological problems, and impaired social relationships (Cordell, 2010; Swearer, Espelage, Vaillancourt & Hymel, 2010). Furthermore, researchers reported that victims of bullying reported individual illnesses, which resulted in poorer academic performance, an increase in fear and anxiety, the development of suicidal ideation, lower self-esteem, and depression (Hawker & Boulton, 2000; McDougall, Vaillancourt, & Hymel, 2009). Cooper, Clements, & Holt, (2012) observed that a pattern of strong correlations existed between suicide and thoughts of suicide among adolescents who were bullied or victimized.

There have been many responses to the problem of keeping schools safe. Coon & Travis, (2012) observed that over the past few decades, schools have bolstered their campus's security by adding physical, technological, and surveillance features that were supposed to increase the safety and ensure the welfare of students and staff. Schools have also added police officers or School Resource officers to campus to increase security. States

and schools reflecting the need to address popular concerns exemplified in Indiana's recent anti-bullying law (Indiana Anti-Bullying Laws and Policies, 2015) have also adopted recent bullying policies and laws. Essex (2010) even observed that the Supreme Court has gone so far as to relax the rights of students to object or refuse search and seizure in the school setting in order to create a safer school environment.

Interestingly, it has been relatively easy for schools to purchase and implement the physical manifestations of security like closed circuit cameras, security alert buttons, safety glass, and door monitors to protect students and faculty while on campus. However, one could also argue that there exists another level of safety beyond the physical manifestations of cameras, etc. Perhaps lesser implemented are programs and tools for students, faculty, and communities to manage interactions among these entities to create not just a physically secure school but an emotionally and perceptively safe place as well.

According to Bosworth (2011), "A more important measure of the relative safety of any school campus may be the perceptions of safety among students, faculty, and staff" (p. 195). In this regard, many safety, antiviolence, anti-bullying programs and strategies exist to reinforce positive student behaviors and promote inviting environments in schools. These varied improvement attempts in the areas of safety and security, however, are only now being assessed for effectiveness. Watkins, Mauthner, Hewitt, Epstein, & Leonard (2007) asserted that the most successful violence resilient schools not only acted in identifiable ways, they also 'talked' in identifiable ways. Consequently, schools should not only provide a safe and secure environment but also teach the students and community appropriate interactions.

Prevention Models

Perhaps the most widespread issue regarding student safety has to do with bullying. Olweus has noted that students cannot learn effectively if they do not feel safe (Olweus, 1992; 1993a; 1993b; 1994). He further observed that many students identified a fear of being bullied or a fear being in an isolated or potentially unsafe area. Bosworth (2011) noted in this same vein,

The biannual Youth Risk Behavior and Surveillance Survey (YRBSS) conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports more than 10% of high school students having been in a fight at school in the last year, 5.5% did not go to school in the past 30 days because of fear, 6% reported carrying a weapon at least once in the past 30 days, and 27% reported property being stolen or damaged. (p. 194)

It is human instinct to withdraw from situations that are perceived as dangerous; consequently, students avoid school when they feel it is not a safe environment (Morrel-Samuels, Zimmerman, & Reischl, 2013). Worldwide, both boys and girls around the world indicate higher degrees of absence when being bullied at school (Dunne, Sabates, Bosumtwi-Sam, & Owusu, 2013). Stirling (2006) suggested that there was an increase in the development of avoidance behaviors and social anxiety among children who were presented with negative facial patterns at a very young age. These situations directly impacted a student's attendance and time spent with educators.

Olweus, noted researchers in school bullying since the 1970s, defined bullying as having the following three elements:

1. negative aggressive actions intended to harm;
2. repeated acts over time; and,
3. an existing power differential between the bully and victim. (Hawley, Ratliff, & Stump 2010, p. 102)

In addition, Blosnich (2011) reported that nonverbal negative actions such as ostracism and vandalism were also a part of bullying scenarios. Additionally, a newer form of bullying has evolved over time, cyberbullying. Cyberbullying is the ''willful and repeated harm inflicted through the use of computers, cell phones and other electronic devices'' (Hinduja & Patchin, 2010, p. 208).

Schools, states, and governments have been addressing the school safety concerns in recent years with mixed results. According to Astor, et. al. (2005), "Numerous national organizations evaluate 'best practices' and "model research-

supported programs" for school safety. The greatest weaknesses of uniform programs is that they are 'top down'; they prescribe the solution to the problem and are usually applied in the same way to every school" (p. 17).

Some of the most common responses to violence and bullying include expulsion, suspension, referral to special education, sending the child to the principal's office, during and after-school detention, parent conferences, peer mediation, and counseling (Astor et. al., 2005).

In 1994, the Gun Free Schools Act (GFSA) was implemented in the United States. The GFSA stated**,**

> Each State receiving Federal funds must have in effect a State law requiring local educational agencies to expel from school for a period of not less than one year a student who is determined to have brought a weapon to school (U.S. Department of Education, 2015).

According to Akiba and Han (2011), during the past 16 years since the GFSA became a law, researchers have reported that the act has not been effective for reducing students' problem behaviors and that it has continuously produced negative outcomes, such as disproportional racial and gender representations in disciplinary outcomes and expelled students' deprivation of educational opportunities. (p. 265)

Astor et. al., (2005) in an extensive review of intervention programs, pointed out that the most successful strategies for addressing school safety and violence prevention occurred when schools did the following:

- Raised the awareness and responsibility of students, teachers, and parents regarding the types of violence in their schools (for example, sexual harassment, fighting, and weapon use).
- Created clear guidelines and rules for the entire school.
- They targeted the various social systems in the school and clearly communicate to the entire school community procedures to be followed before, during, and after violent events.

- Focused on getting school staff, students, and parents involved in the program.
- They easily fit the interventions into the normal flow and mission of the school.
- Used faculty, staff, and parents in the school setting to plan, implement, and sustain the program.
- Increased monitoring and supervision in non-classroom areas. (p. 28)

While many ideas and models are out there regarding violence and bullying prevention in schools and researchers have studied the presence and dynamics of this problem in school settings, some perceived that there was an important area of the problem that has been understudied.

Violence and Bullying in Rural Schools

There has long existed a perception that rural schools, due to their smaller size and community adhesiveness, are more immune to violence and bullying that urban and suburban schools and that students in rural schools therefore feel safer. Studies by Seals & Young (2003) and Stockdale, Handadambo, Duys, Larson, & Sarvela (2002) strongly indicated this was not the case. These studies clearly suggested that rural school districts also need to be addressing the problem in an effective manner. Seals and Young concluded in their research that acts of school violence in the rural sitting "have shown that bullying can no longer be viewed as merely a part of growing up. We now recognize that exposure to this form of behavior can also have detrimental long-term effect" (p. 745). In this same vein, Dulmus, Theriot, Sowers, & Blackburn (2004) believed that the issue of violence and bullying in rural school had been greatly understudied and that such schools were especially "deserving of more research attention" (p. 4).

In response to the violence and shooting of the late 1990s, Safe Schools/Healthy Students (SSHS) was created as a comprehensive model that that would work to create safe and secure schools and communities in the United States. The initiative was established in response to a series of deadly school shootings in the late 1990s (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2015). In partnership with the

US Department of Education, SSHS grant funding was provided to schools and communities to improve mental health, create safe school environments, and reduce violence and substance abuse.

In 2009, two rural school systems in Southern Indiana, applied for and received grant funding to implement SSHS services and programs to elementary and high school students that would promote healthy development and prevent violence beginning in 2009. The purpose of the program was to increase attendance, decrease physical altercations, decrease bullying, and to increase the perception of a safe school community for both parents of students and for students at the schools. To accomplish this purpose, the following strategies and programs were implemented:

1. Too Good for Drugs and Violence
2. Olweus Bullying Prevention programs
3. School safety trainings and assessments
4. Conflict resolution (PATHS) training.

The project goal was to provide and maintain a safe school environment based on data gathered by preliminary surveys at the two school systems. Representatives from a professional evaluation and consulting service established five objectives to address the significant areas of needed improvement as indicated by the results of the baseline survey. These objectives were:

1. To decrease the percentage of students in grades 3-12 who did not go to school on one or more days during the past 30 days because they felt unsafe at school or on their way to and from school.
2. To decrease the percentage of 3rd to 12th grade students who have been in a physical fight on school property.
3. To decrease the percentage of 3rd to 12th grade students being bullied in a 2 month period.
4. To increase the percentage of parents and students who perceive that the school community is safe.
5. To decrease the number of disciplinary referrals due to fights or other disruptive behaviors on school property

for K-12 grade students. (Diehl Evaluation and
Consulting Services, Inc., 2014, p. 16)

Barley & Beesley (2007) argued that small rural schools
would better respond to programs that claimed to increase safety
and to lend a feeling of a safe environment to students than
larger urban and suburban schools. Two important and powerful
aspects they noted about rural schools involved high teacher
retention and high expectation on students at such rural schools.
"Retaining teachers helps develop a supportive professional
community, leads to close relationships between students and
teachers, *and provides continuity that supports curriculum
innovations and school improvement plans"* (p. 9).   This study
sought to find out if the implementation of a program to improve
the safety of the school environments in two particular rural
school settings resulted in a significant difference in students
feeling safer in the school environment. In order to find the
sentiment of the students over time a survey was developed that
addressed key areas of safety and bullying concern and was
administered each year for four years. The areas of addressed
by the surveys were as follows:

- The frequency of students who reported missing school
  because they felt unsafe either at school or on their way
  to and from school.
- The frequency of students who reported being in a
  physical fight on school property.
- The frequency of students who reported being bullied at
  school.
- The degree of agreement students felt toward 20
  environmental, cultural, and relationship indicators in
  reference to their school.

Research Design

A quasi-experimental research approach was used with a
convenience sample of accessible students from the schools
studied. Data collection was approved by the participating
schools and the Core Management Team. Each year the
schools employed a standard procedure for disseminating the

questionnaires to students. The items in the surveys were recommended by the SSHS National Evaluation Team.

Teachers were instructed during meeting prior to the delivery of the questionnaire to direct students to honestly answer to the best of their ability and to keep disruptions and interactions regarding students to a minimum. Teachers also tracked students who had participated ensuring those who missed the opportunity to answer the questionnaire were given time to complete it. Teachers kept students quiet and attentive until all students had completed the questionnaire.

Control variables for this study were students' genders and the grade they were in during the course of the programing. Grades three through twelve were included in the study, consisting of roughly 2000 students from both school systems each year for four years. Students were to identify themselves as either male or female on the questionnaires.

The level of significance set for this study was a tolerance of p=.05 as is commonly used in educational studies. The confidence level of this significance is valued at 95% certainty. The years analyzed in this study included 2011 through 2014.

Instrumentation and Data Collection

Survey Monkey, an online questionnaire generator, was used to develop the questions and structure them in a format that students could easily decipher and respond to. Each year the electronic survey was posted to the respective schools web sites so the questionnaire could be accessed by students in any setting within the school via a computer.

During the time, the students completed the surveys, teachers assisted with technology, and helped students to understand questions but did not provide any direct interpretation or complete any responses for students. Parents granted permission prior to any completion of the questionnaires.

The participating schools collected discipline information each year and submitted the information into the database. The information included the type of infraction and the date of the incident. This discipline information could then be used to correlate trends in student perceptions of safety and incidents of violence recorded in the offices of the schools.

Three multiple choice questions were also included in the survey. The first multiple choice question asked the student to choose a range of days she or he missed school because she or he did not feel safe at school. The second multiple choice question asked the respondents you choose a range of times he or she has been in a fight on school property. The last multiple choice question asked the frequency he or she was bullied in the last couple of months. Finally, students rated 20 statements concerning their perceptions of the school climate on a 0-4 Likert scale

Analysis

A t-test was used to determine if there were any statistical differences between the 2011 and 2014 populations (See Table 1). The 20 statements were measured using a Likert scale that included five response choices. The available responses were Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree, and N/A and its corresponding value of 1, 2, 3, 4, and 0 respectively. The following assumptions were made in accordance with the use of the t-test:

1. The values were taken from the entire available population of the participating schools.
2. A distribution of the mean of the population was normal.
3. The variance of the 2011 in 2014 groups were very similar.

Table 1. School Climate Questions				
Item	2011 Mean	2011 σ	2014 Mean	2014 σ
There is a teacher or some other adult at this school who...				
a. really cares about me.	3.201	0.808	3.248	0.798
b. notices when I'm not there.	3.144	0.797	3.185	0.801
c. listens to me when I have something to say.	3.173	0.788	3.186	0.773
d. tells me when I do a good job.	3.134	0.799	3.150	0.807
e. always wants me to do my best.	3.461	0.706	3.447	0.735
f. believes that I will be a success.	3.233	0.791	3.251	0.821
The next questions ask what you do and how you feel about your school:				
a. I am happy to be at this school.	3.136	1.069	3.262	0.988
b. I feel close to people at this school.	3.262	0.860	3.215	0.892
c. I feel like I am part of this school.	3.318	0.940	3.218	0.967
d. I feel safe in my school.	3.318	0.817	3.355	0.842
e. I help decide things like class activities or rules.	2.736	1.187	2.762	1.160
f. I do interesting activities.	3.191	0.941	3.118	0.970
g. I do things that make a difference.	3.077	1.066	3.020	1.073
This school...				
a. is a supportive and inviting place for students to learn.	3.232	0.906	3.358	0.843
b. promotes academic success for all students.	3.264	0.857	3.350	0.850
c. is welcoming to and facilitates parent involvement.	3.276	0.807	3.354	0.862
d. provides adequate counseling and support services for students.	3.317	0.868	3.346	0.867
e. fosters an appreciation of student diversity and respect for each other.	3.217	0.939	3.307	0.896
f. is a safe place for students.	3.299	0.844	3.385	0.826
g. is a safe place for staff.	3.390	0.808	3.437	0.786

The result of the t-test showed statistically non-significant at p<.05. These results indicated that there was little change in student perceptions regarding increased safety over the four year period even with treatments in place. The null hypothesis was retained as no significant difference was found between the 2011 participants and the 2014 participants.

Summary
It is essential for schools to know what types of programs that claim to make students feel safer in schools really work. Many of the programs that tout effectiveness are expensive to implement, and in an age of tighten school budgets, information concerning effectiveness would be of great value. As also noted above, researchers, such as Barley & Beesley, have argued that small rural schools would better respond to safety programs that claimed to increase safety and to lend a feeling of a safe school environment to students than larger urban and suburban schools. In the case of the four programs used to increase school safety and a sense of school safety at two rural Indiana schools, this studies found that there was little student perception of change regarding safety over the four year period that the four safety treatments used at the school were in place. These treatments included: Too Good for Drugs and Violence and Olweus Bullying Prevention programs, school safety trainings and assessments, and conflict resolution (PATHS) training through the implementation of a Safe Schools Healthy Students (SSHS) grant.

Interestingly, there was a noticeable increase in the percentage of students indicating that they missed school due to feelings of being unsafe. The percentages were low, but a .6 percent increase was evident from the 2011 school year to the 2014 school year. Had the programing been effective, attendance rates due to safety concerns should have decreased over the period.

This study suggested that the programing examined in this research accomplished little in the way of increasing perceptions of school safety among students and produced little to no decreases in episodes of school violence at the participating schools. However, further research in safety and anti-violence

programing in schools is necessary for a broader perspective. It is possible in situations like this, for example, that the intended results may not be apparent immediately. Changing the climate and behaviors of a school could possibly take many years and significant results may not initially be seen. It is quite possible that a longitudinal study encompassing many additional years may provide different results. An interesting find in the data showed that for some students the feeling of ownership in their school was minimal. Many students at the two schools involved in this study did not receive explanations about the implementation of the safety programs, nor did they have input in the program. Johnson (2009) believed that students' feelings of ownership in their school correlated with lower levels of violence in the school at large and in a greater feeling of safety. This would suggest that schools should not just concentrate on particularly focused programming to decrease violence, but also work toward creating a culture of ownership among pupils to obtain a safer school environment. It is recommended that school administrators at least provide and encourage avenues of student ownership when making school safety improvements.

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An Examination of Sentencing of Public School Educators Convicted of Sex Offenses against Students

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Abstract

Sexual misconduct among public educators is a growing trend in today's society. With the increase in laws that swiftly punish educators, the question of sentence length arises. The purpose of the present study was to examine whether a relationship existed between the length of sentence received by educators convicted of sexual misconduct, the age of the educator, as well as the age gap between the victim and offender. Examining trends and/or patterns in public school teacher sentencing improves our understanding of the punishment and severity perception held by the judicial system of the crime. The sample for this study consisted of 262 certified public school educators in the United States sentenced for sexual misconduct offenses between the years of 2008 and 2013. Results indicate a strong positive correlation between the difference in age and length of sentence received, $r(166) = .20$, $p < .01$, with a greater difference in age between victim and offender relating to a longer sentence being received by the offender following conviction.

Introduction

Sexual crimes within the walls of public schools destroy the lives of the victims and shatter the trust stakeholders have placed in school personnel. It is understandable that with these

crimes comes a strong and overwhelming desire to punish. Research in the area is limited due to the fact that a great deal of the reports come from newspapers (Knoll, 2010). The most recent examining this data was a 2002 survey conducted by the American Association of University Women. The researchers found that 38% of students in grades 8-11 reported being sexually harassed by teachers or school employees. Their results point to a potentially marked increase in this behavior as previous estimates reported a decade earlier found that 14% of high school students surveyed had engaged in sexual intercourse with a teacher (Wishnietsky, 1991). Though incidents of teacher sexual misconduct are sensationalized in the media and create public outcry, Fromuth, Mackey, and Wilson (2010) noted there is sparse research on this topic to guide researchers, school administrators, and community policy makers. To prevent the continued perpetration of these illicit behaviors, researchers (see Moulden, Firestone, Kingston, & Wexler, 2010; Shakeshaft, 2004) have suggested the characteristics associated with identified sexual abusers who have offended against students be identified to develop better screening and hiring procedures that deny these individuals access to students and help safeguard our schools.

Despite the expansive body of research that exists on the characteristics of sexual perpetrators inside the family unit, far less attention has focused on the punishment that is set aside for the convicted educator. For example, does a female teacher have a better chance of receiving a smaller sentence compared to her male counterparts? In previous studies, researchers identified personal characteristics that appeared to be common among sexual perpetrators. These characteristics included features such as being adult, single, male, university educated, psychologically stable, and having almost no prior sexual or criminal offenses (Firestone, Moulden, & Wexler, 2009; Moulden, Firestone, & Wexler, 2007). Even though sexual predators are predominately male, evidence does not exclude females as offenders. Knoll (2010) examined the patterns of female school teachers arrested for sexual offenses. Vandiver and Kercher (2004) reported six types of female sex offenders; however, the most common type was the "heterosexual nurturer," who was least likely to have an arrest for sexual assault. Knoll (2010)

examined sexual abuse in New York State and concluded female teachers who were sexual offenders had the qualities of a "teacher/lover who viewed herself as emotionally equal to her teenage male victim" (p. 374). With this in mind, the question arises, how is society punishing the offenders?

Prevalence of Educator Sexual Misconduct

The ultimate authority in educator sexual misconduct is Charol Shakeshaft. In 2013, she stressed the financial effects of sexual misconduct, with incidences costing school districts thousands to millions of dollars. Title IX requires all school districts to report suspected or alleged sexual misconduct to state child protection agencies (Nance & Daniel, 2007). In a 2004 report for the U.S. Department of Education, Shakeshaft (2004) stated: "There have been only 14 U.S. and five Canadian or UK empirical studies on educator sexual misconduct and only one received federal funding." (p. 4). According to Shakeshaft, studies examining the prevalence of sexual misconduct have historically taken two paths. Incidence studies, the first path, examine child sexual abuse official reports to child protective or criminal agencies. Prevalence studies, the second path, inquire to children or adults if they have ever been sexually abused as a child by an adult. While these paths exist, there hasn't been a national incidence or prevalence study conducted (Shakeshaft, 2004). Over a decade later, Shakeshaft's call for a national study have remained unheeded. However, absent any national studies, there have been several studies examining prevalence or incident at regional levels.

Cameron et al. (1986) surveyed 4,340 adults in Los Angeles, Denver, Omaha, Louisville, and Washington, DC, in order to determine their sexual attitudes and experiences. The subjects were asked to view a list of 36 different caretakers and to indicate the ones they had sexual relations with in the past. The findings indicated 4% of the respondents had a physical sexual experience with a teacher.

Corbett et al. (1993) surveyed 185 students in two college introductory sociology courses to determine the frequency of sexual harassment by a teacher in high school (contact and non-contact). The students were asked about what happened to them as well as what they had witnessed occurring to other

students. The researchers concluded 17% of the students had physical sexual contact with a teacher and 43% reported verbal sexual harassment. In their study, sexual harassment was defined as uncomfortable comments, sexual nature, made by the teacher towards the student.

When examining sexual harassment towards students, the perception of the crime can be changed by the characteristics of the victims. Formuth and Holt (2008) examined whether a victim's age changed the manner in which the crime was perceived. The participants (300 undergraduates) in the study, read scenarios depicting teacher sexual misconduct in which the student's age was varied (9, 12, 15), and then answered questions about their perceptions. They concluded the age of the student powerfully impacts how teacher sexual misconduct is viewed. In general, the trend was to view teacher sexual misconduct involving a 9 year old as the most serious and teacher sexual misconduct involving a 15 year old as less serious.

The most accurate report concerning prevalence rates in the United States is the American Association of University Women's (AAUW) 1993 and 2001 replication study titled Hostile Hallways. The 2001 study surveyed 2,064 students in eighth thru 11th grades (compared to 1,632 in the 1993 study) from a sample of 80,000 schools. Using self-administered questionnaires, 1559 students were interviewed during English class and another 505 were conducted online. The AAUW reported 9.6 percent of students had been targets of educator misconduct during their school career.

Moulden, Firestone, Kingston, and Wexler (2010), examined the descriptive characteristics of Canadian teachers convicted of sexual offenses. Archival violent crime linkage analysis system reports were obtained from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, and demographic and criminal characteristics for the offender, as well as information about the victim and offense, were selected for analyses. In examining the 113 qualitative reports, of the crime reports, they concluded the victims had a mean age of 11.8 years and were more likely to be female. The mean age of the offenders was 37.28 years of age. The study only included male offenders due to a small number of female teachers in the

sample. The study's relevance focuses on the examination of offenders' characteristics as it relates to age.

Offender Characteristics

Educators who commit sex crimes against students share some common characteristics.   Jennings and Tharp (2003) found that 25 percent of the educators in Texas who were disciplined for sexual infractions involving students between 1995 and 2003 were coaches or music teachers and thus have larger amounts of time with the students (football, basketball and band practice). Even though coaches and music teachers have extended time with students, research shows teachers of other subjects, however are reported more than coaches (Shakeshaft, 2004). This is statistic is due to the fact teachers are finding ways to be in private situations with their victims.

The variable of gender of the offenders has been examined and primarily depicts a male dominated offender class. As an example, Jennings and Tharp (2003) searched educator sexual misconduct public records of 606 teachers in Texas. They discovered 12 percent were female and 88 percent were male. In a review of newspaper reports for a 6-month period, Hendrie (1998) found that there was a gender distribution of 20 percent female and 80 percent male offender. Shakeshaft and Cohan (1994) surveyed 778 superintendents in New York State on incidence of educator sexual misconduct. After making initial contact they identified 225 school superintendents who reported they had dealt with educator sexual misconduct. Follow-up interviews concluded 4 percent of offenders were female and 96 percent were male. Only one study has examined the average age of offenders. Hendire (1998), found the age of offenders ranged from 21-75 years old with an average age of 28. (Shakeshaft, 2004).

Sentencing of Educator Sex Crimes

Sentencing of educators involved in sex crimes can vary from state to state. In the past a culture of secrecy which was tied to nondisclosure acts was prevalent within school districts (Surface, Stader, & Armenta, 2014).   However today all 50 states have laws that require school officials to report suspected

or alleged sexual misconduct to state child protection agencies. (Nance & Daniel, 2007).

Researchers in the past have examined sentencing outcomes for various crimes, however, there are no studies which have examined educators sentenced of sex crimes. Research has shown that characteristics of the crime and victim, seriousness of offense, and victim age affect the length of sentence for child sex offenders (Faller, Birdall, Vandervort, & Henry, 2006). Patrick and March (2011), examined the sentencing outcomes of convicted child sex offenders over an eight year period. They found the circumstances of the offense influences sentencing more than the characteristics of the victim or the offender. Specifically the judicial system places a greater length of sentence on crimes that society consider more serious due to the description of the sex crime that occurred.

Methods
Statement of the Purpose
The purpose of the present study was to examine if a relationship existed between the length of sentence received by educators convicted of sexual misconduct and the age of the educator as well as the age differential among the victim and offender. By examining trends and/or patterns in public school teacher sentencing, our understanding of the punishment and the severity perception held by the judicial system of the crime can be better understood.

To accomplish our goal, we reviewed public records focusing on the demographic information as well as the history and frequency of teacher arrests and convictions in the United States between 2008-2013. Our examination and subsequent analyses were conducted to address the following research questions:

1. Is there a statistically significant relationship between the age of offender and the length of sentence received following conviction?
2. Is there a statistically significant relationship between the difference in age of victims and offenders and the length of sentence received following conviction?

3. Does the length of sentence issued differ between offenders convicted of same-sex crimes and offenders convicted of opposite-sex crimes?

Participants

The sample for this study consisted of 262 certified public school educators in the United States sentenced for sexual misconduct offenses between the years of 2008 and 2013. Included in the sample were 164 males and 98 females, with the average age of participant being 37.01 (*SD* = 10.93) years. Ethnicity data was not present in the public record searches. In terms of subjects taught, the sample participants represented a wide range of subject areas including: business, social studies, sciences, mathematics, language arts, music, technology, elementary education and special education.

Data Collection

Participants for this study were identified through a review of public records available from a six year period (2008-2013) across the United States. Cases were included when a sentence was issued that was related to offenses of a sexual nature with a minor victim identified. The cases were then categorized based on the grade level in which the alleged offense occurred, age of the alleged victim (see Figure 1), age of the offender (see Figure 2), gender of the victim, gender of the offender, and length of sentence in months. Though many of these cases are in the public record, no personally identifiable information is included in this study to protect the anonymity of the individuals whose cases are included in our analyses.

Figure 1

Figure 2
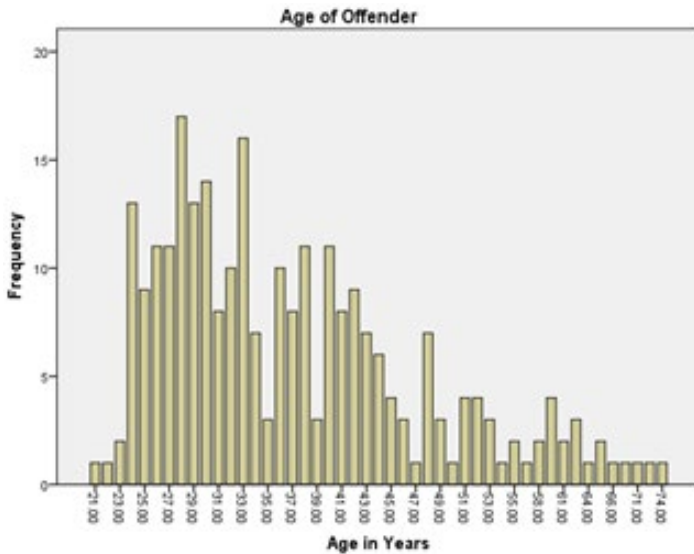
Age of Offender

Data Analyses

Cross-tabulation tables were constructed to examine whether relationships existed between the age of the offender, the age of the victim, the length of sentence, the age difference between offender and victim and the gender of both the victim and offender. To determine the significance of these relationships, a Pearson chi-square test was computed for a pairwise comparison examining offender age and length of sentence, a comparison examining age differential among victim and offender and length of sentence, and a comparison examining length of sentence and same or opposite sex offender – victim status. As a follow-up, phi coefficients were computed as a measure of effect size to provide additional information on the strength of any significant associations noted between these sets of variables

Results

Our first research question sought to understand whether a relationship exists between offender age and the length of sentence received following conviction. To address this research question we computed a bivariate Pearson's *r* correlation. Our results did not indicate the presence of a significant relationship between offender age and length of sentence received after conviction, $r(166) = .09$, $p = .24$.

Our second research question sought to understand whether a relationship exists between the age differential among victims and offenders and the length of sentence received following conviction. To address this research question we computed a bivariate Pearson's *r* correlation. To create of our age differential variable, we calculated a difference score for each victim and offender pair by subtracting the victim's age from that of the offender, creating a ratio-level continuous variable which was then correlated with sentence length. Our results indicate a strong positive correlation between the difference in age and length of sentence received, $r(166) = .20$, $p = .01$. The greater the difference in age between victim and offender, the longer the sentence received by the offender following conviction (see Figure 3).

Our third research question examined whether sentencing of offenders was influenced by the fact that an offense was committed against either a same-sex or opposite-sex victim. To address this research question we conducted an independent measures *t*-test comparing offenders of same-sex crimes and offenders of opposite-sex crimes on the length of sentences they received. Results indicate no significant between group differences, $t(152) = 1.06$, $p = .29$, in terms of the length of sentence received.

Figure 3
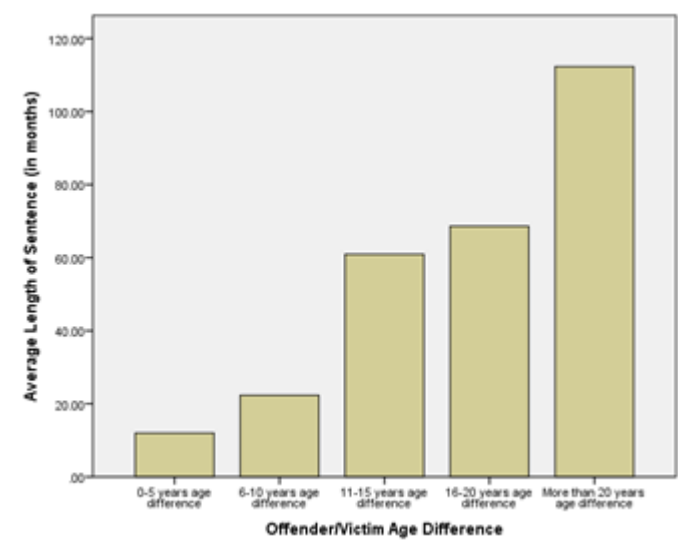
Discussion

The purpose of this study was to gain a better understanding of the sentencing patterns for educators found guilty of sex crimes against a student. Using public records data from all cases adjudicated in the United States over a six-year period (2008-2013), we were able to expand our knowledge of the perpetrator profile in these events.

Our first research question addressed offender age and whether there was a relationship between lengths of sentence. The results suggest that there is not a significant difference with offender's age at the time of the crime and the length of sentence. This finding contradicts the popular notion that younger educators, starting their careers, were more likely to receive a smaller sentence when it came to sex crimes with students.

Our second research question brings to light the connection between severity of the crime and punishment. Data analysis revealed a strong positive relationship between the difference in age between the victim and offender and the length of the sentence. This finding brings a connection to Patrick and March (2011) which found length of sentence for child sex crimes held a positive relationship to the severity of the crime. With this point in mind, it can be concluded as the age between victim and teacher increases, society views the crime as more severe and punishes accordingly.

Our third research question examined the relationship between gender and sentencing. With the finding of no significant relationship between the groups we can make no conclusion concerning the results. It would appear the judicial system does not discern between same sex sexual crimes as compared to opposite sex crimes. This research in same and opposite sex crimes has not been explored in past research. Future research, perhaps could help explore this topic to a larger extent.

Limitations of the Study

The study is limited to public records that were released concerning sentencing of educators for sex offenses. Private plea deals that were not publicized in newspapers were unable to be included in the research.

Directions for Future Research

The area of educator sex abuse is in need of more research. The body of literature could be enhanced by a variety of follow-up studies including:

1. Qualitative studies in which offenders are interviewed to determine the underlying causes of their abuse
2. Case studies in which cases that have been mishandled by school districts are examined. Shakeshaft (2004) describes the area as a grey-zone in which the school officials attempted to control the allegation but in turn failed to report to law enforcement.

3. Qualitative studies exploring the perceptions held by stakeholders when it comes to sex offenses by educators.

Conclusions / Implications

The results of this study contribute to a better understanding of sentencing of perpetrators in the field of education. The finding that length of sentencing has a strong positive relationship to the difference in age between victim and offender hopefully contributes to the research in the field. In today's society it appears there is a popular misconception that female teachers are less likely to be severely punished for sex crimes. The findings of this study dispel this myth. It appears as the number of years separate between the victim and the offender increases, the greater society punishes. This raises an interesting question, are their degrees of educator sex crimes when it comes to age differences? With a stronger knowledge of educator sexual misconduct schools administrators can better educate and hopeful protect their students.

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The Teacher Shortage in Indiana: A Three-Year Study

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Abstract

This past year all but two states in the United States faced teacher shortages. As the enrollment of school aged children continues to increase, the availability of teachers decline. For a variety of reasons, fewer students are entering the vocation of teaching. Experienced teachers are leaving the profession, citing burn-out, stress, and personal reasons. Approximately 17% of teachers will leave the profession in the first five years of teaching. Indiana is not an exception. Indiana faces great shortages especially in special education, English, and STEM related areas. This three-year study shows over 90% of the reporting districts experiencing shortages each year. This is forcing many districts to hire teachers without licensure in the needed content areas and the hiring of long-term substitute teachers when no regular licensed teachers are available.

Introduction

In 2016, The Learning Policy Institute reported that Indiana ranked 47th in teacher attractiveness and 50th in terms of teacher job-related security. Students were struggling to pass the teacher licensing examinations and after entering the profession started at a much lower salary than the national average for teachers and much lower than most other occupations for college graduates with a four-year degree. All of this is to say that the teacher shortage crisis is here, with most states dealing with the critical issue. All across America school districts are struggling to find teachers to teach in their qualified areas (Camera, 2016). Approximately 500,000 teachers leave teaching each year, costing districts over $.2 billion per year (Seidel, 2014). And while states have made efforts to fill the void, the crisis continues

to grow. Forty-eight of the fifty states, as well as the District of Columbia are experiencing shortages (Ostroff, 2017). According to the U.S. Department of Education (2017), the top five areas of shortage for 2017-18 were math, special education, science, foreign language, and English to speakers of other languages. More and more teachers are opting for retirement (Camera, 2016). Many teachers are leaving the profession early because they no longer desire to work in the changing conditions in the profession (Seidel, 2014). Fewer students are choosing teaching as a profession. And while this results in less teachers in the profession, the enrollment of students in our schools is increasing (Sutcher, Darling-Hammond, & Carver-Thomas, 2016).

Indiana's Teacher Shortage

Indiana is no exception to the teacher shortage. In 2015, the Indiana Association of Public School Superintendents reached out to the Indiana State University Department of Education asking that a survey be conducted to identify the areas of shortages in school districts and if, in fact, a shortage really existed. During this same year, articles surfaced claiming no teacher shortage existed in Indiana (Indiana Business Journal, 2015; Ball State University, 2015a). Ironically, these reports were based on the facts that 39,000 licensed teachers were working outside of education. The results of the 2016, five survey reported 95% of the Indiana Districts were experiencing shortages. The areas of shortages in Indiana were very similar to the national areas of shortage with science, special education, math, foreign languages and English representing the top five.

Because of the continued concern by school leaders, the Indiana State University study was conducted again in 2016 and 2017. In 2016, 92% of the reporting districts, again, indicated they faced shortages. The results for 2017 found 94% facing shortages. These shortages were experienced fairly equally by public school districts throughout the state. Also, for this study, location such as a rural, suburban, or urban school was not a significant factor.

In the past three years, the area of shortage varied little (See table 1). While special education was the second largest reported shortage area in 2015 (59%), it was the top shortage

area in 2016 (95%) and 2017 (69%). Science was the top shortage area in 2015 (63%) and was second in 2016 (60%) and tied for second with math in 2017 (57%). Three subject areas stood out to me in the study. Elementary teacher shortage was reported by 26% of the districts in 2015 and 2016 and increased to 30% in 2017. Being a school administrator through the 1970s to the early 2000s, I remember having a huge surplus of elementary teachers. The same was true of social studies. Yet a small number of school districts have reported having difficulties finding teachers in this area. The third area noted was the huge shortage increase in Project Lead the Way. It is speculated that while many districts have added this program to their offerings, few teachers have completed the training to teach the program.

Table 1

Instructional Areas of Shortage by Field of Study

Area	2015	2016	2017
Sp. Education	59% (95)	65% (106)	69% (97)
Science	63% (101)	60% (97)	57% (80)
Math	57% (92)	50% (82)	57% (80)
For. Lang.	36% (58)	34% (56)	40% (56)
English	34% (55)	41% (67)	30% (43)
Elem.	26% (42)	26% (43)	30% (43)
Fine Arts	20% (32)	17% (28)	16% (23)
Agriculture	19% (31)	15% (25)	13% (19)
FACS	12% (19)	21% (35)	17% (24)
Business		18% (30)	18% (26)
Social St.	9% (14)	5% (8)	6% (9)
PLTW	2% (3)	26% (42)	30% (42)
Other	7% (11)	13% (21)	13% (19)

While identifying the areas of shortages was important, questions were posed to determine the level of concern districts were facing. So, districts were also asked how many areas of shortage they were experiencing (See table 2). Of the districts reporting shortages, in 2015, 73% of the districts reported three or more shortages. This number dropped slightly in 2016 to 67%, but increased to 72% in 2017.

Table 2

How many shortages did you experience? (% of Districts reporting)

Shortages	2015	2016	2017
1	10%	9%	10%
2	17%	23%	18%
3	24%	25%	23%
4	24%	21%	17%
5	9%	15%	17%
6 or more	16%	6%	15%

Indiana allows for districts to apply for emergency permits to temporarily qualify a teacher to teach in an area which they are not presently licensed. When a district and teacher apply for an emergency permit they must show evidence they are pursuing licensing in the emergency permit area. The percent of districts experiencing shortages having to apply for emergency permits have steadily increased over the three years of survey results. In 2015, 79% of the districts reported applying, while in 2017 this has increased to 88%.

In 2017 the question," Did you struggle to find qualified applicants?" was asked. A total of 92% of the districts responded *yes*. The question was added because whole the number of teachers applying for positions have decreased; the hypothesis was that districts were having pools of applicants who might be less qualified.

So, is Indiana unique it terms of having a teacher shortage? While the facts reported above indicating all but two states are facing teacher shortages, some research might indicate that Indiana does have some unique concerns. The Learning Policy Institute (2016) rated Indiana at 2.17 on a scale of 5.0 in terms of teacher attractiveness. This ranked Indiana 47th, trailing only Arizona (1.5), Colorado (2.0), and Texas (2.0). Based on this

same study, perhaps some of the contributing factors to this ranking could include Indiana's start salary of $34,696 compared to the national average of $36,141. This placed Indiana 38th in wage competitiveness. Indiana also ranked 45th in working conditions, 44th in teacher student ratio, and last in terms of teacher-related job security. Teachers who have left the profession (15.4%) are higher than the national average 21.9%.

New teachers have struggled to pass the new Indiana teacher licensing exams developed by Pearson Education (Laughlin, 2015). According to an article by WTHR-TV (Segall, 2017), in 2015-16, 64% of prospective English teachers failed the Pearson CORE middle school English exam, 68% failed the Pearson CORE middle school math exam, and 82% failed the Pearson CORE Middle School science exam. The same report noted that over 50% of all perspective teachers failed the CORE exams in history, social studies, reading, economics, and geography. While the state has lowered the passing score, some education students find the test extremely difficult. Several states such as Minnesota, Illinois, Arizona, Utah, and Kansas have lowered the requirements to become a teacher (Holodny, 2017). Arizona allows local school administrators to determine teacher certification (Holodyn, 2017). Indiana continues to study this issue and hopes to find solutions to the testing problems.

Another possible outcome of this is the number of teacher license being issued. In 2012-2013 prior to Pearson Education CORE exams being issued for teacher licensing, Indiana issued 5,890 first time teacher licenses. By 2015-2016 the number had dropped to 4,552, a 23% drop (Segall, 2017). While even college professors struggled with the tests, Pearson states they are not to blame as only followed the input of Indiana teachers (Segall, 2017).

During the first five years of teaching approximately 17.3% will leave the profession (Brown, 2015). The same research indicated about 10% will leave after the first year. Teachers with mentors and teachers with starting salaries over $40,000 were more likely to stay. Teachers who began their career after age 30, teachers going through alternative certification programs (such as Teach for America), and teachers who spend their first year in high poverty schools are more likely to leave the profession early (Brown, 2015). Jenson (2015) found that those

same teachers cited the lack of support as the number one reason for leaving teaching.

With many of the teachers from the baby boomer era retiring and many other teachers nearing the end of their careers, more and more teachers are needed. In Indiana, 27.1%19,259) of the teachers have 0-5 years of experience (IDOE, 2017). At the other end of the experience chart, 24.5% (17,352) are at an experience level of 20+ years. This means 51.6% of the teachers in Indiana are in the experience range of leaving the profession. This is at a time when public school enrollment continues to increase, again meaning more teachers are needed (National Center for Education Statistics, 2017).

These are just a few of the issues concerning the Indiana teacher shortage. Many more contributing factors could be considered. The cost of a college education in Indiana teacher training programs is between $80,000-$10,000. Table 3 indicated the annual cost for students who entered four of the universities in Indiana: Ball State University, 2015b; Indiana University, 2015; Indiana State University, 2015; Purdue University, 2015.

Table 3

Annual Costs of Freshmen Incoming Students, 2015-16

Expense	Indiana Univ.	Purdue Univ.	Ball State	Indiana State
Tuition	$10,388	$10,002	$7,698	$8,380
Room/Board	$9,794	$10,030	$8,715	$8,999**
Books/Supplies*	$1,230	$1,220	$1,000	$1,000
Transportation*	$1,030	$210	$100	$130
Personal Costs*	$2,096	$1,570	$3,000	$2,500
Additional Costs			$1,982***	$558***
Total	$24,538	$23,032	$22,495	$21,567

*Estimated
** Does not include meal plan
***Parking Fee
**** Health Center-$152, Residential Tech Fee-120; Student Services Fee-$1,294; University Tech Fee- $336
***** Meal Plan Mid-option- $558
^ Used $300 as expense for total

As seen in Table 4, many careers other than education can offer salaries much higher than the salary of a beginning teacher (National Association of Colleges and Employers, 2017). With the high cost of earning a bachelor's degree, the possibility of paying off student loans, and trying to begin a professional career, a beginning teacher salary may not be as enticing as the earning power of a degree in one of these higher salaried occupations. Many students earning a degree in a specific field can earn more if they do not enter teaching. For example, a teacher shortage area can offer a teacher of business education an average beginning salary of $36,141 compared to a student majoring in business and starting in business at an average beginning salary of $54,124.

Table 4

2017 Average Beginning Salaries for Students
Graduating with a Bachelor's Degree

Occupation	Average Beginning Salary
Business	$54,124
Computer Sciences	$74,183
Engineering	$64,530
Engineering Technologies	$64,530
English Majors	$40,466
Health Profession	$50,564
History Majors	$38,529
Indiana Beginning Teacher	$36,141
Mathematics & Statistics	$53,259
Multi/Interdisciplinary Studies	$54,426
Psychologists	$34,644
Physical Sciences	$47,206
Average Salary for 2017	$51,022

Conclusions

Research suggested that there are several reasons for a teacher shortage. Job security is not great, as the evaluation system for teachers used by most districts provided limited opportunity for failure and can mean possible dismissal after the first two years in not meeting expectations (Jensen, 2014). Young teachers see high stress in the high stakes testing (MSU Today, 2014). Discipline can be a challenge (Jensen, 2014).

Many older teachers have experienced the "burn-out from the high stakes testing, high accountability, and the simple lack of enjoying teaching" (MSU Today, 2014; Resmovits, 2012, Para. 1)

Indiana can be applauded for the blue ribbon panel that was organized to address these issues, but much more has to be done. Indiana needs to recognize it faces a crisis in terms of teacher shortage. Dramatic changes to the system must be able to attract more excellent teachers. Indiana must find ways to encourage more students to enter the teaching profession and find ways to keep good teachers in the profession. To accomplish this task, job satisfaction among teachers have to be increased and the levels of stress have to be decreased. It is time to realize this is a crisis that continues to grow.

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Pre-service Teachers' Use of Content-Area Literacy Instructional Strategies: Integrating Literacy Knowledge and Practice for Struggling Readers

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to present the methods, findings, and implications of a study that examined the effectiveness of an undergraduate reading methods course in providing pre-service teachers with content-area specific literacy strategies designed to support struggling readers in the primary grades. This research provides detailed information on the course design as well as the strategies found to be effective. Data were collected by using a survey instrument to determine if the pre-service teachers were both knowledgeable about and prepared to implement content-specific literacy strategies during practicum. The methods course introduced pre-service teachers to a variety of content-specific literacy strategies that have been found to be effective strategies for helping pre-service teachers enhance struggling readers' literacy skills. The results of this study indicate that college-level reading methods courses for pre-service teachers should explore content-specific strategies in order to help future teachers become familiar with the strategies and learn to use them in their practicum classroom.

Introduction

In conjunction with the State Department of Education's focus on accountability for struggling readers, this study highlights instructional strategies that can be used in content-area literacy instruction to help struggling readers in the primary grades meet rigorous standards for learning. Researchers have

long noted that many barriers impede content-area literacy implementation for struggling readers. Previous research indicates that pre-service teachers need instructional strategies for developing their abilities to teach content-area literacy (Barone, Mallete, & Xu, 2005; Williams, Stafford, Lauer, Hall, & Pollini, 2009). Moreover, recent research suggested that although teachers are trained to implement instructional strategies within their content, they may not feel well equipped to meet the literacy needs of their students (Mallette, Henk, Waggoner, & DeLaney, 2005; Roe, Smith, & Burns, 2011). Hall (2005) found that pre-service teachers tend to be resistant to teaching content-specific literacies. They often believe that they do not have sufficient knowledge, abilities, or preparation for integrating literacy instruction into their content area in ways that support struggling readers' literacy needs.

Researchers and university educators have extolled the value of integrating content-area literacy instructional strategies into the classroom in order to improve content-area learning for struggling readers (Shanahan, 2004; Sturtevant, Duling, & Hall, 2001; Vacca, 2002). The complexity of content-area literacy strategies and the ability to infuse struggling readers with them in order to improve their literacy performance have resulted in renewed calls for teachers to integrate content-area literacy instruction into their teaching (Alvermann, 2001; Biancoarosa & Snow, 2004). Historically, the research on content literacy teaching has focused on the pre-service teacher education context, but researchers have begun to question the capability of these contexts to ensure widespread implementations that will improve the literacy skills of struggling readers in primary grades.

Although the research has demonstrated the behavior of experienced teachers, there is still much to be learned about how university instructors can assist pre-service teachers in learning content-area literacy strategies that are needed to support struggling readers. While university instructors have found that a training/teaching experience allows pre-service teachers to implement a variety of comprehension and fluency strategies under instructor guidance (Duffy & Atkinson, 2001; Fang & Ashley, 2004; Massey, 2003; Morgan, Timmons, & Shaheen, 2006; Timmons & Morgan, 2008), more information is needed about pre-service teachers' experiences in instructing

and, more importantly, about how well pre-service teachers apply content-specific strategies in a teaching situation. The purpose of this study was to examine the effectiveness of an undergraduate reading methods course in providing pre-service teachers with specific content-area literacy strategies designed to support struggling readers in the primary grades.

Research

It is important for every teacher to understand the challenges that reading informational texts presents so that they can help their struggling students meet the common core state standards. The common core state standards emphasize the need for K–12 students to read informational material and learn strategies that can be used with a wide variety of informational texts (McCormick & Zutell, 2014). In their research, Beers & Probst (2016) found that a majority of teachers spend 30 minutes or less having their struggling students read nonfiction in class. In other words, the struggling students who need the most practice in inferential reasoning are getting the least instruction in content-specific literacy skills (Beers & Probst, 2016).

As struggling readers advance through the grades, they spend a great deal of time reading and learning from informational texts. McCormick & Zutell (2014) suggested that teachers should make informational texts an integral part of the lower elementary grades so that students can successfully advance in schools. Since nonfiction texts can present many challenges to many struggling students, pre-service teachers should be well prepared to implement a variety of content-specific literacy strategies that help them understand content-area text as well as the vast array of informational children's books available for students to read. Because informational text is written to convey information and contains a fair amount of specialized vocabulary that is not used in a narrative text, struggling readers need to learn content-specific literacy strategies to figure out the meaning of difficult academic and technical vocabulary in order to retain much of the information (Robert, Vaughn, Fletcher, Stuebing, & Barth, 2013).(McCormick & Zutell, (2014) believed that struggling readers need assistance with following and understanding informational texts, probably more so than with following narratives

Cummins (2013) suggested that many teachers are grappling with the research-based content-area strategies as they begin to implement the common core state standards. It is critical that university instructors introduce aspects of the content-area instructional strategies that can offer both practical guidance for teaching general comprehension strategies for informational text and approaches for addressing stumbling blocks. Keene & Zimmermann (2013) suggested two positive outcomes when teachers are well prepared to teach students how to understand informational texts, rather than lecture with after-the-fact questions; specifically, students (a) develop greater background knowledge, and (b) retain more information. McCormick & Zutell (2014) concurred, stating, "These constructive effects are seen with average readers and with struggling readers when teachers have ample familiarity and experience with the instructional procedures" (p. 472).

Course Overview: A Reading Methods Course for Pre-service Teachers

This study involved examination of a reading methods course for pre-service teachers that was offered for providing practicum experiences in applying research-based content-area strategies, current assessments, methods, and materials in teaching reading to individuals or groups struggling with reading. This course addressed the use of research-based literacy strategies and literacy assessments to determine classroom intervention and instructional strategies. It provided foundational information about stages of reading acquisition, factors that impact reading success or failure, and the nature of reading difficulties. Instructional strategies focused on strategies using teacher modeling to build content-specific skills in young children. The purpose of the practicum course was to design, plan, and implement instruction using a variety of materials (including content-area reading strategies) that address common core standards, ILA guidelines, and the nature of the reading process. The pre-service teachers collaborated with the cooperating teachers and peers in order to provide the optimal literacy environment for students with reading difficulties within the classroom setting. The theme of literacy/reading was stressed throughout every course activity as pre-service

teachers learned how to facilitate elementary children's content-specific literacy skills. The theme of closing the achievement gap was addressed through lesson planning and activities that included support for all learners and accommodations for those learners with special needs.

The pre-service teachers completed 21 hours of field/clinical experiences. First, they provided content-specific literacy instruction in reading to groups of students at a local elementary school. Next, they were expected to prepare a lesson plan in collaboration with the cooperating teachers for each field experience session. Finally, the pre-service teachers reflected on each lesson using the university's teacher performance-analysis lesson plan format and submitted those in their reflective journals.

The Role of the Cooperating Teachers

The literacy practicum course normally required pre-service teachers to work collaboratively with the cooperating teacher and reinforce, apply, and extend the content-area literacy instruction in order to accomplish an effective partnership in the classroom. Because the pre-service teachers possessed complementary skills and training, each co-teacher took the partnership lead in the designing and delivery of content-area literacy instruction. Kent and Simpson (2009) noted that pre-service teachers gain insight into the realities of the class populations during collaboration while also learning valuable lessons in planning, accommodating, and instructing students with reading difficulties. It has been shown that collaboration with classroom teachers empowers pre-service teachers to walk more confidently into their profession because they feel well prepared to meet the needs of all students (Kent & Simpson, 2009).

The Role of the Course Instructor

In the reading methods course, the instructor spent several weeks teaching pre-service teachers how to teach content-specific literacy strategies, including the Frayer Model, anticipation guides, journals, Find Someone Who, close response, and interactive word study/play. Along with explicit strategy instruction, the instructor emphasized a variety of teaching methods, including explanations, modeling, guided

practice, independent practice, and feedback. The instructor exposed pre-service teachers to the techniques, models, and best practices for implementing appropriate content-specific literacy instructional strategies. The instructor also collaborated with school partners to deliberate and discuss effective implementation of content-area literacy strategies. Both pre-service and cooperating teachers on the co-teaching team were responsible for the instructional planning and delivery of content-area literacy instruction. The goal was to improve the educational outcomes of all students through those selected content-specific literacy strategies noted above.

Instructional Strategies That Facilitate Learning across Content Areas

The reading methods course instructor expected the pre-service teachers to be able to provide quality instructional strategies as part of the content-area teaching and learning. For this purpose, the following content-specific literacy strategies were taught to improve the pre-service teachers' instructional practices and to achieve the course objectives.

The Frayer Model
The Frayer Model was used to help students define a concept, determine the attributes of the concept, and determine its relationship to other terms in the most effective way. Often used with struggling readers, the Frayer Model is an effective tool used to teach in the content areas (Roe et al., 2011).

Anticipation Guide
Anticipation guide was used before and after reading to activate students' prior knowledge and to create interest about a new topic. Using this strategy stimulates students' interest before reading and challenges or supports their preconceived ideas about key concepts in the text (McKenna, 2002).

Journals
The journals were used to promote students' higher-order thinking and to support students' reflective literacy skills in learning areas such as math, science, and social studies.

Find Someone Who

The Find Someone Who strategy was used for introducing a new unit, grouping students randomly for cooperative learning, and developing problem-solving and categorizing skills (Kagan & Kagan, 1998). This strategy can be used to practice new vocabulary, to activate background knowledge, or to review concepts. It also encourages struggling readers' to use their logical thinking and inductive/deductive reasoning.

Close Response

An increasing number of classroom teachers have been focusing on the close response strategy in order to amplify the processes involved in understanding literature from a reader-based perspective (Hiebert, 2014). The close response strategy provided students with ownership for their own learning, motivated and engaged them in critical thinking, and provided a context for them to try out, negotiate, and refine their ideas in interaction with others.

Interactive Word Study/Play

Examining each layer of the orthography helps students to see the patterns and derivations in English words, teaches students how to use this word knowledge strategically during writing activities, and helps them decode unfamiliar words while reading (Williams et al., 2009). The primary goal of using interactive word study was to support students' development of alphabetic, pattern, and meaning layers of the orthography. It provides a tool for categorizing word patterns and word meanings.

The Role of the Pre-Service Teacher

According to Vacca, Vacca, & Begoray (2005), "All teachers play a critical role in helping students think and learn with text" (p. 3). The pre-service teachers in this study needed training and ongoing support in the field of content-area literacy strategies so that they could teach their students how to use these literacy strategies and offer them ongoing support as well. The course met three times per week for an hour and a half to discuss the research-based instructional strategies in order to deepen and expand the pre-service teachers' understanding of content-area literacy. The pre-service teachers had opportunities to reflect on

their own teaching experiences and discuss how the concepts were being taught in practice. They tailored their content-area literacy strategies based on new information that was presented and discussed. They wrote how they applied the research-based content-area literacy strategies to meet the objectives and inform the lesson plan that was created. Through course activities, the pre-service teachers gained an understanding of building internal capacity for implementing the common core state standards as well as understanding their role in facilitating implementation.

Methods

The reading methods course that was the basis for this study was offered by a Midwestern University's Department of Early Childhood and Elementary Education. The course was offered for three credit hours and divided into four sections; each had 17 students and the same instructor. The course was offered face-to-face in a traditional classroom at both on-campus and off-campus learning centers. The purpose of the methods course was to integrate language arts (reading, writing, speaking, listening, viewing, visually representing) across the content areas. The pre-service teachers were required to complete a 21-hour field experience, designing and implementing activities that help develop students' literacy across the content areas. Through class activities and field experiences, the pre-service teachers developed an increased awareness of the importance of establishing a learning climate conducive to literacy development for all students and an understanding of methods to integrate the literacy across the curriculum. This was a mid-level literacy-related course that pre-service teachers were required to take before enrolling in their senior-level courses. Sixty-eight pre-service teachers were enrolled into four sections during the spring of 2016, and the age of the enrolled students ranged from 20 to 40 years. Of the 68 undergraduate students, 95% were white, 5% were African American; 7% were male while 93% were female. The pre-service teachers developed an understanding of local, state, and national policies that affect reading and writing instruction, including the common core standards.

The approach of this descriptive study was both qualitative and quantitative in nature. The researchers mainly collected

qualitative and quantitative data by using a survey instrument to determine if the pre-service teachers were both knowledgeable and prepared to implement content-specific literacy strategies during practicum. The researchers deliberated and debated over each survey question in order to make sure the questions contained the researchers' intended meaning. The survey included six close-ended questions and three open-ended questions (see Appendix) that required pre-service teachers to compose narrative responses. The open-ended questions allowed pre-service teachers to answer the questions in their own words and describe unique perspectives about the effectiveness of content-area literacy instructional strategies designed to help struggling readers and writers learn. Ultimately, 15 of the 68 pre-service teachers completed this survey. The qualitative and quantitative examinations of data allowed more insightful responses from the participants.

Results

The purpose of this study was to examine the effectiveness of an undergraduate reading methods course in providing pre-service teachers with content-area specific literacy strategies designed to support struggling readers in the primary grades. Data were collected via a survey instrument used to determine if the pre-service teachers were both knowledgeable about and prepared to implement content-specific literacy strategies during practicum.

Data about the pre-service teachers' familiarity with and use of content-area reading strategies revealed the following results. First, 100% of the pre-service teachers agreed that content-area literacy instructional strategies were effective tools to help struggling readers and writers learn to read expository texts. In addition, 100% of the pre-service teachers agreed that the course instructor helped them become more familiar with content-area literacy instructional strategies. Nearly 94% of the pre-service teachers said that the content-specific strategies were very effective and critical for developing listening, reading, and thinking skills in young students who were struggling in reading and writing. Further, 100% of the pre-service teachers agreed that after completing the course, they began to see

themselves as both knowledgeable about and prepared to implement content-specific literacy strategies.

In this study, the pre-service teachers were asked to implement a number of content-area literacy strategies—specifically, the Frayer Model, anticipation guides, journals, Find Someone Who, close response, and interactive word study/play—and determine which strategies were the most frequently used methods of literacy instruction during their practicum. The pre-service teachers responded that the journals (M=4.00), the Frayer Model (M=3.79), and the anticipation guide (M=3.58) were the three most frequently used methods of literacy instruction. However, 100% of the pre-service teachers found that the Find Someone Who (M=3.50), close response (M=3.31), and interactive word study/play (M=2.93) strategies were just as critical for developing listening, reading, and thinking skills in young students who were struggling in reading.

The pre-service teachers were asked to provide evidence for their responses if they had implemented strategies that were not on the list or if they would be interested in implementing strategies that were not included in the study in their future classrooms. Forty percent of the pre-service teachers said that they would like to implement other strategies—including (a) Write Around, (b) personal dictionaries, (c) personal foldables, (d) write charts, (e) Venn diagrams, (f) back-to-back partners, and (g) Reader's Theater—to help struggling readers conceptualize ideas presented in informational texts. Other researchers have suggested that graphic organizers, charts, foldables, and Reader's Theater are particularly useful tools to internalize processes for recognizing text structures and applying them to informational text (McCormick & Zutell, 2014).

The pre-service teachers were asked to rank the Frayer Model, anticipation guides, journals, Find Someone Who, close response, and interactive word study/play in terms of effectiveness in order to determine which content-area literacy strategies of the six provided the most outstanding help for pre-service teachers (see Figure 1). Seventy-nine percent of the pre-service teachers said that journals were very effective, 14% said they were somewhat effective, and 7% said they were not an effective instructional strategy for developing higher-order thinking processes. Furthermore, 79% of the pre-service

teachers said that the Frayer Model was very effective, 7% said it was somewhat effective, and 14% said it was not an effective method to achieve proficiency with poor readers. Sixty-five percent of the pre-service teachers said that interactive word study/play was very effective, whereas 35% said it was a somewhat effective method of instruction to help students comprehend the meaning of vocabulary words. Additionally, 58% percent of the pre-service teachers said that close response was very effective, while 50% said that Find Someone Who was a very effective method of instruction. However, 100% of the pre-service teachers recognized that these strategies have a significant effect on comprehension of struggling readers. Only 47% of the pre-service teachers said that the anticipation guide was a very effective method of instruction to facilitate comprehension.

The pre-service teachers in this study embedded literacy practices into their content teaching and instructional practices, and 100% of the pre-service teachers felt proficient and understood how to incorporate the practices effectively. The results of this study show that a reading methods course helps pre-service teachers feel better prepared to teach reading and understand the benefits of teaching students reading in their content areas. This finding is consistent with Spor & Schneider's (2001) study, which showed that 70% of teachers indicated that they were most familiar with the content-specific literacy strategies because of the literacy courses taken at the undergraduate level.

Figure 1- The pre-service teachers were asked to rank the Frayer Model, anticipation guides, journals, Find Someone Who, close response, and interactive word study/play in terms of effectiveness in order to determine which content-area literacy strategies of the six provided the most outstanding help for pre-service teachers
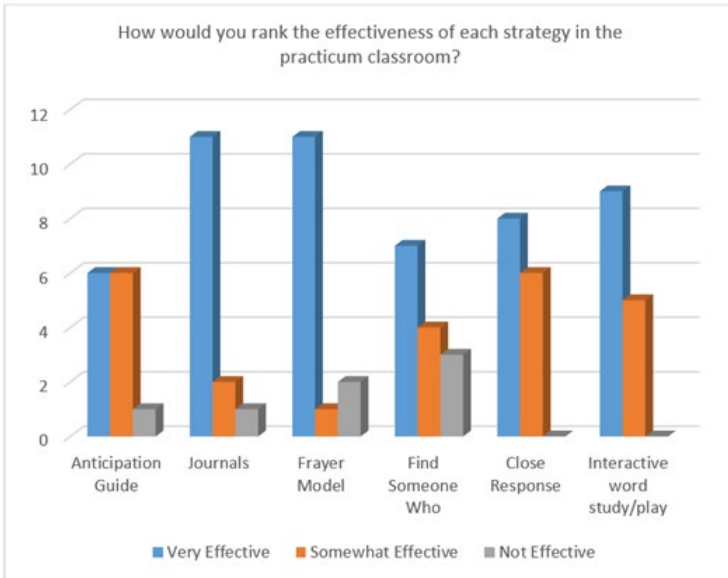
Because of using content-area literacy strategies, the pre-service teachers in this study increased their ability to internalize conceptual understanding about teaching literacy across subject matters. In this study, the Frayer Model, anticipation guides,

journals, Find Someone Who, close response, and interactive word study/play were rated as the best six strategies for providing outstanding help for pre-service teachers. The findings also revealed that the pre-service teachers felt that Write Around, personal dictionaries, personal foldables, write charts, Venn diagrams, back-to-back partners, and Reader's Theater were very effective strategies for improving student comprehension of expository texts.

Recommendations and Implications

Hall (2005) suggested that reading methods courses should focus more on content-area literacy strategies to help pre-service teachers understand the advantages of teaching students reading in their content areas and thus better prepare them for teaching. Manzo, Manzo, & Estes (2001) suggested that all pre-service teachers who will be teaching in a conventional school setting should have information about content-area literacy so that all students can be taught to read better. The results of this study advocate that college-level reading methods courses for pre-service teachers should explore content-specific strategies in order to help them become familiar with the strategies and learn to use the content-area reading strategies in their practicum classroom.

The generalizability of the results of this study, however, is limited due to the small number of participants. A study with a larger sample would allow for more valid conclusions about how struggling readers could be taught to improve their learning of informational texts. A similar study but extended over a longer period of time would generate more participants and would mark an interesting direction for further research. An additional element could be added that examines a case study of struggling readers and determines if content-area reading strategies have significant impact on their reading comprehension. Finally, an extended study might help determine how faculty can support pre-service teachers in order to improve content-area literacy instruction and thus achieve a successful school wide literacy initiative that truly impacts struggling readers' achievement and improves their literacy and learning.

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Values, Heroes, and the Power of Storytelling in Social Studies

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Abstract
This article explores the ambiguous concept of heroes and how their essence affects the teaching of citizenship in social studies. Utilizing working definitions of the concept and the historical evolution of the hero, the transcending values of a hero are offered as a foundation to perpetuate American citizenship education. The mechanics and power of the storytelling strategy are presented as an effective vehicle for advancing specific values of heroes, which in turn advance American citizenship.

Introduction
Citizenship education has always been the purported goal of social studies. Though that concept has been perceived from many angles, its ultimate goal is focused upon people and therefore the promotion of moral and ethical standards that perpetuate a democratic citizenry. Such standards are embodied in humanitarian endeavors that benefit others by inspiring and uniting us as a people (Sanchez, 2014). As social studies educators, we are in an ideal position to help guide our students in identifying with and understanding those standards as American values that reflect the best of what our culture offers (Sanchez, 2000). Such a vital mission might most effectively be approached by examining the endeavors and values of authentic heroes/heroines throughout our extraordinary history who serve as genuine role models for the values, traits, and spirit that are necessary for developing citizenship in the twenty-first century.

The American Experiment has always reserved a special place for such individuals. Indeed, our history and literature abound with such individuals who provide inspiration and hope,

even though the concept itself may be shrouded in ambiguity. But our culture provides an arena for them (Walden, 1986).

The ambiguous nature of the concept nevertheless represents a measure of character against which we evaluate ourselves, even as we question if heroes are actually cultural necessities and products of historical events. But regardless of the possible debate over whether heroes create history or history creates heroes, the fact remains that their perpetual existence seems to indicate that we need them personally and collectively (Sanchez, 2000). Perhaps it is indeed true as Robert Penn Warren (1972) noted that "by a man's hero ye shall know him" (p.4).

What is a Hero?

Inevitable in such a discussion is one's definition of a hero, which must precede any inquiry into the teaching of their values. Historically, the hero concept/definition has always been somewhat ambiguous, which may explain its alleged misconception and possible devaluing to the point that it may no longer mean something definitive, and which may contribute to the social studies educator's possible reluctance to teach the concept. But regardless of historical vagueness, the paradox is that such individuals have always existed which further infers that there has always been a need for them.

So what is a hero? The educator's personal definition is certainly crucial, as it may determine the presence or absence of heroes in a given historical circumstance. Definitions are as numerous as the years they span, yet they may be selectively gleaned for commonalities. Rzadkiewicz (2009) citeed a conventional dictionary definition from Webster's (2004): "Any man admired for his qualities or achievements and regarded as an ideal or model" (p.657). Rolfe (2006) offered a personal definition of one "who performs an extraordinary, spontaneous act of bravery or sacrifice" (p. 1). Hakim (2006) believed that "real heroes are often those who quietly do what is right" (p.9). Sanchez (2010) defined a hero as "a person who performs a voluntary action that symbolizes the moral/ethical standards of the culture" (p.20). Finally, Weber (2009) perceived heroes as "... [Those who] saw a real need for assistance and they rose to the occasion immediately" (p.6).

This recent set of definitions is probably as representative as any era could relate and in one form or another could transcend time in relevance. These diversely stated definitions also share at least five commonalities and implications that may lead to a more concise perception of the concept. The first and perhaps most obvious commonality among the definitions is achievement for the benefit of others. A hero must perform some specified deed that demonstrably helps others. Though such action may be the proverbial extraordinary or humanitarian feat, the hero's intent is to demonstrate- possibly through outstanding effort and/or uncommon ability- what is possible, thus inspiring those of lesser ability to change their behavior and attempt that which they may never have even considered without the hero's inspiration.

A second commonality/implication is that heroism knows no gender/race/age limits. Virtually anyone can be a hero. Historically, the previously ill-perceived status of women and minorities often disqualified them from hero status in their own time. Changing social attitudes in the 20th century have enabled current generations to re-evaluate past generations whose selected individuals can now be viewed as the heroes/heroines that they are.

A third commonality/implication is that a hero's actions may be frequent. In many cases, a person need perform but a single action to merit hero status. Yet in other cases, a hero's actions can be numerous and frequent. This is especially true for those who put their lives on the line on a daily basis to protect us, such as law enforcement officers, firefighters, and the military, as well as the daily sacrifices made by parents.

A fourth commonality/implication is the hero's pre-heroic status: fame is not a prerequisite for heroism and may not necessarily be the end result. In fact, a case to be made is that many heroes are "unsung" and remain so due to the deeply personal regard we have for them and the humbleness with which they regard themselves. He may "simply" be an ordinary person thrust into extraordinary circumstances and rises to the occasion. The hero does not ambitiously concern himself with being a hero and has no desire in being viewed as one. Rather, he is solely focused on achieving an action which may inexplicably put him in peril in order to benefit others, often

without considering pros and cons beforehand; instinct may trump logic (Weber, 2009). But the admiration of others is not an objective of the hero and certainly the heroic sacrifices we experienced and witnessed on 9/11 serve as a prime example of the unsung hero.

A final commonality/implication- and perhaps most importantly- is that the hero's actions exemplify those values which ultimately define a culture's character. In short, he does the right and necessary things which in turn reinforce the transcendental standards which perpetuate the culture and make it better (Sanchez, 2014). This is the essence of operative values, or values in action, and acclaim is dependent upon advancing such values (Lickona, 1991). Thus, the hero serves as a model of and foundation for values/character education (Hechinger, 1987). Social studies educators may innately recognize that the best way to teach values/character is to teach about the people who exemplify them:

In seeking the criteria that define the hero, we do not discover the "perfect" hero who transcends time, for such an individual remains in the context of his or her time. Rather, we find that the hero's values and character transcend the eras: courage, perseverance, truth, responsibility, work ethic, and daring to risk for the benefit of others. To promote a hero is to encourage the adoption of those values (Sanchez; 2000, p.59).

But in this regard, Lickona (1991) warned that a major obstacle for social studies educators to consider is the influence of the late-20th century movement of personalism, which stressed "the worth, dignity, and autonomy of the individual person" (p.9) and emphasized only the self through a "focus on expressing and fulfilling themselves as free individuals" (p.9) rather than fostering the values that perpetuated the culture. This led to resisting role models that legitimized cultural values and promoted a shallow moral relativism in the schools.

The American Hero

Like all cultures, the concept of the American hero similarly has a changing history (Sanchez, 2014). But unlike many other cultures, America's younger history has focused much less on the literary figure and much more upon flesh-and-blood individuals who defined and advanced our ideals. During the

late 18th century as the young republic was taking hold, we valued honor, duty, and patriotic virtue, traits that were necessary to sustain the goals of 1776. Symbolizing these traits were our first real American heroes: George Washington, Samuel Adams, Benjamin Franklin, and Abigail Adams, among others, certainly fulfilled those cultural needs. The 19th century took a different turn as American heroism was defined by humanitarianism, scientific achievement, economic attainment, and political or military exploits. Symbolic of these traits were such as Abraham Lincoln, Harriet Tubman, Clara Barton, Frederick Douglass, and Thomas Edison, to name but a few. Interestingly, this phase of American heroism closely paralleled the European martial perspective personified by Carlyle's 1841 On Heroes, Hero Worship and the Heroic in History (1985), which centered upon military and political figures, such as Cromwell and Frederick the Great. But this same perspective explicitly lost favor during America's 20th century while continuing in Europe. America's 20th century heroes, on the other hand, magnified the physical attributes and sacrificial achievements of humanitarians, the self-made individual of the courageous deed, and the newly-admired sports/media figure. Symbolic of these traits were Babe Ruth, Charles Lindbergh, Jane Addams, Audie Murphy, Martin Luther King, and a multitude of athletes and media stars. For educators, the common-thread presumed a prevailing set of values that was subsequently advanced by such role models.

The American perception of heroes and what we both need and want them to be are intimately interrelated. Over time, the vagueness of the concept has further resulted in the overuse of the term to a great extent. Time and maturity also affect our perception in that we "outgrow" some heroes (Sanchez, 1998). As we change, so may our heroes. New knowledge may also force us to reconsider objects of our worship. In examining the Custer myth, for example, Connell (1984) asserted that:

As values change, so does one's evaluation of the past and one's impression of long gone actors. New myths replace the old. During the nineteenth century [George A. Custer] was vastly admired. Today his image has fallen down in the mud and his middle initial, which stands for Armstrong, could mean Anathema... Thus, from a symbol of courage and sacrifice in the

winning of the West, Custer's image was gradually altered into a symbol of the arrogance and Brutality displayed in the white exploitation... How odd that this consummate thespian's greatest role was a flop (pp.106-107).

Our perceptions must also take into account that heroes cannot be, and do not have to be, perfect, though more than a few have been disastrously construed as such. Time and new information reveal that all possess the proverbial feet of clay. Nonetheless, they all had a steadfast singleness of purpose, sometimes embodied in a single deed against overwhelming odds (such as Lindbergh and Murphy), sometimes over a lifetime of deeds (as with Helen Keller and Mother Teresa). Some made their appearance prematurely in that the context of their heroism was not recognized or acknowledged in their lifetime (as with Abigail Adams, who was basically excluded due to her gender). Some are simply forgotten for unknown reasons (Dr. Tom Dooley, though celebrated briefly in his own time as an embodiment of humanitarianism and self-sacrifice, merits reconsideration). In terms of consistency, few if any can be perceived as total successes. The rather arrogant perception of the mid-to-late 20th century that only "winners" can be heroes has evolved into one tempered by forgiveness and tolerance, especially if the potential hero in question has clearly risked everything against the odds or has been enveloped in the martyrdom of death (Warren, 1972).

A Social Studies Mission

As noted earlier, to promote a hero is to encourage the adoption of the hero's values and character (Sanchez, 2000). Educationally, the paradox of sorts is that it is not really an individual that is promoted but rather his values. An individual must stay in the context of his time but his values transcend time. Thus for the social studies educator, the underlying issue becomes one of values education. The need to teach values and character in the social studies classroom is perhaps more important in post-9/11 America than at any time in our history and it purportedly remains a high priority in our standards-based mission (Sanchez, 2000). Yet the continuing debate over values education is too frequently deadlocked, even derailed, over the lack of agreement about whose values or what values should be

taught. In many respects, this is a fruitless argument in that an "acceptable" core of values can be embraced: goodness, truth, responsibility, compassion, perseverance, work ethic, and courage, among others, are symbolic of the American character. Few would deny their cultural importance or their worth and priority to be taught in our educational institutions.

Crucial to our mission, however, is that our goal must not be indoctrination that simply justifies a status quo. Rather, we must promote and encourage their moral/ethical growth through a multidimensional examination of the positive and imperfect. We must not attempt to purify or romanticize our morality by "removing our warts." The consequence of such would be a culture drained of its very essence, leaving cynicism in its place. It is therefore vital for social studies educators to present a critical self-examination of both the positive and negative aspects of the hero's life in order to promote the understanding that human imperfections are an integral part of the hero's character and may very well serve to enhance the fabric of heroism itself (Sanchez, 2010).

If our students are to become the reflective and concerned citizens we need them to be, we must guide them in choosing and evaluating proper heroic models whose values can fulfill those citizenship obligations. The social studies mission thus becomes one of choosing those heroes who best model our moral/ethical heritage, engage and dialogue with students in a context-based examination of their exploits, and note the extent to which their prescribed values transcend time and become relevant for the contemporary student. Students will thus come to recognize not only that certain values are fundamental and not time-restricted, but also the heroic potential in themselves.

An Effective Strategy

Social studies deals with the human experience. Indeed, its bellwether discipline, history, relates the story of the human experience through the trials and tribulations of individuals and groups. Identifying an effective strategy to teach that experience will continue to be an ongoing debate among practitioners, but certainly among the oldest and battle-tested approaches is the storytelling strategy (Sanchez, 2014). As a vehicle for teaching about heroes, storytelling empowers the imagination through the

humanization of heretofore one-dimensional individuals, reinforcing value perspectives, and stimulating critical thinking skills (Sanchez, 2010). Such stories establish a connection between the historical and the personal by examining values and actions initially in context but in such a dynamic way as to transcend time for the contemporary student (Sanchez, 2014).

Storytelling is as old as civilization itself. From the earliest cave paintings, through the invention of the written word and its mass production, to 21st century visual media that further enhance them, stories have always served to explain life, preserve history, and ensure the continuity of cultures by bringing together human lives through a sense of belonging and understanding (Abrahamson, 1998). In that regard, the storyteller has always held a prestigious position by sharing, entertaining, of course, and teaching by passing on the ways of wisdom. Stories are a way we make sense of our lives. In telling them, we inform ourselves as to who we are, how we perceive the world, and what we value most (Sanchez, 2014).

Educators both in and out of the conventional classroom have long depended upon storytelling as an historical foundation for teaching character education through life lessons (Zabel, 1991). All of the great and legendary philosophers and teachers used stories to instruct, to make illustration, and to guide their charges. But what is the actual benefit to those young people who listen to the stories we may tell? Certainly more than mere entertainment. For the listener, storytelling reduces depersonalization and serves as a link to more meaningful learning within an historical context. And for the teacher/storyteller, it encourages listeners to view our history as the collection of great stories that it is; that we are the tellers of our culture's tales (Egan, 1989).

The power of the strategy is simplistic but astonishing. Tellers and listeners find a reflection of themselves in a story by mutually creating an interaction and understanding between them through a deeply personal perspective, perhaps prompting the listener to think critically, perhaps encouraging the modeling of a positive behavior; very beneficial outcomes that the reading of the conventional textbook cannot offer and should discourage our overreliance on it (Sanchez & Mills, 2005).

The American Experience is a body of stories within a story that relate not only an adventure but also values that transcend time itself through the conceptualization and understanding of an individual's values that carry relevant truths (Sanchez, 2014). It is against the values and lessons found in historical stories that social studies educators have the opportunity to help guide our students as they inevitably evaluate the landscape of American democracy itself, the very character of American culture, and, most importantly to them, the American value perspectives for their own individual lives (Leming, 1996).

What is It?

From a formal perspective, Sanchez (2014) defined storytelling as "the art form of using vocal skills of language, gestures, facial expressions, physical movement, and artifacts to effectively communicate a historical or cultural account in order to promote an audience's visual imagery in a co-creative process" (p.24). From a more practical perspective, the teacher/storyteller verbally and passionately relates a tale through voice, gestures, and artifacts by looking into the eyes of listeners and co-creating the story with them in a virtual energy exchange between teller and listener, resulting in a true human connection that promotes the listener to personally experience the story.

The effective storyteller strives to sustain the appeal and relevance of a story through the connecting and transcending values inherent in the tale. To achieve this mission, however, requires attention to physical elements of the strategy as well as technical elements.

Sanchez (2014) notes that the purely physical elements or "mechanics" of storytelling involve the concepts of memorization (which must take into consideration length and attention span of the target audience), voice inflection (a monotone will quickly kill even the most exciting story on paper), eye contact (which should be more or less constant to promote ownership and partnership in this co-creative endeavor), facial expressions (giving life to the tale and interpreting its multiple moods), gesturing with hands and arms (to establish the story's psychological atmosphere and give it stability), pacing and pausing (for dramatic effect and the mental digestion of the

story), and physical movement (for plot-building and keeping the flow of the story going).

The technical elements of a story relate the critical importance of organization; namely, an effective storyteller- no matter how skilled- needs a good story to begin with. A "good" story is thus one that has key elements that serve to organize it for the teller to sustain its appeal and relevance. Kennedy (1998) offered a general blueprint of five key elements that a "good" historical story needs to have in its pre-telling stage. These include characterization (allowing the teller to imbue the characters with dimension as the humans that they are), connections (establishing the relationship between a character and the larger context of historical/personal significance), conflict (a tense situation leading to value choices), change (the resolution of the conflict due to those value choices), and catharsis (the release of tension that restores a balance of emotion).

Of crucial importance to the ultimate success of the storytelling strategy, however, is the avoidance of a most commonly made mistake: because historical stories deal with people and invariably have moral/value perspectives by their very nature, they cannot simply be told without a follow-up on the obligation to more closely examine and share those perspectives (Sanchez, 2014). Our purpose in telling stories is to create those conditions enabling our students to understand the importance of values and their relevance to American citizenship (Common, 1987). Only then can our students fully comprehend American values for their own benefit and that lead to the perpetuation of our constitutional republic.

The Stories

The final consideration concerns the previously-mentioned "good" stories of heroes/heroines waiting to be told. Where to find them is both the proverbial good news and bad news. The good news is that they abound, but the bad news is that we will not generally find them in the textbook to which too many teachers are virtually chained. To find the good and accurate stories that we seek, we must go beyond the conventional history textbook, which by its nature is too broad and shallow to comprehensively include dimensional and developed stories of

heroes/heroines (Sanchez, 2010). The textbook, in short, does not relate history as the real experiences of real people. All it is and all it can ever be is a chronological dash through time that begs to be slowed down, filled in, and explained by us (Sanchez, 2014).

Storytelling offers a viable alternative if we pursue more effective sources that offer detailed, accurate, and balanced treatments of heroes/heroines, something that the textbook simply cannot do. Trade books by noted historians such as David McCullough, Joseph Ellis, Howard Jones, Walter Isaacson, Peter Lillback, Milton Meltzer, and Russell Freedman, for example, present social studies educators with the comprehensive foundation for rousing stories for every grade level. But practitioners are admittedly more likely to seek shorter pre-written treatments, finding their compact nature more viable for the confines of a classroom period. It is this perspective that led the author to write a recent book comprised of seventeen stories of American heroes/heroines written specifically for teacher/storytellers to tell during a conventional class period (Sanchez, 2014).

The aforementioned stories represent an endeavor to highlight a common set of values that historically symbolize and advance the American Experience. Regardless of the possible ambiguity of the hero concept, these individuals demonstrate values in action, serving as models of and foundation for values/character education (Lickona, 1991). While each story stresses the "worth, dignity, and autonomy of the individual person" (Lickona, 1991, p.9), each is also the story of a flawed individual. Such a multi-dimensional presentation is crucial for contemporary students to understand in terms of negating the "perfect" hero, for such does not exist. Only through the positive and negative aspects of the hero's life can we promote the understanding that human imperfections are an integral part of our lives and may further enhance the very fabric of heroism for our own lives (Sanchez, 2010). While these individuals are merely human and must remain in the context of their times, their values and character transcend the eras by advancing the American Experiment and are thus as relevant to us today as they were in their own times (Sanchez, 2000).

Each has rightfully earned his/her heroic place in our history by exhibiting the values of the American pantheon, values that reflect our ideals and dreams, values that endure to guide and inspire us. Many are already considered quintessential heroes, yet all considered themselves ordinary people thrust into extraordinary circumstances requiring values choices that all people must make. They simply took the proverbial next step and rose to the occasion.

The cornerstone of values that symbolize and perpetuate the American Experiment were certainly not invented by Americans. Obviously other cultures possess them as well, but it can be argued that American heroes/heroines have best exemplified them.

The value of courage is an American stalwart. The power of its horizon ranges from standing up for what one believes to the ultimate sacrifice for the benefit of others. Quite often, we also find perseverance in our heroes/heroines to bolster that courage. Our history is resplendent with such figures, including John and Abigail Adams, Harriet Tubman, Abraham Lincoln, Frederick Douglass, Jackie Robinson, and Martin Luther King.

Compassion and improving the human condition serve to cultivate the human spirit. These values have deftly advanced America by placing priority on humanity, something our modern world desperately needs during this harrowing time of global violence. American models for such still serve as powerful beacons if we follow the examples of Clara Barton, Jane Addams, and Dr. Tom Dooley.

Work ethic and ingenuity have been criticized as a current generational shortcoming in the turmoil of societal change. If we are to perpetuate the republic, those values must be promoted and restored. To that end, we can be inspired by the lives of Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Edison, and the Wright Brothers.

While the value of responsibility arguably begins in the home, its ultimate influence on a nation's course originates in an individual's determination to simply do what is right and be willing to pay the price for doing same. Our best examples perhaps come in the guise of public servants who understood that their mission was to represent their constituents by putting their interests ahead of their own. In this current age of political disillusionment, there are those who remind us that responsible

statesmen did exist. The quintessential George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, David Crockett, and Harry Truman are the embodiments of a value that put America on a level of greatness that we must recapture and retain.

Conclusion

American heroes/heroines are a reminder of who we were, are, and wish to be. The burdens they bore were by choice and not mandate. As such, their values and character inspire us to grow beyond our self-imposed limitations by adopting the heroic within ourselves. By examining their lives, we can realize that their values were not of a bygone age, but rather that they continually symbolize the essence and timelessness of the American Experience.

Stories that relate their strengths and flaws not only promote their heroic exploits but further allow us to analyze the relevance of their values and character in relation to our own lives. The teacher/storyteller can thus lead students to uncover those cornerstone values that transcend time and uniquely define us as American; that heroes/heroines inspire by example and promote the heroic potential within us all. Theirs are tales worth telling" (p. 49).

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The Perceptions of Five Academic Deans Regarding Work-Life Balance

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Abstract
Academic deans are entrusted with a multitude of responsibilities that literally go with the territory of serving in such a post. In accordance with their duties, deans regularly are required to manage a plethora of tasks and to stay connected with a diverse group of faculty as well as an ever-changing student population within their respective schools of learning. With all of the noted challenges inherent to survive and thrive, how can academic deans possibly achieve a work-life balance? This study focused on the perceptions of five academic deans at a small Christian college in the Midwest regarding work-life balance.

Introduction
Researchers have noted that to be successful as a college/university dean, one must embrace that chaos will often ensue in the natural course of business (Leaming, 2003; Lucas, 2000; Wilk, 2016). Responding to the needs of faculty, students, and administrators alike can be an arduous assignment to say the very least. According to Leaming (2003), "About the time you think you've dealt with every known problem, a new one crops up. And unless you possess considerable leadership skills, you will not likely survive as a chair or dean unless you can master the people-handling problems that you face day in and day out" (p. 217). With that in mind, critical management skills (including measures of diplomacy and discretion) are needed to dedicate a sufficient amount of energy to tackling such issues head on.

For any leader to be effective, they must attend to various aspects of life- not just in the performance of their job duties but also in the total context of their overall daily living. However,

based on the complexities of generational attitudes and the various backgrounds of respective individuals, the concept of achieving a work-life balance (while well intentioned) has become a catch all phrase that has different connotations for everyone.

The concept of balancing work and personal life obligations such as to one's own health, one's family, and to recreational and spiritual needs has been of some interest to researchers (Rue, Ibrahim & Byars, 2016; Wilk, 2016; Matos & Galinsky, 2011; Gómez-Mejía, Balkin, & Cardy, 2007; Ackers & El-Sawad, 2006; Wexley & Latham, 2002). Carvell (1980) pointed out that "occupational stress can be caused by extraordinary workloads, too much responsibility, or conflicts in a person's occupational roles…stress is a part of nearly every type of job found in business and industry" (p. 160). Lockwood (2003) defined work-life balance in several contexts, but notably in terms of the employee she identifies it as the "dilemma of managing work obligations and personal/family responsibilities" (p. 1).

To further complicate the matter, both the work of deans and faculty members has been described by countless educators as a lonely pursuit. According to Lucas (2000), "Affirmation of value and acknowledgement that faculty members have made a difference are scarce commodities in higher education" (p. 20). As a result, self-motivation and an inner drive to thrive are key ingredients that are important coping mechanisms. Lucas added, "It is when faculty feel they are not valued anywhere that stagnation occurs both professionally and personally and they just "put in their time and try to find some satisfaction outside the institution" (Lucas, 2000, p. 20). In the view of this researcher, such a predicament only hastens to accentuate the need for deans and faculty to attain and maintain some measure of work-life balance in their daily lives.

Context of the Study

To discover the perceptions of work-life balance at a Christian university in the Midwest, five academic deans were interviewed. The following questions were posed to those five individuals.

- They were asked to describe their responsibilities and to outline a typical day in the completion of their role(s).

- They were asked about how they prioritized those duties.
- They were asked about their family and personal hobbies and interests.
- They were asked to appraise their level of cell phone usage both during the day and at night and to comment on their availability to their constituent groups. Along this line, their policy and utilization of office hours was covered in this exchange. Fifth, the next topic involved stress management.
- They were asked about their own techniques for coping as well as their impressions about how well their colleagues handled stressful situations.
- They were asked to assess how understanding their family was with regard to calendar conflicts between family occasions and university functions and deanship tasks. In this area, the deans were also asked to describe how they felt upon having to indicate to others about such conflicts.
- Finally, each interviewee was asked about whether they believed that achieving or maintaining a work-life balance was important to them.

Methodology

In advance of the interview, the deans were contacted and were made aware of the questions that would be asked. Consent was granted by the deans for their responses to be recorded. The interviews (averaging thirty minutes in length) were conducted in their respective offices during a four-day period in early October, 2016. The method used to document the interviews was done via voice memos on a standard iPhone SE (64 GB), the device owned by the researcher. Subsequently, as a quality measure to ensure safety of the material, the memos were airdropped to an iPad and were emailed as a backup procedure in cases where the file size would allow. To safeguard the anonymity of the deans in the collection of the research, pseudonyms have been ascribed to each interviewee both in the following section and in the concluding reference listing.

Findings

Subject number 1 – Dr. Polly Stravinski

Dr. Polly Stravinski has had the distinction during her seven-year tenure of serving as academic dean of a particular school and also for a period of time as provost for the same institution. In terms of her responsibilities, Dr. Stravinski confessed that when she served as dean the role was an all-encompassing position involving the full share of administrative duties, accreditation reporting tasks, and professional organization meetings with the faculty unable to share the work due to being so overloaded in their teaching roles. According to Stravinski, "Back then, the dean did everything."

In terms of how to prioritize her work, the basic thrust expressed was that it was largely deadline determinative. She added that she was helped greatly by having had a mentor who had been the previous dean. That mentoring experience enabled Dr. Stravinski to acquire a realistic job preview of the required tasks and deadlines.

Family life remained quite important to Dr. Stravinski. During her deanship, she and her husband raised two daughters and subsequently grandkids as well. Fortunately, she remarked that she was grateful that they all attended the same church which allowed Sunday to be a concentrated family day. Admittedly, Dr. Stravinski confessed that her biggest weakness throughout her tenure has been an inability to say no when asked to take on additional responsibilities. Yet, she maintained that being able to say no should be an absolute characteristic inherent to all who seek to become a dean and should even be included in their job description.

Regarding cell phone usage, she utilized a cell phone and admitted that usage had increased through the years. When travelling between campuses, she used her cell phone to check email. However, while on the main campus having access to her office, she did not use it nearly as much. In fact, she tried to refrain from using it on the weekends at all – unless receiving a call from family or faculty.

During her time serving as dean, cell phone usage (especially in the function as a "smartphone") was not as prevalent as it became later. Her preferred mode of usage primarily consisted of talking and checking emails, while she only

engaged in texting with one family member who favors that form of communication. During important meetings and at certain times of day, she opted to silence her phone and was typically selective about answering depending on the nature of the call and the person identified by the caller id function. Generally speaking, if it is a work-related call, Dr. Stravinski conveyed that she always answered it. She characterized her availability as 24/7 prior to retirement.

As a faculty member at this point in her service, she fulfilled the requirements of regular office hours in order to be compliant to the requirements set forth in the faculty handbook. However, since many of her graduate students were employed elsewhere during the day, she worked a nontraditional schedule in order to be available to meet the needs of the student population in which she served. During those required office hours, she typically caught up on coursework, attended required meetings, and stayed connected with colleagues.

In terms of managing stress, she engaged in yoga as well as breathing exercises for relaxation. Also, she enjoyed reading for pleasure whenever time allowed. Additionally, she mentioned a particular fascination with Sudoku. During her time as dean though, she admitted that it was often quite difficult to manage stress. As far as her colleagues go, through the years they have enjoyed spending time together on a regular basis. In fact, daily lunches became a much-needed ritual that provided chances to forge and build on their bonds as well as frequently providing laughter.

Regarding calendar conflicts between personal events and university functions, her family was always very supportive. Nevertheless, she characterized that responsibility of having to tell someone that she could not attend a particular meeting as "disappointing", and indicated that she continued to feel "torn" between the two at times when intersections occurred.

In summary, Dr. Stravinski confided that she believed wholeheartedly in seeking to find a work-life balance. At times, that challenge was more difficult than others whether it be during her tenure as a dean, as provost, and/or as a faculty member. She concluded with the admission that she has been "trying for 40+ years and still haven't done it right," but it was very important for her to continue to attempt to do so.

Subject number 2 – Dr. Stanley DeJesus

Dr. Stanley DeJesus served as dean of a school of learning at a Christian university in the Midwest. Dr. DeJesus continued to carry a teaching load of six credits per semester, even though he admitted that at many schools deans are not expected to teach. DeJesus relished staying in the classroom because in his words, "It keeps me sharp, keeps me on the cutting edge, and keeps me interacting with people."

How did Dr. DeJesus determine what's most important? "If you asked me that a year ago, it would be the tyranny of the urgent," DeJesus responded. "I think the things that get my priority are things that directly affect how we deliver our curriculum to our students and not just in the short term but how we are going to continue to deliver…"

For Dr. DeJesus, a typical day was salted with meetings (with administration, with other deans, with faculty members) and classes. Since he had a passion for teaching in the classroom, those experiences brought about added adrenaline and excitement for Dr. DeJesus. Consequently, he usually attempted to schedule something to help him wind down thus fostering a smooth transition back into the administrative gear following an exhilarating teaching session.

Family life was rather unique for Dr. DeJesus at this stage of his career. An admitted empty nester, his four children and grandchildren were spread out from New Hampshire to Florida. In fact, he and his wife lived in another state and he commuted for compressed periods at a time (including nights and weekends) to accomplish his work before taking long weekends to return home. Occasionally, his wife travelled to the main campus at times when she found it possible.

Regarding cell phone usage, he confessed that he did not utilize his phone as much as others do but still estimated being on his phone about one hour per day. Family factors influenced his desire to check his phone, but otherwise he was not particularly motivated to check his phone in an incessant manner. He considered himself very reachable and his office phone had a message that directed callers to contact him on his cell phone if they had a need and he could not be reached at that time.

Regarding office hours, he did feel more anchored to the office than he should be and that it might behoove him to get out of the office more to be more available to students residing elsewhere and especially to those who were not able to come to campus during traditionally accepted hours. He believed his availability to students was effective, but with more flexibility in terms of schedule he suggested that he would be in an even better position to build on those relationships. Although he could envision a time where conditions might morph into somewhat of a different arrangement for availability, he still supported the merits of a face-to-face approach and recognized the great value of relationship building in person as a best practice.

DeJesus admitted that managing stress was an ongoing challenge. He was a big proponent of reflection, self-talk, and humor. He confided that big picture ideas that have a bearing on the future of the university were areas that potentially offered stressful elements for him to manage. When something happens that could be a possible stressor, DeJesus typically preferred to take a few days, think it through, and get some rest. Upon returning to the issue refreshed, he believed he was in a better position to revisit the issue from the better vantage point.

Regarding calendar conflicts between personal events and university functions, his family was very gracious in understanding those issues.   Looking back, he recognized how difficult it was with conflicts and with the vast geographical distances to visit his children and grandchildren as much as desired. Moving forward, he hoped to be able to schedule more time to see them. Admittedly, he was bothered by having conflicts that required him to choose due to his fear of chaos and disorganization. Rather, he greatly preferred an ordered, organized approach in his role and in his life in general.

In summary, Dr. DeJesus believed in the concept of work-life balance and considered it to be "super important." In fact, in reflecting on the high levels of stress that accompanied his chosen profession and in the deanship role, he did a lot of thinking about the next stage of how to shift the scales even more toward family time.

Subject number 3 – Dr. Denny Donnelly

Dr. Denny Donnelly was employed in two roles of leadership at a Christian university in the Midwest. First, as with the other subjects who were interviewed, Donnelly served as dean of a school of learning and had been in that post for five plus years. Second, Donnelly also was the current provost at the same institution, a post he assumed a mere five months ago. Previously, he was the vice provost for over two years and moved into his current position upon the retirement of his predecessor.

Dr. Donnelly related that his deanship responsibilities had to change in the fulfillment of his duties as provost. In the past, he dealt with the day-to-day issues from faculty such as whether they had the resources necessary to be successful, student issues that accompanied the deanship role, and accreditation issues. At this point based on his advancement to provost, he delegated some of those tasks to two other faculty members in that school. That was an extremely beneficial move for Dr. Donnelly, although he admitted that he still "functioned as the interface with accreditation" even while his colleagues assisted him in sharing the load. In both roles in managing his time, he believed that "being present in the building had its good points." On the other hand, he respected the need to balance that presence in both offices or risk the danger of his day being entirely "co-opted by what is going on" in one particular place.

How did Dr. Donnelly decide what was most important in the administration of his duties in dual roles? Of course, that presented a daily challenge. In fact, he often described the provost role as "trying to take a drink from a fire hydrant and you get all you can and have to be okay with whatever falls on the ground." He constantly assessed what has to be done and was comfortable in saying no when necessary. First thing in the morning, a non-negotiable part of his schedule was to meet with his staff to pray and read scripture each and every day.

An interesting perspective was shared at this point in the interview. In the wearing of multiple "hats", Dr. Donnelly mentioned that sometimes he was forced to make a decision in support of some measure as a dean that he had to disagree with in his role as provost and vice versa. Of course, he admitted that this was a very fine line to walk but he regularly attempted to

balance those initiatives in a spirit of fairness to all of the constituents in which he deals.

Family life was extremely important to Dr. Donnelly. His wife was a music teacher at a K-12 public school in the region. They had two daughters, one in junior high and the other in elementary school in the third grade. Work/life balance weighed heavily on his mind as he intentionally scheduled specific activities with the family each and every day. In fact, he insisted that there were certain times at home that were protected from interruptions where work was "out of bounds."

Regarding cell phone usage, he conceded that it might be somewhat misleading to just refer to time on the cell phone because he used an IPad extensively as well and considered that to be an extension of his smartphone utilization. Outside of office time, he spent around 90 minutes per day using his cell phone and even more than that on occasion. In addition to calls, on an average day he received approximately 250 emails.

Donnelly appreciated the assistance of secretaries at both his offices who guarded his time very well. With that being said, there were seven people working with him at the university who were allowed to add appointments to his calendar without his approval. Therefore, he did everything possible to be as efficient in time management as possible given those circumstances and the workload that accompanied the positions he held.

In terms of managing stress, Dr. Donnelly believed that one of the key issues involved is to know yourself and know your limits. He considered himself to be self-reflective (and respected the fact that there was a time for silence) and enjoyed being involved in church activities as well. Also, he liked being with people and considered himself an extrovert who enjoyed the company of others. Additionally, he loved to engage in fishing, hunting, boating, outdoor activities with his family, and was an avid St. Louis Cardinals baseball fan.

Regarding calendar conflicts between personal events and university functions, Dr. Donnelly believed that while it is a constant challenge, he and his family did a good job of trying to find an appropriate balance. With that being said, he acknowledged that it can be difficult when juggling his travel schedule and assorted responsibilities. Again, he suggested that he was not afraid to say no when needed to accommodate his

family especially if it occurred after a particularly labor-intensive period of university events and/or based on an extensive travel schedule representing the school.

In summary, Dr. Denny Donnelly understood and validated the need for a work-life balance. Looking back, something he read in graduate school left an indelible impression that "someone who is constantly too busy to do the most important things in their life is lazy." He echoed that sentiment and added that it was not a sign that you are a "go getter" but rather it was sign that you are too lazy to take control. Achieving a work/life balance required him to employ time management skills regularly and to do all he could to take control rather than let things happen. Dr. Donnelly insisted that is an intentional choice.

Subject number 4 – Dr. Candace Rowinski

Dr. Candace Rowinski recently became dean of a particular school upon the retirement of her predecessor last May. Upon being hired by the previous dean as a faculty member four years ago, she worked closely with her dean on projects and learned many of the deanship responsibilities from him during that time. Additionally, she has served as the director of a multi-site adult learning program for the duration of her time at the university. She has learned how to incorporate multitasking in the performance of her duties. Dr. Rowinski summed up the hectic nature of the transition for her over the past few months as "fast and furious."

In terms of prioritizing her work, Rowinski endorsed the analogy that she "tries to get to the fires that are burning the brightest every day, so to speak." In so doing, she has negotiated staff and faculty turnover issues, dealt with curriculum and classroom concerns, clarified expectations for the newly hired faculty members who themselves had dual roles and responsibilities in other departments across campus, and attempted to adhere to the administrative portions and accreditation reporting tasks inherent to her post. To be successful, she favored the use of a running to do list to assist her in mapping out her plan of action.

Family life was extremely important to Dr. Rowinski. Her husband was employed as a college educator at another institution and they have one son who is in middle school. Both

parents aimed to be quite active in raising their son. In light of their various duties, they employed the use of a family calendar (prominently displayed on the refrigerator) to keep each other informed on upcoming events and tasks.

Regarding cell phone usage, Dr. Rowinski relied heavily on her smartphone. For multiple reasons, she kept it accessible throughout the day. From the family vantage point, her home is approximately one hour from her main campus office. So, if there is an issue that needed to be addressed on the home front concerning her son, her husband, or her parents who live near them, she could be reached easily via her cell phone.

From the work perspective, she utilized her phone regularly to retrieve and respond to emails. Since her duties have covered multiple campuses in various geographical locations throughout the state, it was important for Dr. Rowinski to be reached by personnel from all across the university community. Additionally, she tried to keep her cell phone nearby for a two-hour window (from 5-7 p.m.) in the evening since that is the timeframe when evening classes were getting started in the multi-site adult program and critical, time sensitive needs could have developed requiring her attention and approval during that interval.

As a faculty member and dean, she regularly kept office hours. She worked closely with her assistant who had an office down the hall in their building as well as forged relationships with other faculty members. Upon the hiring of the two new members who have dual responsibilities earlier this fall, she had to set the table properly with both of them to ensure that they kept office hours in addition to the fulfillment of their tasks at the other locations.

In terms of managing stress, she was a big believer in exercise for stress relief. While in a perfect world she might do even more, she averaged workouts four to five times per week. As dean, she was keenly aware of the stress difficulties of her faculty and strongly desired for them to find ways to manage stress as well. She was quick to point out that each faculty member handled stress relief mechanisms differently based on their hobbies and interests. In answer to that question, she was able to identify the specific methods that each of them gravitated toward in the management of stress. In her view, investing in

her faculty was a great measure to reinforce the positive work culture.

Regarding calendar conflicts between personal events and university functions, Dr. Rowinski believed her family to be very supportive. At the beginning of each semester, they strived to calendar events together and attempted to find some margin. As a general rule, they tried to find balance where at least one parent could attend all of their son's activities to show their support. She characterized the burden of having to tell someone (work or family) that she cannot make an event as "tough." She recognized a potential weakness is that she always wants to "do it all."

In summary, Dr. Rowinski wanted to be a good teacher in the classroom and a good dean worthy of the confidence placed in her by her predecessor. Also, she sought to be a good mom and a good wife. Even with the best of intentions, sometimes those responsibilities overlapped and that was unfortunate when it occurred. Without question, she struggled to juggle those conflicts which she referred to as the "working mom guilt" and earnestly desired to have a work-life balance.

Subject number 5 – Dr. Clarice Culliver

Dr. Clarice Culliver served as dean of a school of learning at a Christian university in the Midwest. Having been at the university since 1994, she occupied her deanship post for most of the last decade. Initially, she was hired to be the university registrar and simultaneously got involved in university teaching as well.

Dr. Culliver juggled her role as dean while maintaining a full teaching load. One main function of her position was to serve as a point of contact connecting faculty with administration. She envisioned her role as similar to a "captain of a ship." Primarily in her leadership style, she elicited help from her faculty and enjoyed collaboration. She favored the approach of "catching flies with honey – not vinegar" and spoke with affection about her relationships with faculty and administration alike.

How did Dr. Culliver determine what's most important? She admitted that she is always seeking to balance classes with deanship duties. Occasionally, deadlines dictated what must be done and in what order. In the particular school where she

serves as dean, there are eight different departments. While one of those departments was closely related to the area in which she teaches, many of those eight were not specialties related to her expertise. In those instances, she leaned heavily on those respective department heads to make recommendations and she empowered them to do their jobs while offering help when needed.

For Dr. Culliver, since there are multiple diverse departments that are comprised within her school, she did not have the secondary accreditation reporting requirements to occupy her time that many of her fellow deans were forced to manage. Given that reality, she was able to teach more than she might otherwise be able to do if faced with those additional administrative complexities. However, her school worked in concert with another school which did have those accreditation realities based on content areas, so occasionally those issues intersected. Even so, she still had to comply with the general requirements for accreditation with the Higher Learning Commission, but she was not alone in facing those issues as dean since it is a university wide focus.

Family life was important to Dr. Culliver. Her husband was also employed in education as a dean at another institution. She has one daughter who was a senior at the university in which she was employed.

Regarding cell phone usage, she has an Android phone but confessed that she did not like to utilize it very often. When her daughter is away, she kept it close by for obvious reasons. She received texts and messages from her sisters at times. When teaching, she mostly avoided the use of her smartphone, unless she is in need of the clock feature to tell time. She did not give out her cell phone number very often, claiming about her number that "very few people actually have it." She liked to be in control of who has her number and preferred her privacy at times.

Regarding office hours, she believed in office time but recognized the blend of her class duties and deanship responsibilities was a challenge on a daily basis. She noticed that many students did not come by her office these days as they once did, opting instead to send an email message as their preferred mode of communication.

In terms of managing stress, Dr. Culliver confessed that "it's not always easy." Between teaching, grading papers, and deanship duties, she recognized that not everything is going to get done in any given day. She enjoyed working out, liked to travel, and had animals at home that captivated her attention. When something bothers her, she liked to "talk it out and not let it bottle up inside." At times, she had to coach her faculty who appeared stressed with high teaching loads and she wanted them to feel appreciated.

Regarding calendar conflicts between personal events and university functions, the major issue that required a balance for her was when she had to grade papers at home. Otherwise, there were certain times on the calendar that were expected to be particularly challenging. Dr. Culliver admitted that it bothered her when she had to break an appointment or was unable to attend a function or class.

In summary, Dr. Culliver strongly favored a work-life balance. She loved her job, but wished she had more help in accomplishing her tasks. Fortunately, she loved teaching and inspiring students and loved spending time with her colleagues which made it all worthwhile.

Conclusion

As related by each of the five deans at this particular Christian university in the Midwest, the duties performed were extensive, diverse and complex. The above research demonstrated the need for flexibility to achieve stated goals. From the questions posed, it was reasonable to conclude that all deans found their work to be valuable. Also, each dean expressed their love for their family and they earnestly desired to make family a priority by spending time with them. With the increasing inclusion of technology into everyday life, it was also apparent from responses that although these deans incorporated technology (cell phones and associated devices) into their routines, it was vital for the preponderance of them to establish some clearly defined boundaries on usage in order to prevent excessive intrusions and to reasonably accommodate the intersection of two worlds: work and family.

All agreed that a work-life balance was a desirable formula to pursue. Most if not all readily conceded the challenge was

infinitely more difficult to attain in programming calendars, meeting office obligations and in managing stress. At both ends of the spectrum, two deans expressed contrary views with respect to "saying no." While one dean struggled with saying no, another dean indicated no difficulty in doing so. An additional respondent voiced a concern not mentioned by the others which motivated their decisions- a fear of disorganization and chaos. Prior research commented on these issues particularly and the findings here were consistent for the most part except for the one respondent's preference toward an ordered approach rather than embracing the chaos that accompanied the work as outlined earlier (Leaming, 2003; Lucas, 2000).

Although their backgrounds were quite different, each of these academic deans expressed their intent to seek improvement in balancing their work and family. Further research could be done to determine if perceptions of academic deans in other settings mirrored these findings in a replicated design. For the context of this study though, most respondents declared that they had not found such a balance at the time of the interview. Yet, as their journey continued, perhaps it was only a matter of time.

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