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Monarch Butterfly on a Sunflower

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Brent Mabon
Ninette, Manitoba

INTRODUCTION BY THE EDITOR

Marion Terry, Ph.D.

Welcome to the twenty-seventh issue of the *BU Journal of Graduate Studies in Education*, devoted to rural, northern, and Aboriginal education. Our authors for volume 13, issue 2, are current and past BU Faculty of Education graduate students. I thank these educators for sharing their work. Together, they have produced a collection of articles that examine various topics of interest to Manitoba educators.

- Barbara Engel's research report examines the role of metacognition in teachers' curriculum-making processes.
- Hannah Beghin's refereed article discusses instructional strategies to accommodate children with autism in general classrooms.
- Hoanglan Cardinal's refereed article considers ways to develop positive school climates for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer (GBTQ) students.
- David Hurley's refereed article recommends using professional development and collaboration structures to battle the stress that leads to teacher burnout.
- Brett McNabb's refereed article attributes the development of a growth mindset in mathematics to the roles played by students' parents, teachers, and peers.
- Tanya Polasek's refereed article offers teachers advice for helping helicopter parents to curb their over-involvement in high school students' education.
- Duncan White's refereed article challenges educators to reflect and refine their practice in order to improve equity in education.
- Shannon Fullerton's refereed article extolls using land-as-text outdoor classroom instruction that supports a paradigm shift to Indigenous learning in school.
- Jayne Cliplef's refereed article examines ways to overcome the barriers to successful anti-bullying interventions.
- Landon White's refereed article focuses on the responsibility of principals to serve as instructional leaders in their schools.
- Nicole Harwood's refereed article suggests ways to address the social, emotional, and behavioural changes that accompany transitions to high school.

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RESEARCH REPORT

Teacher Metacognition: Teacher as Curriculum Maker with Metacognition at the Centre of the Classroom

Barbara Engel

This study examined teacher awareness and teacher use of metacognitive practices in Canadian schools within Manitoba. The literature on teacher metacognition was limited because the majority of the literature centred on student metacognition and there was a call for more research regarding teacher metacognition. Four participants from urban and rural Manitoban schools, who had taken Reading Apprenticeship (RA) training, were interviewed in this narrative inquiry. This research created reflective stories through an analysis of transcripts of interviews. The Metacognitive Awareness Inventory (MAI) tool activated the participants' thinking, which helped to tune their reflections and the qualitative transcripts of the interviews, revealing trends in metacognitive vocabulary and reflective story. The primary research question was as follows: How does a teacher's understanding of metacognition influence the development of metacognitive skills and metacognitive conversations in classroom practices and routines?

The participants' reflections highlighted six threads of teacher practices, employing metacognitive strategies and metacognitive conversations in the classroom that helped to increase their perceptions of student achievement. The analysis wove together the three main ways teachers influence their students' metacognition, as found in the literature review, with the six threads of teacher metacognitive practices that were found in the current research. This created four unique tapestries revealing evidence that the teachers' understanding of metacognition can influence the development of metacognitive skills in their practices and routines.

The conclusion is that a teacher's awareness around metacognitive strategies did influence the participants' decision making within planning, classroom set up, and daily routines. Therefore, a teacher's understanding of metacognition can influence the development of metacognitive skills and metacognitive conversations in classroom practices and routines. This research suggests that collaborative work around improving metacognitive strategies and conversations within the classroom would greatly benefit teachers' personal practical knowledge. Therefore, more training is recommended to help to solidify and improve the use of metacognitive strategies and conversations, increasing the personal practical knowledge of teachers. It is recommended that secondary institutions' courses and professional development opportunities within the school divisions of Manitoba build collaborative efficacy around implementing metacognitive strategies. This study's results have reinforced the fact that metacognitive strategies and conversations can be successful agents in helping students achieve higher quality standards from the teachers' perspectives. However, further research is recommended that includes teachers who have not taken RA training; more extensive studies are required to seek teachers' understanding of metacognitive practices.

Weaving the Tapestry

Six threads weave a tapestry of how metacognitive strategies and conversations support deep learning, helping to increase teachers' perceptions of student achievement. Teachers are readying students for learning which activates existing schema in students. Teachers are more explicit regarding student learning goals. Teachers are checking for understanding as formative assessment. Teachers are asking more impactful questions. Teachers are creating equality. Teachers are increasing their awareness and ability to employ gradual release of learning.

First Thread:
Teachers are readying students for learning by activating existing schema.

The participants' reflection revealed their perspective that the importance of readiness to learn had a direct correlation to student achievement. They each spoke of how they helped to develop their students' mental processes or cognitive dimension through problem-solving strategies (Schoenbach et al., 2012). They all spoke of knowing who their disengaged or reluctant and engaged or eager students were, which helped them to recognize and regulate their thinking in real time (Hughes, 2017). Their reflections unveiled students' refining individual schema (Kallio et al., 2017). Within their reflections, the participants identified the social dimension, the "community building in the classroom, including recognizing their resources brought by each member and developing a safe environment for students to be open about their reading difficulties" (Schoenbach et al., 2012, p.24). Moreover, each teacher's reflection revealed the need to make connections personally and to help scaffold the readiness to learn, in order to ensure that students were engaging their existing schema and sharing what they knew. A connection must be noted to the personal and knowledge-building dimensions within Reading Apprenticeship training as working to benefit students.

Addison voiced her growth in understanding procedural and conditional knowledge. She spoke of knowing the KWL (Know, Want to know, and Learn) strategy for years, but she had not fully employed it until the year after her RA training. She also distinguished that she had a more profound understanding of how she would be using it to benefit the students: "I see why this activation matters and how I can productively use this to benefit students." Addison's metacognitive reflections around the importance of activation, and specifically her more in-depth understanding of the metacognitive process, improved the engagement of her students with the KWL strategy. She planned, monitored, and managed her thinking around the use of the activation for the students' benefit. This reflection revealed Addison's understanding that activating students' existing schema was needed to inform her students' metacognition better.

All participants displayed their knowledge of cognition through their use of activating the existing schema of their students. They displayed their ability to support regulation of cognition when they scaffolded time for individual thinking. They facilitated an increased knowledge building through the metacognitive conversations and pairing, and small-group sharing of ideas. Their activation routines accommodated fixups of misunderstandings and, therefore, they saw better success in writing after their lessons.

These reflections around the importance of activation were echoed by all participants, which displayed their willingness to apply metacognitive strategies to activate and better prepare students' readiness to learn because they, the teachers, understood the importance of having knowledge about cognition and also modelling the regulation of cognition so to help student achievement.

These reflections demonstrate how the first thread (Teachers are readying student for learning by activating existing schema) has been influenced by teacher understanding of self-regulated learning, which shapes the metacognitive space for students.

Second Thread:
Teachers are more explicit regarding student learning goals.

Interestingly, the reflections around sharing one's metacognition with the class revealed the participants' awareness of how much they were thinking and how quickly they were thinking (comprehension monitoring and evaluation), which created Ah-Ha moments that led them to understand why sharing metacognition helped to make explicit learning goals. The participants' reflections demonstrated a connection to Abromitis' (1994) findings that metacognition encourages "flexible and adaptive thinking" and "modification" (p. 5), which in these reflections helped teachers to define explicit learning goals. These reflections bring to light the idea that the

curriculum-as-plan (Aoki, 1993), and a teacher's understanding of what makes success, might need a shift or change in the next moments of curriculum-as-lived (Aoki, 1993). Many of the shared reflections revealed a learning and recognition to increase the practice of metacognition in order to expand on teachers' personal practical knowledge while teaching students to read challenging texts in their classrooms.

Daniella's reflection of how her inferencing skills were fast and automatic reflects Karpicke and Grimaldi's (2013) research around retrieval-practice. She spoke to how a majority of her students had missed the tone of an article and, had they not taken the time to share their thinking before their independent work, the students would have missed an essential aspect of the article, causing them possible confusion and frustration. However, she was able to shift and be explicit about the students' learning goals because she accommodated and planned for shared metacognition and group sharing of ideas. Daniella's shift in explicit learning goals came from her ability to hear misconceptions, which then directed the next steps. Scaffolding her students, in order to focus on the author's tone, deepened their understanding and their writing.

Bradan revealed how overwhelming tracking metacognition could be as he reflected on one of his first attempts of sharing his metacognition. This exercise of metacognition led him to a more concise sharing of one aspect of his metacognition, as noted by Ozturk (2017), who spoke of highlighting awareness of cognitive activities and utilizing them most effectively. Bradan then gave the students multiple experiences for practising that one metacognitive aspect of questioning when reading. He had an awareness of how his metacognition was "knowledge-intensive" (Kallio et al., 2015, p. 102); therefore, he applied the dimensions taught during his Reading Apprenticeship training, in order to more powerfully increase the students' capacity. He adjusted the initial goals, and became more explicit and concise, which gave his students more opportunities for success in tracking their thinking.

These reflections demonstrate how the second thread (Teachers are more explicit regarding student learning goals) is influenced by two themes as highlighted in the literature: teachers modelling their thinking to support students' understanding, and teachers understanding the self-regulated learning that shapes the metacognitive space for students.

Third Thread:
Teachers are checking for understanding as a formative assessment.

Each reflection demonstrated a form of metacognitive conversation in real time, which spiralled the students' thinking deeper into subject-specific criteria, connecting their existing schema to new knowledge and thereby deepening their understanding and increasing their success right then (Hughes, 2017; Bing-You et al., 2017; Akman and Alagöz, 2018). Utilizing metacognitive conversation in the classroom makes implicit thoughts explicit (Jones, 2007), and there is "a focus on reading and talking about reading during classroom lessons (which) gives teachers the opportunity to mentor students in the reasoning and problem-solving skills they need to master" (Schoenbach et al., 2012 p. 24). More specifically, participants shared that metacognitive conversations enable teachers to hear more student ideas and more student perspectives, and they hear misconceptions early so that metacognitive conversations can guide students to fix their misunderstanding.

Addison observed, "I just feel like they can hear so many more ideas and perspectives than they would if they stayed in their head all the time," empowering them to deepen their understanding. Bradan reflected that including metacognition "slows the whole process down," which he saw as a benefit because "you can see more where students are." Christopher recalled, "I go through the thinking process to get different tools, or I need to learn a technique or look at this idea up to get a deeper connection. I think the same is true in the classroom. The students must think about this for themselves. My job is trying to get them to just think about that a bit more often." Daniella's story of a misconception highlighted the importance of checking for understanding in order to deepen learning. Her story revealed how the personal

and social dimensions worked together to support context and knowledge-building. Several students had a misunderstanding around the word Indian within a short story they were reading. She stated, “They were so confused about what an Indian meant in this story.” A safe exchange ensued, with moments of humour and light-heartedness that facilitated a deeper understanding of the author's intent and specific language use. This formative assessment helped to engineer a respectful conversation around word choice, meaning, and context. Had this exchange of ideas not occurred, many students would have written a response completely missing the central theme of the story. Danielle's ability to use formative assessment created moments of listening and sharing, which solidified meaning for many students.

These reflections demonstrate how the third thread (Teachers are checking for understanding as a formative assessment) is interwoven with the teacher awareness of reading strategies broadening the reading experiences for students, and with the teacher understanding of self-regulated learning shaping the metacognitive process for students.

Fourth Thread:
Teachers are asking more impactful questions.

Each participant designed learning moments that wove powerful text and students’ thinking by posing questions and creating metacognitive conversations. Conversations focused on how or why students think, probing the students to discover new connections. The teachers were not only modelling the metacognitive process, but they were also doing as Jones (2007) advocated, making real-time connections, encouraging students to consider how or why they accept or reject ideas. This shift in teaching stance has moved the teacher to a facilitator of discovery. Addison and Bradan asked their students to reflect during metacognitive conversations, encouraging the students to check themselves for understanding. Daniella spent significant time improving her questions in order to activate deeper thinking by her students. Her questions helped to shift her students' stance, placing them central in the inquiry at the inception of discovering how or why they would make choices as they engaged in literature elements. Christopher spoke of the messiness of discovering, and how creative it feels when students can be in the moment, making choices that deepen their understanding.

This thread of impactful questions comes from an increased awareness of the importance of metacognition within the personal practical knowledge of each research participant. Each participant believed that heightening students' metacognitive awareness increased the students' achievement. This reflects the assertion of Akman and Alagöz (2018) that building knowledge within students requires activating both the cognitive regulation skills and the cognitive knowledge.

The participants reflected on how they modelled metacognitive conversations with probing questions, empowering their students to participate more deeply in their knowledge building. The participants spoke of their role shifting away from the giver of knowledge to the facilitator of student engagement. This shift was not created by happenstance, but with intention. Each participant spoke of engaging the students to activate their existing schema, not just determining what students already knew, but ensuring that students were aware of why they were thinking in that particular way.

These reflections demonstrate how the fourth thread (Teachers are asking more impactful questions) has been influenced by teacher understanding of how self-regulated learning shapes the metacognitive space for students.

Fifth Thread:
Teachers are creating equality.

The RA training actively engages teachers in understanding the importance of the social domain. This understanding acknowledges Charles McMurry’s powerful declaration that “the

teacher is working at the very smelting process, the point of difficulty where new, uncomprehending knowledge meets this tumult of the child's mind" (Clandinin, & Connelly, 1992, p. 378), which when matched with metacognitive conversations and strategies provides equality for students. The social dimension entailed the research participants creating safe places for learners to share their idea production, "integrating the relationship between literacy and power" and developing voice around a text (Schoenbach et al., 2012, p. 25). By modelling and employing metacognitive conversations and encouraging tracking of student metacognition, each participant created equality in the classroom. Each participant spoke of a safe place where students could critically and creatively think, problem solve, make mistakes, and speak through their thinking free of ridicule (Aktag et al., 2017). Each participant spoke of the routines that built student confidence, allowing everyone to express their voice and building a learning community that heard multiple perspectives. Each participant spoke of class conversations' importance, which ensured that each voice was heard, making procedures and norms that supported individual thinking and small- and large-group thinking. The common thread between the participants was that they each believed in building a positive social community. This reflects Borko et al. (2000) and Richmond et al.'s (2017) premise that learning is an active and social construction. Students have more achievement in shared experiences. Active learning is more powerful than direct instruction.

Bradan's reflection spoke of the diverse needs that were impacted when purposefully building routines around the social dimension. He believed that his students needed this social learning. He had two separate and different class situations that required the scaffolding of how to think and share thinking: the first being a chatty few who monopolized conversations, and the second being an extremely quiet group. In both scenarios, he used his routines of think, pair, share to create equitable learning moments for all. In the one year, this routine helped to quiet some voices and share learning through equitable distribution of voice. In the previous year, this routine built confidence in a group of extremely quiet thinkers.

Daniella spoke of the tracking routines that supported individual and group thinking, which led to better student writing responses. Her scaffolding of productive activation followed by individual reading was supported by her modelling of how to track and support meaningful connections between writers' intent and student understanding. Students were encouraged to share thinking through pairs, small-group and large-group conversations. Students made posters together and then presented their ideas. Students engaged in gallery walks, adding to their thinking and building a deeper connection between the author's choice and readers' understanding, which then supported student writing with evidence of more in-depth understanding.

These reflections demonstrate how the fifth thread (Teachers creating equality has been influenced by teachers modelling their thinking), supporting students' understanding and teachers' awareness of reading strategies, broadened the reading experiences for students. Each research participant used the thread of building a social climate to create equality within the classroom. This required each participant to have the will and confidence to release control, facilitating their students to create their new knowledge through guided, purposeful practices.

Sixth Thread:
Teachers are increasing their awareness and ability to employ gradual release of learning.

The four participants in this study believed that by scaffolding metacognitive strategies, they were building the skills needed for students to gain control over their learning, releasing them to engage fully in the act of shifting between their knowledge about cognition and their ability to regulate their cognition. This goal of releasing the students was evident in all of the participants' perfect learning scenarios. The participants had the goal of creating a space where their students could engage in conversations, creating inquiry that was supported by a social

culture within their classroom. These active learning lessons reflect the research by Richmond et al. (2017), which found that active learning instruction produces higher academic performance than lessons that use direct instruction as formal pedagogy. Schoenbach et al. (2012) expressed how this all starts with the teachers modelling their metacognition to demystify the thinking process for students. Then, following modelling comes gradual release to the student with social supports, echoing Borko et al.'s (2000) research that spoke to teachers releasing control to students. Gradual release implies that the teachers build reading and thinking routines that employ the students to engage their thinking with the teacher and other peers, with the eventual goal of having students lead learning scenarios. This reflects the notions of Fletcher's (2018) research on "help seeking" strategies within the classroom. The participants spoke of students becoming more independent and the feeling created within the classroom when gradual release was successful.

Christopher spoke to the loss of time when the learning space was full of engaged and responsive learners. He reflected on how he felt a little out of his comfort zone, releasing control and having different stations, with students getting up and moving around the classroom. However, he concluded with his delight in how engaged the students were. Bradan recalled that his routines of clarifying conversations were happening without him: students probed each other deeper into their inquiries. Addison spoke to the release of the learning process, reflecting on when the students take total control of their learning and claim their learning. Daniella's metacognition around her teaching practice shifted. "My professional reading has helped me build bridges within the thinking process: critical thinking, higher-level thinking, reading and writing. I see the value of setting up the students and then releasing them right into the metacognitive funnel." All of these reflections echo the research of Borko et al. (2000) that the teachers they were following "talked about 'giving up control' to students as they organized the learning environments in their classrooms to enable students to take a more active role in their own learning" (p. 296). These experiential learning scenarios highlighted how the participants' use of metacognitive strategies and metacognitive conversations within their classrooms led their students to increased control over their learning.

These reflections demonstrated how the sixth thread (Teachers are increasing their awareness and ability to employ gradual release of learning) is influenced by the teachers' understanding of how self-regulated learning shapes the metacognitive space for students.

This research found that teachers elicit powerful strategies to improve students' engagement with the use of metacognitive strategies or conversations, which then led to their students' meeting or exceeding the teachers' perceived ideas of success.

Recommendations

These research findings have been conclusive. Teacher awareness around metacognitive strategies influenced the participants' decision making within planning, classroom set up, and daily routines. Therefore, a teacher's understanding of metacognition does influence the development of metacognitive skills and metacognitive conversations in classroom practices and routines. The findings also had indicators that implementing metacognitive practices within a classroom increases a teacher's perception of student achievement because these practices make visible the students' thinking, therefore making visible the students' journey to new understandings.

However, this research had a limited quota sample with four participants selected from a group of teachers with Reading Apprenticeship (RA) training. This purposive sampling had a unique perspective because of their training. This RA training created a sampling bias because these teachers had an insight to understanding the significance of student engagement, and each had a unique mastery in creating a class climate that promoted connections between prior knowledge and new knowledge.

The involvement in this study also affected the attitudes that the teachers had toward student engagement. They voiced how the participation in this research heightened their reflective practice, which made them more aware of their influence and therefore enhanced their practices during this research period. Thus, it is thought that the following recommendations for practice and further research be made.

Recommendations for Practice

Three out of four participants expressed that their personal practical knowledge was enhanced by the initial RA training and the collaborative efficacy with other staff members, focusing on improving metacognitive strategies and conversations within the classroom. The fourth participant expressed that although she was not in a formal group, she believed that metacognitive practices were known by a majority of staff. This research suggests that collaborative work around improving metacognitive strategies and conversations within the classroom would greatly benefit teachers' personal practical knowledge.

Three out of the four participants expressed a desire to retake RA training. Their reflections indicated that their practices were influenced by the training and then again by being involved with this research. They expressed that the initial training was good because it created a shift within their teaching stance. However, they thought that more training would help to solidify and improve their use of metacognitive strategies and conversations, increasing their personal practical knowledge.

There was also discussion around highlighting the need to take metacognition awareness and strategies during the preparation of becoming a teacher within secondary education institutions. Therefore, it is recommended to build collaborative efficacy around implementing metacognitive strategies within secondary institutions' courses and within professional development opportunities in the school divisions of Manitoba. Educational leaders would play a critical role in putting this recommendation into practice.

Recommendations for Further Research

These qualitative research findings were limited to reflections from participants. A deeper understanding of teacher awareness around metacognition could be accomplished if quantitative data from the MAI were used to compare the teachers' awareness of metacognition with their reflections on their practices.

However, these research findings identified the positive impact of the metacognitive strategies and metacognitive conversations within the qualitative reflections of teachers who revealed their perspective that "students are able to catch up in critical reading skills if provided with additional, sustained instruction in small, focused instructional groups" (Torgesen et al., 2008, p. 63). Therefore, it could be stated that the results of this study improved teaching methods, which in terms of the participants' perspectives improved students' reading skills and knowledge building. This study's results have reinforced the fact that metacognitive strategies and conversations can be successful agents in helping students achieve higher quality standards from the teachers' perspectives. However, further research is recommended that includes not just teachers who have taken RA training; more extensive studies are required to seek teachers' understanding of metacognitive practices.

Further research should also include teachers who have no official training in metacognitive strategies so that a control group can better identify teacher awareness of metacognition and the implementation of strategies based on teacher awareness.

This research also was specific to tracking the teachers' metacognition without the voices of the students. Further research is needed to elicit metacognition from both the teachers and the students in order to appreciate the impact that metacognitive strategies and conversations have on student achievement.

Conclusion

Through each tapestry woven in this research, it is apparent that metacognitive practices and conversations impact teacher planning, class set-up, and routines, thereby positively impacting teachers' personal practical knowledge.

Therefore, the current study's focus on teacher awareness should open an avenue in the literature, which has so far been mostly engaged around students' metacognition as it relates to their academic performance. Making the teachers' tapestry of metacognition visible has revealed the relationship between modelling metacognition and increasing teachers' perceptions of student achievement. This upholds that "high quality instruction enables students of all ages to construct domain-specific and domain-general strategies, metacognitive knowledge about themselves and their cognitive skills, and how to better regulate their cognition" (Schraw, 1998, p. 123). Therefore, we must promote that high-quality instruction includes metacognitive strategies and conversations.

The literature review spoke to a need to investigate teacher metacognition. Now the research findings support the need for more research regarding teachers as experts in implementing metacognitive strategies and metacognitive conversations within their classrooms, increasing their personal practical knowledge.

About the Researcher

Barbara Engel fosters a respectful and inclusive learning environment in her grade two/three Strathmillan classroom. She is creative and dedicated to developing and implementing school programming to enhance student achievement. She obtained her M.Ed/B.Mus. and B.Ed. at Brandon University. She is continually inspired by her partner Rick and sons Weslee and Owen.

REFEREED ARTICLES

The Benefits of Inclusion for Students on the Autism Spectrum

Hannah Beghin

Abstract

Children with autism have a right to be within inclusive classrooms. There are many benefits to having inclusive classrooms, including reducing stigma surrounding autism, creating respectful relationships between all students within a classroom, teaching all students how to act positively with others, and increasing knowledge of autism. To best create an inclusive classroom, teachers should continue differentiating instruction, should teach to a student's interests and needs, and should meet with family members of students with autism to better understand the needs of the child. All students can benefit from being in an inclusive classroom setting, and teachers often already implement teaching strategies that would best support a child with autism.

Inclusion in a general classroom is a positive option for children with autism. Inclusion has often been a highly debated topic, and if schools are prepared students with autism should be able to be in inclusive settings. Most students on the autism spectrum are included within general classrooms, because they have the right to be taught in an inclusive classroom (Andre et al., 2019). Inclusion can benefit all children, including peers within the classroom. Inclusion of students with autism in the general classroom can minimize stigma against autism while students learn how to communicate appropriately with one another. Having a student with autism in a general classroom also reduces negativity associated with autism, and children will learn how to work with one another. Inclusive classroom settings teach students to build relationships with all peers. Teachers already practise beneficial differentiation techniques for all students, and it should be continued. For teachers to feel comfortable with successfully integrating a student with autism in a general classroom, it would be beneficial for the teacher and the family to meet prior to school starting. Teachers can consider teaching to the students' interests and abilities so that a student with autism is successful in an inclusive classroom. Teachers should ensure that they have some education on autism so that they can successfully integrate a child with special needs in the classroom setting, because a more knowledgeable teacher is more comfortable with inclusion. Inclusion can benefit more than just a child with autism, and should be an option for that child.

Benefits of Inclusion

Inclusion can be defined in many ways. Inclusion can benefit all students and staff within a school, positive attitudes toward autism will make inclusion more successful for a child with autism, and inclusion can teach all students how to have positive relationships with one another. Inclusion can be defined in many ways, but the premise behind most definitions remains the same in that inclusion ensures that all students are included in learning (Jung et al., 2019). Inclusion is an educational program practice that integrates all levels of learners in one classroom and is the "process of overcoming the barriers limiting the participation of all learners" (Meindl et al., 2020, p. 1). Children should have access to inclusion, because the practice of inclusion can benefit all learners (Campbell, 2016). There are many different variations of the definition of inclusion, but, inclusion is allowing all students to learn in social environments together.

Inclusion benefits all students within a classroom by minimizing stereotypes while encouraging learning to occur between all peers. Stigma often follows students who have autism, and ensuring that students with autism are included within regular classrooms can increase the knowledge around autism, along with creating more positive attitudes toward it (Anthony et al., 2020). Inclusion is beneficial for all students because classrooms "provide valuable academic resources and social learning opportunities" (Ge & Zhang, 2019, p. 1), which encourages all students to learn the same curricular outcomes while also learning from their peers in the form of group work. Students with autism who are in inclusive classrooms demonstrate "better cognitive and adaptive characteristics" (Rattaz et al., 2019, p. 464), because they are able to observe and practise interacting with their peers, and their peers are more likely to respond in a socially appropriate way (Vivanti et al., 2019). Inclusion can benefit not only students who are on the autism spectrum, but other students too.

Attitudes play a prominent role in whether inclusion is beneficial for students with autism. While many students with autism have lower academic motivation (Ge & Zhang, 2019), it is up to a caring teacher to support and create positive relationships with them (Connor & Cavendish, 2018). Caring, motivational, and positive teachers can create learning environments that all students benefit from, and wherein students feel safe enough to interact with others. Inclusion in classrooms increases overall knowledge of autism. If social programs such as Sesame Street and Autism: See Amazing in All children (Anthony et al., 2020) can reduce stigma related to autism and increase positive behaviours surrounding autism, then having students in an inclusive classroom can bring even more knowledge to all students, which can have a positive effect on attitudes. It has been found that students with autism who were in regular classrooms "had less stereotypies compared to children included in special classes" (Rattaz et al., 2019). Inclusion can create respectful and positive environments wherein all students learn how to interact and work together, which benefits all children (Meindl et al., 2020) and makes students more positive toward autism. When students with autism learn how to interact positively with others by being in inclusive classrooms, stigma related to autism will be reduced because peers will be learning about autism while interacting positively. Inclusion benefits all students, because students learn how to be respectful and positive, and to work appropriately with all types of students, which improves attitudes toward autism.

If students want to have success in inclusive settings, they will need to learn how to have positive relationships with all students. If students with autism are in regular classrooms, there will be fewer stereotypes as children of all abilities interact, which can eventually build better relationships with peers (Rattaz et al., 2019). Peers hold an important role in showing a child with autism how to interact properly with others, and as those interactions continue, there is an improvement in social acceptance, interaction, and communication (Campbell, 2016). Students learn from a young age how to be accepting of others, and research shows that social interactions can decrease stigma related to autism while improving knowledge of autism (Anthony et al., 2020). Relationships can be made only when there is no stigma, and if a student with autism is to be fully included within the classroom, being socially exposed to other students is the best way to end possible stigma. Students with autism would benefit from being in an inclusive classroom because they will learn how to build social relationships, while also minimizing stigma so that peer relationships can be formed. There are many different definitions of inclusion, yet they all state that all students are included in learning. Inclusion can benefit staff and students within a school, create positive attitudes toward autism which can create more inclusive classrooms, and teach students how to have proper relationships with one another.

Preparing an Inclusive Classroom for a Child with Autism

Teachers should continue to implement differentiation for students, and should meet with families to communicate about appropriate practices for students with autism. Students may benefit from being taught to their interests and abilities, and teachers should ensure that they

have training on autism. Teachers often implement differentiation, along with many good teaching practices and accommodations that benefit all students. When including students with autism in a general classroom, students have indicated that they like when the teacher creates support plans that are unique to their personal needs (Connor & Cavendish, 2018). Differentiating learning can include being a multi-modal teacher because it is important for all students, and it is important for teachers to provide visual and auditory instruction to ensure that all students are able to receive instruction, especially if there are learners with autism (Connor & Cavendish, 2018). When teachers diversify the curriculum for students who have autism, there are more positive attitudes toward the teacher and the inclusive classroom from the student with autism (Larcombe et al., 2019). Students with autism also state that having more time to complete assignments, having access to another room for test taking, receiving notes prior to learning, and being able to use technology is beneficial for learning (Accardo et al., 2019). Students with autism also thrive on receiving individual affirmation from a teacher, and are more engaged in class when a teacher praises them individually (Andre et al., 2019). Teachers have already been implementing many forms of personalized differentiation for students, and should continue to do so for the benefit of all students.

Prior to a student with autism being enrolled within an inclusive classroom, it would be in the best interest for the teacher, support staff, parents, and child to meet. The relationship between a student with autism and the teacher is more beneficial and positive if the teacher gets to know the student and their needs (Rudy, 2020). Teachers may find it useful to ask students for their input of what supports they want, or what they find to be effective (Accardo et al., 2019). Often teachers learn about students by reading their educational records, but if a teacher wants to learn more about a student with autism, it may be best to ask that student or their family to provide what works for them (Kluth, 2010). Families are able to share what teaching procedures are most effective for that child, too (Kluth, 2010), which will make planning for that student easier on the teacher. Effectively collaborating and communicating with families can better prepare a child for inclusion within a classroom (Rattaz et al., 2019). Communication can create better understanding between school and family, and can create a clear vision of what education is to look like for a child with autism. Prior to a student with autism being enrolled in a classroom or school, it would be beneficial for the student, family, and teacher to meet in order to make the transition into an inclusive classroom more successful.

Students with autism can be taught to their interests and abilities, which will make them more successful in inclusive classroom settings. Differentiation of instruction is suggested for all students, and can include differentiation of the curriculum (Strogilos et al., 2018). Differentiation of the curriculum encourages teachers to teach to students' interests, which makes learning in an inclusive setting more beneficial for that student. To have a successful inclusive classroom for a student with autism, it would be beneficial for teachers to teach to a child's interests and strengths (Kluth, 2010). For students with autism to be socially engaged within an inclusive classroom, teachers could provide choice for students by allowing them to choose assignments that match their personal abilities and interests (Andre et al., 2019), while still having the opportunity to converse with their peers about the topics at hand. Teachers are encouraged to differentiate within inclusive classrooms, in order to ensure that all students are being taught to the best of their abilities, because it "can be fruitful to encourage interests of autistic children" (Wood, 2018, p. 126) so that those students can be engaged and successful in their learning.

Teachers need training to have increased knowledge and understanding on how to ensure that a student with autism is part of a successful inclusive classroom. Training for teachers is crucial, because many teachers feel underprepared to teach a child with autism (Meindl et al., 2020), and education will better prepare teachers to instruct a child with autism. Parents and therapists have found that when students have a positive experience at school, it is often due to the teachers and educational assistants with whom the students work (Larcombe et al., 2019). Teachers who have confidence in how to assist an autistic child, due to having some education, will have a more positive demeanour that students will pick up on. This positivity is needed for

successful inclusive classrooms. Knowledgeable teachers can create better plans with educational assistants so that students can work and learn to the best of their abilities. Often students with autism are negatively viewed by others, but teacher knowledge and positivity toward autism and inclusion can improve students' overall attitudes toward autism and inclusion (Rodriguez et al., 2012). Teachers have stated that receiving training and information is crucial for understanding how to include students with autism into their classrooms (Rattaz et al., 2019). Teachers already differentiate and use good teaching practices and accommodations for children with autism, and they should continue to do so. It may be beneficial for families of a child with autism and the teacher to meet and discuss student abilities prior to school starting. For the benefit of the students with autism, teachers can teach to that child's interests, and teachers should have some formal training on autism.

Conclusion

Children with autism have a right to be within an inclusive classroom. There are many benefits of having all students together in an inclusive setting as long as teachers, parents, and support staff all work together to make inclusion beneficial for students. Students with autism not only learn from their peers in inclusive classrooms, but they also teach their peers about autism while reducing stigma, which creates more positive attitudes and relationships in regard to autism and inclusion. Both students with and without autism require interaction with their peers in order to learn how to interact positively with others, which also increases knowledge and acceptance of autism. Inclusive classrooms can reduce stigma due to the positive interactions among all students. Many teachers already practise differentiation in their classrooms, and those practices should be continued when there is a child with autism in the general classroom, because those differentiations assist student learning. Teachers, families, and support staff should attempt to meet prior to school beginning to learn about the best learning strategies for a student with autism. Students with autism can be taught to their interests and abilities when in an inclusive classroom, because that may create more success for that child. Students with autism have a right to be within an inclusive learning environment in general classrooms.

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Creating Safe and Inclusive Schools for LGTBQ Students

Hoanglan Cardinal

Abstract

Positive school climates foster an optimal learning environment in which students feel safe and supported, and are in a greater position to thrive in terms of academic performance, better relationships with peers and staff, and overall social-emotional well-being. Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer (LGBTQ) students often have to navigate more challenges and hostile school climates compared to their heterosexual peers because school practices, policies, and curricula tend to prioritize heteronormative structures. Significant work is required to challenge these structures, such as by implementing zero-tolerance policies, LGTBQ-inclusive curricula and mandatory professional development for educators, and by creating safe spaces for LGTBQ students within schools.

All students have the right to feel included, respected, and safe in a school environment. However, schools can be a hostile and lonely environment for students who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer (LGBTQ). LGTBQ youth are more likely to report feeling that schools are unwelcoming or unsafe due to unsupportive peers, staff, and policies (Colvin et al.). Compared to the heterosexual student population, LGBTQ students experience worse outcomes in mental and physical health as well as education (Snapp et al., 2015). Schools have a responsibility to create a safe and inclusive environment that supports LGBTQ students academically, physically, and social-emotionally. However, heteronormative structures that exclude the LGTBQ student population, lack of supportive policies that offer protection, and unsupportive/untrained teachers contribute to hostile learning environments. Challenging heteronormativity[1] by the implementation of zero-tolerance policies, LGTBQ-inclusive curricula, and mandatory professional development for educators, and creating safe spaces within schools, will promote a positive school climate for LGTBQ students.

The Negative Impact of a Hostile School Environment

There is a growing body of research on the negative impact that sexual/gender minority-related disparities and the heteronormative culture in schools have on LGTBQ individuals. For example, LGTBQ youth are at a significantly higher risk for peer victimization, sexuality-based discrimination, and harassment when compared to heterosexual youth (Colvin et al., 2019; Hatchel et al., 2019; Steck & Perry, 2018). In an exclusionary and hostile school environment, LGTBQ students experience physical abuse, verbal harassment, ostracism, and other forms of victimization. Feeling unsafe and unsupported at school has significant consequences on LGTBQ students' mental well-being and academic outcomes. Due to a hostile school environment, LGTBQ students are more likely than their heterosexual peers to feel marginalized and to have low motivation for learning (Steck & Perry, 2018). LGTBQ students are at a higher risk of academic failure with alarmingly high dropout rates, which is associated with the chronic stress from verbal and physical victimization at school (Snapp et al., 2015; Steck & Perry, 2018; Wimberly, 2015). Also, a higher proportion of LGTBQ youth who experience gender victimization report substance abuse, depression, anxiety, and suicidality (Colvin et al., 2019; Hatchel et al., 2019). The consequences of hostile school environments for LGTBQ students are significant and demonstrate that more supports are required to reduce negative impacts and to enhance the well-being of LGTBQ students in schools.

[1] The term *heteronormativity* is based on heterosexuality and assumed binary as normative, consequently marginalizing and othering those who identify as LGTBQ.

School curricula, structures, and policies typically prioritize heteronormative structures and contribute to hostile school environments (Steck & Perry, 2018). *Heteronormative* refers to the perspective that promotes heterosexuality as the normal sexual orientation. School systems grounded in heteronormative structures marginalize other student populations, such as LGTBQ students who do not fit this structure. For example, most schools limit or do not include LGTBQ inclusive language in the curriculum, consider the LGTBQ experience in courses, or provide access to safe spaces for LGTBQ students who feel threatened or want more information about LGTBQ issues. Consequently, LGTBQ students are marginalized and excluded when they are not reflected in school curricula, structures, or policies. Heteronormative culture in schools continues when staff does not take effective action against the exclusionary and discriminatory environment that oppresses LGTBQ students (Steck & Perry, 2018).

Creating Safe and Inclusive Schools

Positive school climate is linked with important measures of school success such as academic achievement, high morale staff productivity, and overall better social-emotional well-being (Day, Fish, et al., 2019; Manitoba Education, 2013). Improving the school experience for LGTBQ students requires a multifaceted approach and commitment from administrators and staff. There are key factors that create safe and inclusive schools for LGTBQ students: zero-tolerance policies, LGTBQ-inclusive curricula, mandatory professional development for educators, and safe spaces for LGTBQ students.

Zero-Tolerance Policies

Challenging the heteronormative culture takes systematic policy reform to set the tone and promote the inclusion and acceptance of LGTBQ students. Zero-tolerance policies can change the negative climate of schools for LGTBQ students by including protections from discrimination and harassment based on students' actual or perceived sexual orientation and gender identity (Wimberly, 2015). Such policies send a message to all students, staff, and the community that the school is a safe and inclusive environment wherein discrimination is not tolerated (Day, Ioverno, et al., 2019). In The Every Teacher Project (a large scale research survey of Kindergarten to Grade 12 educators), findings demonstrated that educators and students who were in districts with anti-homophobia and anti-transphobia policies in place were more likely to view their schools as being safe (Taylor et al., 2016). Zero-tolerance policies that specifically address sexual orientation or sexuality-based harassment and victimization contribute to a reduction in bullying and other forms of victimization (Steck & Perry, 2018). Used inappropriately and without implementing preventive measures, zero tolerance policies will not be effective in changing normative structures and attitudes toward students with LGTBQ. Using a proactive approach rather than reactive, educators can send a message of zero tolerance of bullying and harassment through open dialogue, modelling, and teachable moments.

LGTBQ-Inclusive Curricula

Integrating LGTBQ-inclusive curricula also challenges a heteronormative culture that is prevalent at schools by explicitly addressing LGTBQ-related issues. Incorporating information about the LGTBQ community into the curriculum gives all students the opportunity for insight into the experiences of LGTBQ individuals, and facilitates a more inclusive school climate that celebrates diversity. LGTBQ students benefit greatly from an inclusive curriculum that teaches about LGTBQ people, history, and events. It is important for LGTBQ students to see themselves represented in the curriculum and respected in the classroom (Prescott, 2019). LGTBQ students feeling safer, and experience less bullying and more peer support when schools teach LGTBQ-inclusive curricula (Snapp et al., 2015). They also miss less school because of safety concerns

and are more comfortable and likely to talk to their teachers about LGTBQ issues (Komosa-Hawkins & Fisher, 2013). Implementing policies that protect LGTBQ students and incorporating inclusive curricula disrupts heteronormative culture in schools. Manitoba Education has numerous support documents and resources that help schools to develop their own policies and guidelines for ensuring safe and equitable learning environments for LGTBQ students. For instance, *Safe and Caring Schools: A Whole-School Approach to Planning for Safety and Belonging* is an evidence-based support document for planning and sustaining positive and safe schools. Another source to consider is British Columbia's *SOGI*[2]*-Inclusive Education Resource Guide*. Educators who have been actively supporting SOGI students for years share recommended practices and provide details on how to implement SOGI-inclusive education.

Problematic Gaps in Educators' Beliefs and Practices

Creating positive school climates are crucial. Educators are a key factor in transforming schools into safe and inclusive environments that all students deserve. However, research indicates gaps between what teachers believe about LGTBQ-inclusive education and how they practise it. The Every Teacher Project identified teachers' beliefs, perceptions, and practices in regards to LGTBQ-inclusive education (Taylor et al., 2016). The findings revealed problematic gaps in creating a safe and inclusive learning environment for LGTBQ students. For example, most teachers would approve of LGTBQ-inclusive education, but few would be comfortable practising it. Although most educators believe that LGBTQ-inclusive education should be taught, many do not have adequate professional training, and feel unsupported or unequipped to do so if their school does not have policies in place (Meyer et al., 2019; Taylor et al., 2016).

Mandatory Professional Development for Educators

Mandatory professional development programs enable educators to gain the necessary knowledge, awareness, and skill to deliver appropriate services to LGBTQ students (Komosa-Hawkins & Fisher, 2013). LGTBQ-related components of these programs include the opportunity to explore one's misconceptions/biases to break down stereotypes, information on the unique challenges encountered by LGTBQ youth, current policies, strategies to advocate for change, and skill-building in recognizing and handling LGTBQ issues. Professional development equips educators to support LGTBQ students and respond to forms of victimization such as bullying, harassment, or discrimination. Having trained educators in schools creates a strong social support network for LGTBQ students. This is especially vital, considering that LGTBQ students often experience varying levels of support from family members and would benefit from outside support systems (Day, Fish, et al., 2019). Research also shows that positive teacher-student relationships are associated with benefits for LGTBQ students such as greater school engagement, better academic performance, and overall better social-emotional well-being (Colvin et al., 2019; Day, Fish, et al., 2019; Day, Ioverno, et al., 2019). Mandatory professional development to equip educators with the necessary knowledge and skills to support LGTBQ students is necessary in transforming the culture of schools.

Safe Spaces for LGTBQ Students

LGTBQ students who experience victimization, need information about LGTBQ issues, or want emotional support require access to safe spaces. This is especially important for LGTBQ youth who experience varying levels of acceptance or rejection from family members. When social support is available within schools, LGTBQ youth feel safer, have a greater sense of

[2] SOGI is an acronym for sexual orientation and gender identity.

belonging, and have better health and education outcomes (Day, Fish, et al., 2019). Safe spaces can include a classroom, administrative offices, and Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA) clubs.

GSAs provide opportunities for LGTBQ students to form positive and supportive relationships with peers and staff, to have a sense of belonging, and to engage in social justice-based activities that challenge the hostile school environment through awareness campaigns (Hernandez & Fraynd, 2014; Manitoba Education, 2013; Steck & Perry, 2018). In a study of the relationship between GSAs and school climates, results showed reduced gender-based bullying and an improvement in school climate due to stronger social support (Day, Fish, et al., 2019). Egale, a Canadian organization for LGTBQ people and issues, conducted a national survey of Canadian high school students to investigate school experiences for students with sexual or gender minority status (Egale, 2011). In this survey, students from schools with GSAs were much more likely to agree that their schools were supportive of LGBTQ people, be open with some of all of their peers about their sexual orientation and/or gender identity, and see their school climate as becoming less homophobic (Egale, 2011). Safe spaces, such as GSAs, act as an inclusive environment that can support students' physical and socio-emotional well-being.

My Workplace and How It Supports LGTBQ Students

In my workplace, Winnipeg School Division recognizes the importance of promoting actions and attitudes that create a safe and inclusive learning environment. Initiatives at the divisional level and within many individual schools address harassment and discrimination based on gender identity or sexual orientation. All employees are required to attend a half-day human rights/anti-homophobia workshop, which provides skills, strategies, and resources to address homophobia and to support a safe and inclusive learning environment for LGTBQ students. In 2013, Winnipeg School Division established an anti-homophobia initiative committee, Inclusion Across the Rainbow, to support student participation in national and local LGTBQ events. Currently, many schools in the division also have GSAs. In the school I work in, many teachers already integrate human rights studies in their teaching. I would advocate for the intentional integration of LGTBQ-inclusive curricula, which lends itself well in social studies, health, and family life units. We also have staff members who are openly gay and engage in dialogue with colleagues and students regarding inclusivity in schools. I would propose starting a GSA in my school, since we do not currently have one. It is important to have an identified safe space in the school where students can have access to information, emotional support, and allies they can turn to. I highly recommend Manitoba Education's (2013) *Safe and Caring Schools*, which features information and supports for facilitating positive change in learning environments.

Conclusion

Creating schools that are safe and inclusive, free of harassment and violence for LGTBQ students, takes a whole school approach and commitment to positive change. The long-term negative repercussions of unsupportive and hostile school environments for LGTBQ students highlight the critical need for schools to reform. Systematic policy reform through zero-tolerance policies and LGTBQ-inclusive curricula fosters acceptance of diversity and does not accept discrimination or harassment. LGTBQ-inclusive curricula raise awareness of all students, validate the LGTBQ community that is often marginalized or unseen in typical curricula, and promote inclusivity. Mandatory professional development provides educators the opportunity to build awareness, knowledge, and skills necessary to support LGTBQ students. Lastly, providing LGTBQ students with access to safe spaces within the school environment supports their physical and socio-emotional well-being. Safe spaces also act as a community-based resource that students use when they encounter challenges. Schools have a responsibility to educate, protect, and care for all students and must take appropriate action to include and support LGTBQ students.

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Extinguishing Teacher Burnout

David Hurley

Abstract

A large majority of teachers experience high daily stress. Over time this stress can lead to teacher burnout, which can manifest itself psychologically, emotionally, and physically. While stress and its effects are unavoidable, these pressures can be mitigated if appropriate action is taken. When teachers have professional development opportunities, they are able to learn new, complex skills that can influence their competence and, in turn, improve their psychological well-being. Furthermore, providing teachers with collaboration structures such as mentoring and peer-professional groups enables teachers to alleviate emotional exhaustion leading to teacher burnout.

Teacher burnout is a syndrome that is produced by the mismatch of unrelenting pressure, demands, and stress put onto educators and the resources needed to cope with them (Lauermann & König, 2016). Researchers have discovered that teaching is among the most stressful professions today; over 90% of educators have reported experiencing job-related stress, while an estimated 46% report “high daily stress” (Bottiani et al., 2019, p. 36; Larrivee, 2012, p. 8). Teacher burnout is a serious condition that can cause psychological lassitude, emotional exhaustion, and physical fatigue—all of which can trigger additional complications, creating a vicious cycle of health problems (Kim & Burić, 2019). These chronic stressors have negatively affected the teaching profession, causing rising rates in absenteeism, attrition, and turnover (Caruso, 2019). Teacher burnout has become one of the biggest problems plaguing the education system today because it negatively affects the ability of teachers to perform their roles effectively by exhausting their mental health, draining their emotional wellness, and fatiguing their physical welfare; however, these complex problems can be resolved through continuous professional education and the institution of collaboration structures (Hoff, 2020).

Problems Associated with Teacher Burnout

Teacher burnout is a growing concern and has become notorious for its psychological, emotional, and physical health effects on educators. With teaching being considered one of the most stressful professions, the problem of teacher burnout and all of its manifestations is severe (Larrivee, 2012).

Psychological Effects

Teacher burnout syndrome arises when there is a mismatch between job demands, or stressors, and available resources to cope with these demands and, as a result, these chronic stressors negatively affect the teacher’s psychological health (García-Arroyo & Osca, 2017). The psychological effects associated with teacher stress and burnout include anxiety, frustration, lack of self-confidence, cynicism, and depersonalization (Larrivee, 2012). DiCarlo, Meaux, & LaBiche (2019) described teachers’ perceived stress, also known as psychological stress, as the degree to which they are able to cope with and control situations that are appraised as stressful. When teachers experience an accumulation of extended stressors, the psychological effects (frustration, cynicism) can negatively influence their self-efficacy (Herman et al., 2018). Self-efficacy refers to teachers’ perceived ability to control their classroom’s management and instruction, while maintaining a belief in their own capacity to effect positive change in their students (Kim & Burić, 2019). This means that teachers with a strong sense of self-efficacy will be able to regain their confidence quickly after facing stumbling blocks and

stressors (Larrivee, 2012). Unfortunately, when teachers suffer psychological effects such as anxiety from chronic stress, it lowers their self-efficacy which, in turn, makes it more difficult for them to cope with job-related setbacks (Herman et al., 2018). Teachers who endure prolonged periods of low self-efficacy experience burnout, which leads to them quitting their jobs (Kim & Burić, 2019). This sense of helplessness worsens their mental health, exacerbates other psychological conditions such as depersonalization and depression, and triggers other health problems such as emotional exhaustion.

Emotional Exhaustion

Many teachers will experience emotional exhaustion while enduring burnout syndrome (Herman et al., 2018). The effects of emotional exhaustion include affective deterioration, or not being able to give more of oneself due to the exhaustion of emotional resources; alterations to one's thought process and lens with which one interprets situations, often becoming negative; and changes to how one acts, usually wanting to give up or being quick tempered (García-Arroyo & Osca, 2017). In other words, emotional exhaustion caused by chronic stress can permeate the way a teacher feels, thinks, and acts (Larrivee, 2012). Burnout syndrome appears to occur at a much higher rate in the helping professions, such as teaching (Sánchez et al., 2019). Teachers will often fall prey to burnout as a "consequence of caring," or the emotional response to the chronic stress of dealing with interpersonal demands (Larrivee, 2012, p. 9). Consequently, if a teacher feels a lack of emotional resilience and well-being, their students and classroom environment are negatively affected (DiCarlo et al., 2019). As their personal relationships and performance suffer, scrutiny and pressure from parents and administrators can add to the teachers' feelings of frustration, anger, and depression (Herman et al., 2018). This imbalance is what contributes to teacher stress and burnout, which manifests itself into emotional exhaustion and other difficulties such as physical fatigue and other related conditions (McCarthy et al., 2016).

Physical Effects

When teachers are exposed to prolonged periods of stress, leading to burnout, they are faced with a litany of somatic complaints, such as physical fatigue, back pain, aching joints, and headaches (Hue & Lau, 2015). Other physical illnesses have been reported to develop in teachers experiencing burnout, such as stomach ulcers, gastritis, and insomnia (Larrivee, 2012). Burnout syndrome can also trigger physical repercussions such as chronic-degenerative diseases in teachers who suffer from it, including hypertension, diabetes, and cardiovascular disorders (Sánchez et al., 2019). If teachers suffer from any of these physical ailments because of burnout syndrome, it most likely means they are already exposed to high amounts of stress, which, unfortunately, triggers their bodies to produce even higher levels of cortisol, or stress (DiCarlo et al., 2019). Cortisol is the body's "stress hormone," which is the last thing a teacher who is already struggling to cope with job-related stress needs (Larrivee, 2012, p. 13). As a result, the chronic stress is no longer arising from just the individual's work environment, but is being produced by their own body, compounding the issue (García-Arroyo & Osca, 2017; McCarthy et al., 2016). In this situation, teachers are usually forced to take a leave or quit their job because they are unable to perform their duties while enduring serious physical conditions and potential consequences (Kim & Burić, 2019). While psychological and emotional effects of burnout syndrome can be dangerous, many teachers can still function with diminished mental and emotional states; however, serious physical conditions tend to manifest into a plethora of potential illnesses and disorders (Sánchez et al., 2019).

Solutions to Teacher Burnout

In order to resolve teacher burnout, effective interventions such as professional development and the institution of collaboration structures need to be established. The implementation of these interventions can lessen the chances of teacher burnout if they are focused on solving the problem – stress.

Professional Development

Teacher burnout syndrome is rampantly becoming the most prevalent problem in the education system today; however, this complex issue can be resolved, and even prevented, through continuous professional education and the institution of collaboration structures (Hoff, 2020). Research has discovered that certain components of work, such as professional development, are linearly related to the psychological health of workers (García-Arroyo & Osca, 2017). In other words, professional development can influence the psychological well-being of teachers. This means that the more education teachers receive, the better their psychological health will be. Continuous professional education provides teachers with opportunities to increase their knowledge in order to develop the appropriate skills and strategies needed to cope with the stressors they face in the classroom. When teachers possess the necessary knowledge to control stressful situations, their self-confidence is reinforced and their self-efficacy grows (DiCarlo et al., 2019). Over time, as teachers continue to assess and successfully solve various situations in the classroom, their competence increases and, in turn, their psychological distress decreases (García-Arroyo & Osca, 2017; Herman et al., 2018). Providing teachers with continuing educational opportunities can equip them with the necessary knowledge, skills, and competence to cope with the psychological effects of teaching; however, more collaborative support must be implemented to solve the problem of emotional exhaustion.

Collaboration Structures

Instituting collaboration structures, such as mentoring, peer-professional groups, and collaboration days, within a school division's operational year can mediate emotional exhaustion leading to teacher burnout (García-Arroyo & Osca, 2017). Emotional exhaustion has been associated with low levels of positive peer supports, impaired relationships, and working in isolation (Herman et al., 2018). Collaboration compels teachers to network, share resources, and develop a teamwork mentality, which can offset challenging teaching conditions and buffer burnout (Lauermann & König, 2016). Collaborative days and peer-professional groups provide support and guidance for all teachers, especially beginning teachers who are most at risk for isolation, emotional exhaustion, and leaving the profession (Larrivee, 2012).

Unfortunately, in education, seeking advice can often be seen as an admission of failure or an indication of one's own inadequacy; many teachers are reluctant to collaborate with their peers or do not feel secure enough to show their vulnerability (Cox, n.d.). This is why it is crucial that a school division mandates collaboration time by building it into their calendar year, especially since teachers are already busy. Research has shown that teachers who worked in an environment that they perceived as being supportive were less likely to experience high levels of stress and burnout, and they were more resistant to the harmful effects of stressful events if they had social support (Larrivee, 2012). Teachers who collaborate with their colleagues are able to overcome professional hurdles, trust each other with their capabilities and expertise, and share similar problems and experiences; furthermore, this leads to higher levels of engagement, vigor, and dedication. Providing teachers with additional support and opportunities to collaborate can minimize the emotional effects of chronic stressors in education. While providing continuing professional education and instituting collaboration structures can be

a perplexing and convoluted process, these two solutions have a synergistic effect that can resolve the complex problem of teacher burnout.

Evaluation of Stress

An adequate amount of stress in one's profession can be considered healthy in generating proper learning and work motivation; however, research has proven that overwhelming chronic stress can lead to burnout syndrome when the resources needed to meet the demands are not provided (Hue & Lau, 2015; McCarthy et al., 2016). The highest incidence of burnout syndrome occurs in human service professionals who deal with the welfare of others and social activities, such as teachers (Larrivee, 2012). Teacher burnout not only has detrimental effects on the educators, but has repercussions at the organizational level: teacher absenteeism, lower performance, and teacher turnover (Sánchez et al., 2019). Currently in the USA, 40-50% of teachers leave the profession due to burnout within their first five years of teaching (Caruso, 2019, p. 2). Consequently, school divisions are left to face high financial costs in the form of teacher recruitment such as position advertisement, hiring incentives, and administrative processing; and teacher replacement such as training materials, professional development, and orientation (Barnes et al., 2007; Watlington et al., 2010). The Alliance for Excellent Education (2014) reported the annual cost of teacher replacement in the USA to be $1 billion to $2.2 billion, which equates to a replacement cost of $4365-$9501 per teacher. While Canadian statistics are lacking in literature, it may be assumed that the per capita cost to replace a teacher is similar. In the end, teacher burnout can have lasting negative effects on everyone it comes into contact with: the educator, the administrator, the school district, and the students.

It is well-documented that being a teacher is stressful and that burnout syndrome can lead to the deterioration of job performance (Sánchez et al., 2019). Nearly all teachers (93%) confirm that they experience high levels of stress in their classroom, while only 7% of teachers allege that they, and their classroom, are well-adjusted with low stress and overall wellness (Herman et al., 2018). Given today's stressful teaching environment, many teachers feel completely helpless and overwhelmed, which leads to burnout, increased absenteeism, and turnover (Caruso, 2019). Teachers today are coping with more troubled and complicated students, contending with ill-conceived administrative mandates, and grappling with demanding parents (Larrivee, 2012). Add to this longer work days, intensified job demands, planning in isolation, continuous evaluation and looming accountability, it is no wonder that stress and burnout is rampantly growing (Sánchez et al., 2019). Finding innovative and impactful ways to support teachers in need can mitigate the negative effects of teacher stress (Herman et al., 2018). Because of solutions such as continuing professional education and the institution of collaboration structures, teachers can work to minimize and manage their psychological, emotional, and physical stress. When action steps are taken to alleviate or remove these chronic stressors, burnout syndrome is less likely; this prevents absenteeism, lower job performance, and turnover from occurring (Caruso, 2019).

Conclusion

Stress is the psychological, emotional, and physical response to life's changing demands (Larrivee, 2012). Teacher burnout syndrome occurs when educators have to deal with a wide array of stressors, for long periods of time, which they cannot handle (García-Arroyo & Osca, 2017). The growing number of teacher burnout cases can no longer be ignored and the effects of burnout syndrome (damaged psychological, emotional, and physical conditions) cannot be easily overcome unless adequate measures are taken to reduce this chronic stress, such as continuing professional education and instituting collaboration structures. Teacher burnout is linked to absenteeism, diminished performance, and turnover; however, taking the measures necessary can mitigate these negative effects of chronic stress (Herman et al., 2018). A certain

level of stress can result in improved focus and performance; however, long-term and ongoing exposure can take over a teacher's life (Larrivee, 2012). If teachers continue to learn new knowledge to develop skills and strategies needed in the classroom, spend time collaborating with their colleagues, and take care of their physical health, they will be able to cope with the stressors they face in the classroom and maintain a healthy level of stress throughout their careers (Larrivee, 2012). Chronic stress can unrelentingly consume teachers, leaving them unable to perform their jobs, leaving them burned out; however, with the proper interventions, we can finally say *good-bye* to teacher burnout and extinguish that flame once and for all (McCarthy et al., 2016).

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A Fixed Mindset in Mathematics

Brett McNabb

Abstract

There are many people whose actions and behaviours can influence the mindset and beliefs that students have toward learning math. In addition to other factors such as social media, which are beyond the scope of this article, parents, teachers, and peers all have different influences on children's mindsets, and often those people do not recognize when they are negatively affecting a student. Teachers need to think critically about their own lessons and assist parents and students to build the necessary skills to help these children build a growth mindset in math.

Children are not born thinking that they are good or bad at math. Children's mindsets can be influenced by other people in their lives, even with subtle messages and beliefs (King, 2020). The mindset of students can be influenced by their parents, their teachers, and their peers, all of whom lie somewhere on the mindset continuum from fixed to growth. Having a fixed mindset means believing that a person's intelligence cannot be changed, whereas having a growth mindset means believing that a person's intelligence can be changed (King, 2020). These mindsets may contribute to a student's academic performance, including interest and participation in mathematics.

Parental Influence

When parents give assistance in math to their children, the assistance can be counterproductive to the students' achievement if the parent reports high levels of math anxiety (DiStefano et al., 2020). When these parents project their own beliefs about mathematical abilities onto their own children, they may lead the children to believe that they are not math people, or that they were not born with a math brain (Miller, 2020). Parents can also influence their children's mindsets when assisting with the students' math homework. Teachers are expected to spend a lot of time within their classroom promoting growth within their students (DiStefano et al., 2020). If teachers work with parents who are anxious about math, in order to provide proper teaching strategies and how to build a growth mindset at home, teachers should see the benefits at school in academic achievement.

Students who receive academic assistance from parents have shown higher belief in their abilities and understanding of their academic self-concept (Zhou et al., 2020). The impact of parental involvement in children's academic success has a quality-over-quantity relation, such that how a parent assists in homework is more influential than the amount that they assist (Silinskas & Kikas, 2019). Parents may be involved in their children's learning, but if they are worried or anxious about the content, then the students can also be worried and anxious (DiStefano et al., 2020). Providing quality assistance in mathematics cannot be achieved if a parent does not model and reinforce discourse that promotes positive attitudes and behaviours. Teachers need to scaffold not only the math content, but also the emotional experience for parents (DiStefano et al., 2020). Teachers need to provide guidance on the content and on how to promote a growth mindset, in order to help parents to become comfortable when assisting their children with homework. With guidance from teachers, parents can learn how to model positive behaviours and feelings toward mathematics to their children.

The feelings and ideas that children pick up from their parents can negatively affect their learning and academic achievement (Parents' Beliefs, n.d.). Students' academic performance is harmed more by the negative messages and perceived anxiety from parents than it is by their actual mathematical knowledge. As teachers, we need to encourage parents to acknowledge

the work that the students have done, and not just the outcome (Boaler, n.d.). When parents have a growth mindset, they are more engaged in mathematics activities. Students whose parents have a fixed mindset have shown promising results when their parents begin to believe intelligence is not fixed (Rowe & Leech, 2018). Teachers need to find a way to make connections with parents so they can learn new ways to model behaviours and attitudes that will maximize building a growth mindset in their children.

Teachers have worried that their efforts in building a growth mindset can be undermined if parents praise only success and ignore failure, rather than praising the effort or the growth (Rienzo et al., 2015). When parents refer to children's success as being a result of the children being smart, then they are setting children up to believe that they are not smart when they fail (Boaler, n.d.). Parents often focus on the right and wrong of a problem. When the results of a task are classified as a success or a failure, students tend to make more mistakes and be more confused, but when students are given empathic responses to their work, they become more confident, patient, and interested students (Karumbaiah et al., 2017). If the only resource that parents receive from teachers is an answer key, then the parents will focus only on answers and not provide a learning environment that promotes growth and understanding.

As educators, we need to create more conversations about teaching math with parents and other outside observers. The notion that students are learning a new type of math builds anxiety and distrust among parents (Chernoff, 2019). When teachers work with parents to guide them through the homework, and provide the parents and students with more feedback, students show more affection toward learning (Zhou et al., 2020). Teachers are able to make these connections in different ways. One way is to scaffold any assigned homework and the instructions that go with it. Breaking down these instructions will help parents to build an understanding of the mathematical process. The instructions are for the actual mathematical tasks, but also for ways to model behaviours and provide questioning and feedback that help parents build a growth mindset in their children (DiStefano et al., 2020). Hosting an open house or a math night provides an opportunity for parents to view their children learning and to see the strategies that teachers use in class. At these in-person events, teachers model student problems or questioning techniques for parents to use at home (Kessinger, 2014). When parents view a teacher's strategies, they are able to be better involved in their children's homework (Zhou et al., 2020). It is important for teachers to open a line of communication with parents so that parents understand how to build a growth mindset in their children.

Teacher Influence

Teachers may influence the mindset of students by the way they provide feedback and praise to their students (Rienzo et al., 2015); thus, they may negatively influence their students' mindsets unknowingly. Teachers may believe that they are using the best practices to promote a growth mindset. However, there is often a disconnect between a teacher's belief in growth mindset and a teacher's practices to build it (Sun, 2019). Many teachers want to provide an environment that promotes a growth mindset, but they may deliver messages to students in ways that contradict their beliefs. For example, teachers may believe in growth mindset, but if they provide only standard algorithms and praise only grades rather than creativity and growth, then their actions are not aligned with their beliefs (Sun, 2019). It is critical that teachers reflect on their teaching practices, their assessments, their questioning, and their feedback in order to ensure that they are effectively building a growth mindset.

A teacher's feedback or praise may cause a change in the way students view their abilities and may shift their mathematical mindset. If a teacher is focused on the end result of an activity, then the students will build an impression that they are smart or that they are not smart (Rienzo et al., 2015), depending on the outcome of that activity. When students are praised for the completed work and the process, they will build a sense of achievement or determination to succeed. When students are given feedback on a failed task in a learning-focused manner,

students will begin to build a growth mindset (Sun, 2019). If teachers are going to turn their students' fixed mindsets into growth mindsets, they need to be consistent in their feedback and assessment over time, focusing on the process of learning rather than just right or wrong.

Teachers' beliefs in a growth mindset do not always lead to academic success and growth in their students. However, a teacher's belief in students' mathematical abilities is predictive of the belief that students have in their own mathematical abilities (Eccles & Jacob, 1986). Regardless of teachers' mathematical ability, they can still produce students who believe negative stereotypes around math, and produce students with fixed mindsets. Teachers of all mathematical abilities who are anxious about teaching math may model anxious behaviour around students or may focus strictly on rote learning techniques (DiStefano et al., 2020). If a teacher does not promote growth within a specific discipline (i.e. growth mindset in mathematics), students will not see connections between growth and mathematical achievement. Not promoting growth within the desired discipline may attribute to students building a fixed mindset, but in classrooms where growth mindset in mathematics is promoted throughout the year, students understand that growth is a process and that success is not measured by right or wrong answers (Sun, 2019). Implementing new strategies throughout the school year will help students to see that growth is longitudinal and that building a growth mindset takes time.

Teachers may not realize the contradictions between their teaching practices and their belief in growth mindset. Implementing new techniques and strategies can be difficult for some teachers who may find it easier to revert to their old teaching ways (Sun, 2019). Teachers and schools need to work together to provide effective feedback and praise at an early age for this strategy to be effective (Rienzo et al., 2015). Teachers need to continue to reinforce the idea of growth mindset and teach new skills and strategies throughout the year (Sun, 2019). If teachers introduce the idea of growth mindset to their students in the first week of school, they need to continue working toward the goal of having a growth mindset throughout the year. If teachers do not follow up with feedback or problems that enable students to build growth mindset over time, then the students will not grasp the concept or build the skills needed to succeed academically.

Peer Influence

As students age, they spend more time around their classmates and peers, which increases the influence that adolescents and teens have on each other. When students spend more time together, they may begin to identify more with their peers than with their teachers (King, 2020). Teachers may not be aware that mindsets are learned not only from adults, but they may also be contagious between peers). If students are not given the correct kind of praise from their peers, it creates behaviours that are defeating and will not motivate students (Zhang et al., 2020). When teachers are not aware of the influence that peers have on each others' mindsets, they may put students in situations where they are negatively influenced when learning.

Praise from peers is an effective tool once teachers have taught proper feedback skills and have promoted a growth mindset in their classroom (Strengthening Peer Reviews, 2019). Feedback that is focused on process over results improves students' mindset and, as a result, improves their motivation and belief in growth (Zhang et al., 2020). As teachers start to implement growth mindset practices in their classrooms, they should also implement peer feedback with their students. Process-focused feedback between peers can promote a growth mindset and increase academic motivation. If teachers develop the skills needed for peers to deliver positive feedback, students can foster the development of growth mindsets and become more motivated and academically successful learners.

Teachers need to build academic motivation within their students by promoting a growth mindset. When peer feedback praises the work and effort of a student, the tension between students and negative impacts of low-level achievers are reduced (Zhang et al., 2020). As when

teaching basic mathematic lessons, teachers need to scaffold instructions for the skills needed to provide effective peer feedback. This may be done by modelling questions or feedback that students can use. Teachers need to provide environments for students to grow and to be motivated. Students should not give feedback on work by labeling it as right or wrong, but rather offer feedback focusing on the process of the work and the effort that is made.

Conclusion

Students' mindset and belief in academic achievement may be shifted by many different people in their lives. Parents and teachers who do not think about this may put students in a situation where they will develop fixed mindsets. Parents can create a negative learning environment by believing that math is an innate skill that some people have, and some do not. Teachers may believe in a growth mindset, but if they are not providing an environment to promote such a mindset their students may not strive for academic growth. When students align themselves with different friend groups, they can develop fixed mindsets and be unable to achieve mastery skills in math. All of these factors contribute to a student's mindset in their own way, and if teachers are unaware of these factors they cannot help a student to grow.

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Helicopter Parenting in High School

Tanya Polasek

Abstract

While parental involvement is often seen as a cornerstone in high school students' success, too much involvement can be problematic. Often teachers feel caught between supporting students' personal growth and parental expectations of students' academic achievement. Certain practices can be developed and implemented at a classroom and school level that can help parents and students. Developing student skills in areas of personal autonomy and self-control is helpful. Creating parent-teacher and student-teacher partnerships can support student growth and may mitigate the negative effects of helicopter parenting.

Parental involvement is generally believed to be beneficial for aiding schools in meeting the goals of education (Robinson & Harris, 2014). While parents' involvement helps children to develop relationships with educators and peers (Cheung, 2019), and encourages development by explaining expectations and offering strategies for academic success (George Mwangi et al., 2019), there are questions about how much involvement is too much. As a high school teacher, I understand the benefits of parental involvement in the lives of students. Teachers can establish certain practices at a school level and at a classroom level that can support the parent in adopting a positive level of involvement and the student in mitigating the effects of helicopter parenting.

The Threat to Well-being, Skill Development, and Academics

There is a difference between beneficial parental involvement and parental over-involvement, which has a negative effect on student well-being and academic outcomes (Darlow et al., 2017). Over-involved and controlling parents – helicopter parents – risk creating an unhealthy environment for their children's academic growth and compromising their children's well-being. These children also lack the skills needed for autonomy. Educators often contribute to the effects of helicopter parenting in their communication and use of technology. This is concerning for high school teachers as we work with parents to prepare students for success in academics and in life.

Parents want what is best for their children; however, they may lack knowledge in how their involvement could have a positive or negative influence on their children's education. Many scholars argue about which mode of involvement would have the desired positive effect on academic achievement (Robinson & Harris, 2014). Controlling involvement has a negative effect on intrinsic motivation (Fan & Williams, 2010). Helicopter parents unwittingly contribute to a decline in students' intrinsic motivation with controlling practices such as rules for maintaining a certain grade point average, which encourages students to develop a performance goal orientation. While parents are attempting to do what is best, their involvement may be misguided.

Parental over-involvement has a negative effect of the well-being of children. Helicopter parenting impedes the growth of coping mechanisms, which leads children to feel a lack of control in their own lives (Darlow et al., 2017). I have seen the unfortunate effects of helicopter parenting in many of my high school students. These parents place high priorities on grades, but not necessarily on learning. As such, to ensure success, many want to complete tasks belonging to their children themselves (Darlow et al., 2017). This type of behaviour restricts, controls, and lessens the self-control of the child (Love et al., 2020). While they may have obtained the desired academic outcome, students may have sacrificed personal growth to accomplish it.

Developing skills to be successful is an important part of adolescence, and if parents are over-involved their children often lack skills needed for autonomy (Darlow et al., 2017). Parent involvement characterized by higher levels of psychological control and reduced encouragement for autonomy leads to supporting performance goal orientations (Xu et al., 2020). Overparenting is connected to lower levels of self-control and self-efficacy (Darlow et al., 2017), and a lack of self-control exhibited in children raised by helicopter parents contributes to school burnout (Love et al., 2020). Furthermore, academic success is predicted by self-efficacy (Fan & Williams, 2010), and students who lack this construct may have felt badly about who they are and powerless to make changes in their lives (van Ingen et al., 2015). When parents are perceived as intrusive, students feel a diminished capacity to perform or to accomplish tasks on their own.

Educators play a role in contributing to and exacerbating the effects of helicopter parenting. Digital communication tools and learning platforms provide parents with instant access to grades, homework completion records, and even assignments. Tools such as Remind101, Google Classroom, and Maplewood Parent Portal keep parents up to date with what is happening in classes, what assignments are due, and current grades. The concern I have is that educators appear to be encouraging "responsibilisation" (Selwyn et al., 2011, p. 322) in parents, whereby parents have become responsible for their children's work. By communicating due dates and grades directly from teacher to parent, we may be stripping students of their responsibility. These digital tools are easier for school personnel to use, but questions have been raised about the effectiveness of using them (Selwyn et al., 2011). Educators need to choose communication technologies that make the most of school-home communication (Heath et al., 2015). Educators should be aware of their role in the effects of helicopter parenting.

Helicopter parents risk undermining their children's personal and academic growth, and compromising their children's well-being. Parental over-involvement hampers children from developing coping mechanisms (Darlow et al., 2017) and restricts their sense of self-control (Love et al., 2020). High school educators are caught between educating and supporting the growth of their students, and helicopter parents who are more interested in high grades than learning. When teachers are forced to use digital tools to communicate to parents, they may be encouraging over-involvement and shifting the responsibility of the learning from student to parent.

The Way Forward: Information, Skills, and Partnerships

Practices can be established by teachers to support parents in adopting positive levels of involvement. Educators can share strategies for parents to use at home in order to raise student achievement (Robinson & Harris, 2014). Some of the most effective parental involvement is subtle and involves shared positive values about learning and education. Students need to develop skills that improve their self-control. Parents should implement practices that support their children's development of autonomy. Creating teacher-parent and teacher-student partnerships is crucial to supporting student growth, while avoiding the negative effects of helicopter parenting.

Parents often look to the school for advice on how to improve their children's achievement, and educators can provide parents with strategies to use at home in order to improve academics. Offering information sessions about higher education opportunities and other benign communication (Fan & Williams, 2010) can steer parent involvement in the right direction. Specific scientific knowledge on parenting and ideas about education should be provided by schools to parents (Xu et al., 2020). Supportive parents show that they care about their children's future while refraining from pressuring the children to excel in school (Robinson & Harris, 2014). When parents have high academic aspirations for their children, self-efficacy increases in their adolescents (Fan & Williams, 2010). One successful approach is when parents are seen to support their children in all aspects of their lives without creating pressure

for their children to perform well (Robinson & Harris, 2014). Likewise, when parents provide information to their children, it supports their children's intrinsic motivation (Fan & Williams, 2010). Positive parent involvement contributes to student development by clearly articulating expectations and giving strategies that support academic preparedness (George Mwangi et al., 2019), and this can be supported by educators.

Some of the most effective forms of parental involvement are subtle and involve passing on positive values about education and learning. Robinson and Harris's (2014) "setting the stage" concept captures my own thoughts about how parents can approach child rearing that will have a positive effect on children's academic and personal growth (p. 210). Stage setting focuses on sending the right messages and values about education and learning, while at the same time creating "life space" that is conducive to growth (Robinson & Harris, 2014, p. 210). Another form of positive involvement is evidenced through positive emotions in children. Emotions such as enjoyment may expand students' thinking and attention, increase motivation, and improve academic engagement and performance (Dong et al., 2020). Educators need to be aware of the influential factors so that they can offer insights when parents are seeking ways to help their children improve academically.

Parents and children can be taught the skills that offer adolescents opportunities to develop self-control. At a certain age, the controls parents once used that undermined their children's autonomy decrease in effectiveness at regulating their teenagers' behaviour (Cook, 2020). Parents are looking for skills to support their children academically, and self-control is one of the most beneficial to learn. Practice is key for adolescents to develop self-control skills (Love et al., 2020). Students need to have opportunities to acquire this practice and, in many cases, need to be explicitly taught how to acquire control. Self-control has been shown to mediate school burnout and helicopter parenting from mothers (Love et al., 2020). This skill is useful to adolescents, but it becomes even more useful to emerging adults.

Supporting the autonomy of their teenagers is an important skill for parents to acquire. When children are granted autonomy through the emphasis of reasoning and independence instead of through punishment, they feel more competent, are better able to regulate on their own in the classroom, and perform better academically (Robinson & Harris, 2014). Encouraging independence in adolescents also helps these children adjust to college (Darlow et al., 2017). Teenagers need to be encouraged and have their capabilities affirmed. If so, they will be less likely to doubt themselves and will instead persevere when they face challenges (Fan & Williams, 2010). Students entering post-secondary school are at a time in their lives when they should establish identity and independence. Overparenting can interfere (Fletcher et al., 2020), so educational institutes should have a plan to increase their students' autonomy (Darlow et al., 2017). Transitioning to adulthood is a complicated time, and students who show higher levels of self-efficacy put in more effort and persist when they face academic adversity (Fan & Williams, 2010). Identity and independence stem from strong roots, and the parent-child relationship is foundational. Having a reciprocal parent-child relationship supports adjustment to post-secondary education (Darlow et al., 2017). When parents are shown the researched benefits of supporting their adolescents' autonomy, they may be convinced to provide their children with space to grow instead of insisting on perpetual hovering.

Strong partnerships between parents and teachers and between teachers and students are crucial in supporting the academic achievement and personal growth of high school students. Communication and collaboration between staff and parents are the foundation of a healthy partnership (Heath et al., 2015). Creating a partnership between parents and teachers may encourage parents to begin home-based learning (Smith et al., 2020). During early adolescence, students may lose interest in school and a good relationship with teachers can give teenagers that extra push to stay engaged in their education (Cheung, 2019). Additionally, students who have a positive relationship with their teacher often internalize the expectations of the teacher. Partnerships with families should be reinforced (Xu et al., 2020, p. 715) because strengthening the teacher-parent relationship and creating interactions that are meaningful show

significant effects (Cheung, 2019). Parents may feel an increase in motivation to maintain these strategies of involvement over time (Smith et al., 2020). Positive teacher-student relationships aid in the adjustment of adolescents to school (Cheung, 2019), and long-term effects on children's academic learnings (Xu et al., 2020). Students thrive when they are part of healthy student-teacher partnerships and strong parent-teacher partnerships.

Conclusion

Parental involvement in the lives of students is paramount to children's success, but over-involvement can be detrimental. Teachers can establish certain school practices to support parents in assuming a positive level of involvement. Some of the most effective parental involvement is subtle and has parents sharing positive values about learning with their children. Because parental over-involvement hampers children from developing coping mechanisms (Darlow et al., 2017) and restricts their sense of self-control (Love et al., 2020), students should be taught skills to improve their self-control and parents should support their children's development of autonomy. While high school educators are often caught between educating and supporting the growth of their students, creating teacher-parent and teacher-student partnerships may avoid the negative effects of helicopter parenting and will support student growth.

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Increasing Equity in Education for All Students

Duncan White

Abstract

One of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals recognizes that inclusive and equitable education is of benefit to our global society. This article explores the potential problems to achieving equitable access to education globally, and in Manitoba. It considers how educational institutions can recognise their roles in perpetuating inequities, and how effective financial investments and the inclusion of all stakeholders can lead to positive change for all students. The goal is to challenge educators to reflect on their practice, and to ensure increased access to equitable education.

Equity in education involves a combination of fairness, inclusion and investment in education to ensure each student has what they need to reach their potential. Increasing equity in education is part of an acknowledgement that access to systems, including health care and government, increases global equality and leads to improved standards of living (United Nations, n.d.). Before improvements can happen, educational institutions need to solve problems that can affect attempts to achieve equity. Sometimes educational institutions doubt that commonly used philosophies to increase equity, such as inclusion,[3] are helpful (del Pozo-Armentia et al., 2020).

Many educational institutions are unable to understand the idea that clear and deliberate attention should be directed at attempts to achieve equity (Lenhoff, 2020). Educators and educational institutions often fail to understand the demands of those seeking equity (Powell, 2020). The second problem is financing attempts to increase educational equity for identified groups (Lee, 2012). Insufficient financial commitments to equity undermine attempts to achieve equity. To deepen the complexity of the situation, not all stakeholders[4] within communities are included in wider discussions regarding access to equity (Palmquist, 2020).

Educational Institutions' Good Intentions

The problem of educational institutions failings in perpetuating inequities includes commitments to unproven or unresearched philosophies, failure to direct clear attention to attempts at equity, and misunderstanding of equitable demands. An implicit understanding of what educational inequity is seems to be assumed and is informing many institutional attempts to create equity (Keddie & Holloway, 2020). Adherence to theories such as inclusion, can lead to uncritical acceptance of their pedagogical limitations (del Pozo-Armentia et al., 2020). When following theories including inclusion and growth mindset, many schools do not conduct any research into how these solutions could possibly increase equity, or contribute to inequities in education (Ching et al., 2020). Pedagogical disagreement in educational institutions can be observed when preparing students for post-secondary choices (Liou & Rojas, 2020). Educational institutions can undermine equity unintentionally. Student disengagement can begin with well-meaning attempts to recruit students for programs, such as credit-recovery, designed to overcome inequity (Powell, 2020). Sometimes all parents/guardians do not support attempts to increase equity, in fact sometimes insisting on access to such programs for their own children (Powell, 2020). Examples from higher education show that programs designed to increase

[3] Inclusion in education involves giving each individual equal opportunity for educational progress.

[4] Stakeholders identified in education should be anyone with a direct interest in an educational institution, including financial and human interests.

equity for identified groups have limited enrolment (Dias Lopes, 2020). Students are affected as learners by educational institutions' and communities' inability to articulate what inequity is, what equity should be, and what it should lead toward (Ching et al., 2020).

A Need for Financial Support

The lack of access to financial resources can have a huge effect when attempting to achieve equity in education. Educational institutions can often fail to recognise how they support the reproduction of financial privilege (Gayton, 2020). Some institutions have widened access to educational opportunities, but there is a variation in the quality of instruction (Wu et al., 2020). Financial investments in teaching and learning methods should be considered. Ultimately, education institutions are meritocratic systems wherein there is no possibility for mobility and equity, or even income distribution, is impossible (del Pozo-Armentia et al., 2020). Even where private or community institutions have invested in schools, there has been inequity in the distribution of finances (Keddie & Holloway, 2020). Faced with such contradictions, it is no surprise that money is not effectively directed to increasing equitable access and achievement in education.

The Need To Involve All Stakeholders

Educational institutions sometimes do not listen to community voices, so attempts at equity are pursued without the involvement of all stakeholders (Winnipeg Indigenous Executive Circle, 2020). Many stakeholders have called for equity in staffing, including Winnipeg communities (Liou & Rojas, 2020). Vague notions are sometimes followed when developing educational opportunities without any attempt to understand the community itself (Toulouse, 2016). Even in post-secondary institutions, students can find it hard to adjust to cultural ideas of education (Gayton, 2020), which can affect their engagement. Sometimes community stakeholders can be ignored, continuing the inequity (Toulouse, 2016). Educators also often feel ignored, which frustrates positive discussion with local communities regarding education (Gallagher, 2016). There is also a need to ensure accountability when stakeholders do invest in schools (Keddie & Holloway, 2020). Full community involvement is essential when making decisions about education, educational success, and educational philosophies.

Institutional Reflection and Commitment to Equity

In education, as in other public sectors such as health, there is a need for institutions and structures to reflect and examine the system's function and desired outcomes. Such needs assessments should involve all stakeholders (Palmquist, 2020, p. 402). In 2020, we are seeing a rise in awareness of equity issues regarding race, but we must continue to explore other equity issues, such as gender (Keddie, 2020). When examining inclusion as a philosophy of equity, there should be an understanding that results achieved will not be equal and that excellence will be achieved by only a few (del Pozo-Armentia et al., 2020). A realistic assessment of the philosophies and methods of equity gives reason for educational systems to look beyond the safety of the institution itself. To try to increase equity, institutions have used learning analytics to inform decisions (Francis et al., 2020). It is important for all stakeholders to be involved, in order to ensure practical analysis of the results. With all stakeholders involved, educational institutions should be able to avoid becoming fixed on single delivery means and other ideas, including Indigenous world-views (Toulouse, 2016).

Financing Equity

The lack of access to financial resources has affected attempts to achieve educational equity. Harnessing community-based organizations (CBOs) and CBO alliances can make significant differences to money. Indeed, it is a witness to the power of such groups that equity has been continually spotlighted in the last 25 years (Lemke, 2020). CBOs or other community involvement can make the difference between half-hearted attempts to achieve equity and meaningful programming that is developed in schools (Gallagher, 2016). CBOs may have success advocating for equitable access to schools of choice. It has been seen that open access to all schools can lead to outcomes such as achieving desired employment, further education, and life ambitions (Lenhoff, 2020). If CBOs can be used effectively to lobby for financing to explicitly achieve equity in access to better quality education, then health care outcomes and other social fields may see increases in equity (Keddie & Holloway, 2020). Educational institutions can be misled into thinking that the achievement of a diverse student and staff population in schools will lead to educational equity, but they should focus specifically on achieving equity for marginalized communities (Mann et al., 2020). In post-secondary institutions, there can be doubts regarding the purpose of equity. The idea of cultural capital should be explored, but often this is trumped by criticism of students being poorly prepared for challenging courses. Such courses include those requiring large amount of complex technical knowledge and understanding of detailed formulas and procedures. In universities, this can lead to increased spending on students, leading to scrutiny of the worth of encouraging diverse access to education (Gao & Liu, 2020). Analysis of the effectiveness of financial investments in teaching and learning methods should be considered as part of achieving equity.

Responding to all Stakeholders

Educational communities need to form consistent goals that will demonstrate increases in equity (Ching et al., 2020). Some research calls for post-secondary institutions to search for top-down solutions to equity (Francis et al., 2020). Other researchers have indicated that only bottom-up approaches to equity work (Gallagher, 2016). There should be closer ties between higher education and schools. For example, clear accountability in defining equitable goals, such as access to higher education, beyond nebulous ideas of relationship building is important to their success (Liou & Rojas, 2020). There is some evidence that community involvement can change this, with time spent following policies and deliberately targeted interventions so that students can see themselves represented in positions of power. This can have a powerful effect on students (Liou & Rojas, 2020). Collaborative efforts among advocates, CBOs, and educational institutions remain a promising way to improve community participation and monitoring in health, encouraging equitable mobility in positions of governance (Palmquist, 2020). In a similar way, educational institutions and systems need to encourage businesses to be part of an audit of education (World Economic Forum, 2020). Prioritized spending on education for employees and the addition of high-quality staff should be goals.

Conclusion

The lasting problems of inequity in education are often not understood, and are therefore perpetuated in local communities, including Winnipeg communities, in negative ways. Many educational institutions need to recognise their own role in sustaining inequity (Powell, 2020). Educational institutions should be aware of the role of financial investments to increase wider societal equity through education (Gayton, 2020). All stakeholders should actively listen to community voices, and show awareness of the impact of historical events on communities' potential to increase equity in education (Toulouse, 2016). In conclusion, there is some need for more research in equitable education, but there is enough evidence to understand that there is

an exciting opportunity for change through education. All educators can agree to reflect and refine our practice in order to improve equity in education.

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Indigenous Education: Land as Text

Shannon Fullerton

Abstract

We are uniquely shaped by the ontology, axiology, methodology and epistemology to which we are exposed in life. The outdoor classroom provides many opportunities to use the land as text to observe surroundings informally, to learn experientially through various STEAM activities, and to create scenarios for project-based learning. In history, Residential Schools and the mistreatment of Indigenous students in the Western educational system created a stigma toward education for numerous Indigenous people. Teachers needs to invite Indigenous Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and Indigenous resources into the classroom in order to support the paradigm shift to an Indigenized curriculum.

How we view and understand our world is molded by our various personal experiences with people and our environmental surroundings. Every experience expands our epistemology, axiology, methodology, and ontology to develop a personal research paradigm that supports the Indigenous ways of being, doing, and knowing (Wilson, 2008). The Western paradigm rejects the Indigenous paradigm because it is not a quantitative or qualitative way to learn or think. Indigenous people believe that land contains the languages, stories, and histories of a people. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's *Calls to Action* speak to the moral and ethical obligations to strengthen relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people (Kinzel, 2020). Understanding Indigenous perspective in education relies on knowing the connection to the land as text through traditional language and ceremony, Indigenous knowledge in curriculum, and the stigma Indigenous people have related to the Eurocentric model of education. Educators need to research traditional languages and ceremonies as connection to self, use Indigenous curriculum resources in the classroom, and understand the differences and similarities between Eurocentric and Indigenous models of education.

Connection to the Land as Text

When connections to land, ceremony, and languages are lost, then the connection to "all our relations" is lost, too. "All our relations" refers to the Indigenous belief that every object has a spirit and a connection to its surroundings. Our identity is uniquely shaped by values, beliefs, and attitudes to which we are subjected during our life. The Elders say that we are all related, not just to the people around us but to the plants, animals, air, water, and land (Simpson, 2013). Indigenous people believe that land is a participant in the ceremonies and the songs as it offers melodies from the various flora and fauna that inhabit it. Land provides all inhabitants with a home (King, 2012). When Eurocentric worldviews are juxtaposed with Indigenous worldviews of "linear over cyclical progression, competition over collaboration, dualism over complexity, and product over process," they fail to accommodate the learning needs of Indigenous and many non-Indigenous students (Sanford et al., 2012, p. 20). The historical cultural genocide associated with Residential Schools promoted assimilation, marginalization of Indigenous people, and eradication of Indigenous knowledges, values, and ways of learning (Peterson et al., 2019). Thus, within Indigenous communities the loss of connection to the land, traditional language, and ceremonies has created disparity among Indigenous peoples.

To rekindle relationships with the land, individuals need to strengthen their understanding of Indigenous knowledge through personal experiences on the land, participating in Indigenous cultures through ceremonies, researching Indigenous languages, and reinforcing the connection to all our relations. Indigenous educational experiences create an understanding of the history of Indigenous peoples, the importance of their cultural ceremonies, and how their language is

action based as opposed to noun based (Jacob et al., 2018). In the Indigenous culture, the dynamics of the family may not be biologically related and are a significant supporter of a child's education. Schools need to recognize that alternative Indigenous family configuration is supportive of their culture and reinforces positive student engagement in classroom activities (McCalman et al., 2017). The English language is noun based, so when Indigenous words are translated they lose connection to the physical surroundings. To be a strong devoted community member, a person must encompass the dominant language of that community (Fishman, 1991). The Western educational system uses English language, literacy, and cultural practices that do not support the Indigenous knowledge systems. Including Indigenous knowledge systems in Eurocentric education will begin to reverse the eradication of Indigenous language and cultural practices (Paris, 2012). Many Indigenous students have had to dismiss their knowledge systems and adapt to the Western educational system that was deemed superior even though it did not support building a strong relationship with the land, Indigenous cultures, and language.

Indigenous Knowledge in Curriculum

Indigenous knowledges are not endorsed in the Manitoba curricula. A lack of confidence, resources, Elders, and knowledge keepers hinders teachers' confidence to address Indigenous subject matter in class. As well, teachers worry about "the right" to teach the material as non-Indigenous teachers, because they do not want to appropriate Indigenous knowledge systems. These conversations arise from research that Indigenous children are not represented in Eurocentric curricula and that teaching practices are carried out by teachers with little to no understanding of Indigenous cultures, epistemologies, and beliefs (Nardozi et al., 2014). Eurocentric curricula do not focus on Indigenous people's knowledges, the relationships with the land, and the land-based learning experiences available in the school communities (Jacob et al., 2018). It is difficult to describe informal land-based learning experiences, how Indigenous ceremonies are influenced by the Indigenous teachings, and how traditional Indigenous language is a verb/action-based language. There is no formalized plan to incorporate Indigenize education into the Manitoba curricula.

To support Indigenous knowledge in Manitoba curricula, school divisions need to support educators in delivering Indigenized education in the classroom. There is a movement toward recognizing the importance of land-based learning. Indigenous peoples' traditional education was through informal observation and experiential learning through storytelling, role playing, and project-based learning. Education was a natural process that occurred while doing everyday activities, and it was not framed within a closed classroom setting (Neegan, 2005). Many students benefit from a project-based, hands-on approach that can be developed in the classroom by using STEAM activities that focus on science, technology, engineering, art, and mathematics. Inviting Elders and Knowledge Keepers into the classroom is an excellent way to bring Indigenous knowledge and storytelling into the Eurocentric school system. Organizing a variety of outdoor activities connected to Indigenous knowledge will support learning on the land and strengthen students' connection to the land. Taking a nature walk, picking a variety of plants, using an Indigenous plant guide to name and identify plants and their medicinal purpose, practising skills to start a fire, making bannock over a fire, and building a quinze are just a few activities that will help students to build a stronger connection to the land.

Eurocentric Model of Education

Schools have a long history of failing to support Indigenous children's learning and overall well-being, which has created stigma for Indigenous people related to the Eurocentric model of education (Peterson et al., 2019). The influence of Residential Schools has tainted the Indigenous peoples' view of public education due to the horrific personal experiences and stories that have travelled through generations of Indigenous families. Indigenous knowledge is

typically portrayed through role playing, legends that are metaphorically linked to natural occurrences, storytelling, traditional ceremonies (e.g., coming of age ceremony), personal experiences, and problem solving. These learning methodologies are not typical of Eurocentric perspectives, typified by using the written word and documentation with statistics and concrete findings. The Eurocentric educational model fails to support Indigenous learners, creating a stigma because it does not align with the Indigenous ways of knowing, teaching, and learning that took place across the generations through traditional language and seasonal activities.

The stigma related to education has been developed over generations of Indigenous students feeling like they do not belong in the Eurocentric school system. I use the *8th Fire: Aboriginal Peoples, Canada & the Way Forward* series with Wab Kinew (Walker et al., 2012) in my classroom because it does an excellent job of weaving the history and present time together to help students visualize urban Indigenous and rural Indigenous settings. This series showcases Indigenous people who are successful in many walks of life, from lawyers to a graphic cartoon artist. It creates understanding by depicting the typical Eurocentric ideology toward Indigenous people and portraying the answers to debunk the Eurocentric actors' opinions. Another activity I do is have Elders and Knowledge Keepers visit the classroom or we listen to their stories regarding Residential School experiences online. The Elders' memories help everyone in the classroom to empathize and understand how the generations of Indigenous people who attended Residential School may have felt.

In Canada, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada calls upon the federal government to address the 94 calls to action. For example, one request is to promote the "preservation, revitalization, and strengthening of Aboriginal languages and cultures" through an Aboriginal Languages Act in education (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015, p. 2). Indigenous people need to be celebrated and empowered so that they can see their importance in our society. I have witnessed many students who do not know their own Indigenous history, but after they have been in my classroom, they have a better understanding of why certain people in their family may respond to certain situations or treat people a certain way. They have thanked me for educating them about their history which is not well documented and has been suppressed for generations. All students benefit from understanding the history of Indigenous people and how education has changed through the generations.

Conclusion

Addressing concerns related to Indigenous perspective in education relates to the connection to the land as text, Indigenous knowledge in curriculum, and the stigma that Indigenous people sense regarding the Eurocentric model of education. Indigenous children have a right to an education that includes their own knowledge systems and traditional teachings. Often, books and curriculum published about Indigenous peoples' way of being, doing, and knowing (Wilson, 2008, p. 70) have been written and illustrated, as well as formatted and marketed, from a non-Indigenous perspective (Peterson & Robinson, 2020, p. 3). Indigenous knowledge and history are becoming an important topic that is discussed within schools, and money is being allocated to purchase Indigenous knowledge resources that support the teachers to provide a more well-rounded education. The marginalization and suppression of Indigenous knowledge systems have gone hand in hand with the transformation and degradation of Indigenous cultures (Ka'opua, 2013). We all have an obligation to educate ourselves about Indigenous knowledge by attending Indigenous ceremonies, researching Indigenous knowledge systems, and creating experiential learning opportunities.

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Overcoming Barriers to Anti-Bullying Interventions

Jayne Cliplef

Abstract

The negative effects of bullying in school are substantial, yet educators trying to intervene face significant barriers. Such obstacles include ineffective intervention techniques and perceptual bias that gets in the way of recognizing bullying. Promising ways to overcome these barriers include the following strategies: using intervention methods that focus of facilitating empathy and problem solving, implementing regular awareness raising activities for educators and students about how to recognize bullying and how to intervene, and employing a school-team approach that informs and supports educators in their anti-bullying efforts.

The need to intervene effectively when bullying occurs in school remains a pressing concern for teachers and counsellors, even after school divisions and governments around the globe have spent years targeting the bullying problem with increasing amounts of attention and resources (Benn-Frenette, 2019). Research into the effects of bullying has made clear that failure to intervene results in negative costs to students in terms of mental health and academic success (Menesini & Salmivalli, 2017). It may be surprising, however, to learn that there are significant barriers to successful anti-bullying interventions (Rigby, 2014). A closer examination of the negative effects of bullying and the obstacles that get in the way of anti-bullying efforts will make clear the frustrating situation educators find themselves in when trying to intervene; however, an examination of strategies aimed at overcoming these barriers will provide promising solutions.

Obstacles to Anti-Bullying Interventions

Obstacles to successful antibullying interventions include problematic intervention strategies (Rigby, 2014) and failure to recognize bullying when it is occurring (Anderson, 2011), but before we look more closely at these barriers it is important to realize what is at stake if interventions fail, by examining what research has established about the substantial negative effects to victims and bullies (Menesini & Salmivalli, 2017). For victims of physical or emotional bullying, the repercussions of the abuse can be serious during their years in school (Rigby, 2014). Victims are more likely than non-victims to experience problems with school attendance, academic performance, increased depression, and heightened anxiety (Menesini & Salmivalli, 2017). These effects can last well into adulthood; for example, the experience of running into former peers can send adults into a state of panic because of bullying experienced in their youth (Benn-Frenette, 2019). There is even some indication that bullying others puts the perpetrators at an elevated risk of experiencing mental illness and engaging in unlawful behaviour later in life (Menesini & Salmivalli, 2017). Clearly, the repercussions of ineffective anti-bullying interventions are disturbing and the pressure on educational professionals to get things right is immense.

Unfortunately, evidence suggests that certain commonly used intervention methods, known as “authoritarian punitive strategies,” are not the most successful (Wachs et al., 2019, pp. 645-646). These methods punish bullying behaviour in ways that range in severity, from scolding, warning, calling parents, or assigning detention all the way to suspending or expelling. While there is some short-term success associated with these methods because the fear of punishment temporarily curtails the bullying, these techniques lack supportive elements crucial to long-lasting success—such as encouraging empathy for the victim, and engaging bullies in finding solutions. Support for this conclusion is found in the results of a recent German study that examined how students perceive the success of different anti-bullying interventions (Wachs et al., 2019). The researchers analysed data from questionnaires completed by 1,996 teenaged

students, and the results indicated that students also view punitive anti-bullying measures as having less long-term success than more supportive techniques. Indeed, a convincing case can be made that a major barrier to intervention success involves educators choosing strategies that are commonly accepted but not the most effective.

Another significant obstacle to reducing bullying through intervention presents itself when educators fail to recognize bullying when it occurs (Anderson, 2011). Without recognition, there is no hope of successful intervention. A study from 2000 was met with surprise when it reported that interventions by teachers occurred in just 14% of bullying incidents in the classroom (Craig et al., 2000, as cited in Anderson, 2011, p. 120). Subsequent research has reinforced this troubling finding and confirmed that there is still an awareness gap among educational professionals about the level of bullying in their schools (Anderson, 2011). For example, in a more recent study 30% of all student-described bullying instances were said to have occurred in the presence of teachers who did not seem to notice, and one-sixth of all student-described cases involved teachers noticing the behaviour but not intervening (Wachs et al., 2019, pp. 658-659). This lack of recognition and action on the part of educators—the majority of whom are well intentioned—may be rooted in personal childhood experiences that have coloured their perspectives and have led to different ideas about what constitutes bullying and what requires intervention (Anderson, 2011). Whatever the reason for a teacher's perceived indifference, a lack of concern can be interpreted as approving of the bullying, which can ultimately encourage the harmful behaviour and discourage victims from seeking help (Wachs et al., 2019). Moreover, if a teacher seems uninterested in stepping in to help, student bystanders are also deterred from intervening (Ploeg et al., 2017). Because of barriers posed by this perceptual bias (Anderson, 2011), and ineffective intervention strategies (Rigby, 2014), educators find themselves in the frustrating position of wanting to change bullying behaviour, but lacking the proper tools and perspective to do so.

Overcoming Anti-Bullying Barriers

Fortunately, there is reason to hope that strategic and perceptual barriers may be overcome by using empathy-fostering intervention strategies and awareness-raising activities, but to achieve long-term success it is important to first develop school-based teams responsible for implementing and maintaining anti-bullying strategies (Anderson, 2011). These teams would support educators who are often struggling to find the time, motivation, knowledge, and techniques to consistently combat instances of bullying (Sainio et al., 2020). Anti-bullying programs have been found to work best when there is a team of at least three people who train and assist other staff in the strategies the school decides to use, and who are committed to raising awareness amongst all school staff, students, and parents about what bullying is and the anti-bullying intervention methods being used (Salmivalli & Poskiparta, 2012). Many teachers have shared concerns about feeling a lack of support from administration and colleagues and a lack of consistency in efforts to combat bullying (Cunningham et al., 2016). Indeed, a dedicated school team promises to resolve some of these concerns by regularly communicating with teachers, raising awareness of anti-bullying programing in the school, providing encouragement, and training staff in the use of effective strategies.

When deciding on effective anti-bullying intervention techniques that foster empathy and problem solving rather than prioritizing punishment, the "Restorative" model provides a good guidepost (Brewster-Mercury, 2019, para. 5). Currently, it is being widely used in schools in parts of Nova Scotia with very positive results. When a bullying situation occurs and those involved are viewed to be ready, bullies and victims participate in a calm discussion circle where educators make sure each participant is able to talk about what happened and listen to the views and feelings of the other participants. Through guided discussion, it is hoped that the following results will be achieved: bullies will gain an understanding of how their victims feel, both victims and bullies will feel like they have been heard and are valued, both will start to

develop a sense of connection to each other, and both will come up with a resolution to the situation. Some clarifications should be made regarding what happens before and after the circle discussion process. Although not specifically mentioned in the example from Nova Scotia, but in line with most serious anti-bullying efforts, educators will first need to meet individually with bullies and victims in order to determine what has happened, decide whether they are ready to meet, and explain the circle process (Garandeau et al., 2016). Similarly, any method that seeks to end bullying should require educators to continue to monitor the situation by meeting again with those involved to make sure the situation has been resolved (Victoria State Government, 2018). It should be noted that, even with the restorative approach, there still will be times when the discussion circle does not work or consequences such as suspensions may be used, but the primary focus of this method is on fostering communication, empathy, connection, and problem solving (Brewster-Mercury, 2019). By striving to follow these intervention guidelines, educators can avoid the problematic aspects of the more traditional punitive-based models.

Finally, it is time to focus on overcoming problems posed by perceptual bias that can lead teachers to overlook instances of bullying, and to examine how the regular use of awareness-raising activities provides a promising way to tackle these barriers (Anderson, 2011). One way of raising the awareness of teachers involves regularly incorporating into staff meetings short activities designed to challenge long-held assumptions about what constitutes bullying and how it can be stopped. Sample activities include discussing troublesome myths such as the following: being bullied helps children become strong and independent adults; victims will not be bullied once they develop better interpersonal skills; and, when compared to physical forms of bullying, social and relational forms are not anything to worry about. Staff would be encouraged to reflect on whether they agree with each statement and to discuss their reasons. Ultimately, it is hoped that a light will be shone on these unjustified beliefs and it will become more difficult for staff to let such biases lead them to overlook bullying (Anderson, 2011). Moreover, it is hoped that those coordinating the activity will gain insight into areas where more staff education is needed so that they can plan better for future awareness-raising activities.

At the same time as awareness-raising initiatives are used to help school staff overcome biased perspectives, students also should participate in awareness-raising activities in order to learn more about bullying and appropriate bystander behaviour, so that they too can help respond to cases of bullying that educators inevitably may miss (Salmivalli, 2014). To this end, educators need to set a clear anti-bullying tone in the classroom and make sure they also engage students in discussions about what constitutes bullying, why it needs to stop, and the positive role that bystanders can play when bullying occurs. Initially, students may feel that it is fine for them to stand by silently observing as bullying takes place; however, they need to be made aware that not expressing disapproval when witnessing bullying can be interpreted by the bully as approval, and ultimately reinforce the bully's behaviour. Because bullies seek the approval of their classmates, student bystanders clearly have the power to make a change by speaking up and supporting the victim (Salmivalli, 2014). Some examples of teacher-guided classroom activities that can empower students to speak up include brainstorming tasks in which students think of positive things they can do when they witness bullying, and role-playing activities in which students act out bullying situations and the best ways to respond. Clearly, there is much work for educators to do in order to encourage effective bystander behaviour. While it is true that curriculum demands and the day-to-day stresses of teaching may leave teachers feeling overwhelmed when it comes to anti-bullying initiatives (Cunningham et al., 2016), it is hoped that the previously discussed school team approach can provide much-needed support for teachers as they learn more effective anti-bullying intervention techniques, commit to challenge their own preconceived notions of what constitutes bullying, and seek to raise the awareness of their students.

Conclusion

Bullying is not on the decline, and there is still an urgent need for educators to step in and put an end to the behaviour when it happens at school (Ploeg et al., 2017). Failure on this front means that the bullying continues, effectively putting victims at higher risk for mental illness, diminished academic performance, and dwindling attendance (Menesini & Salmivalli, 2017). Unfortunately, anti-bullying interventions are too often unsuccessful due to problems with intervention strategies (Wachs et al., 2019) and perceptual barriers (Anderson, 2011). However, there is reason to believe that these problems can be solved by establishing school teams that guide and encourage educators (Sainio et al., 2020) as they strive to use intervention strategies that encourage empathy and problem solving (Brewster-Mercury, 2019), engage in self-reflection about personal blind-spots that may prevent them from recognizing bullying (Anderson, 2011), and seek to empower students to speak up and support victims (Salmivalli, 2014). Hopefully, with the right tools, mindset, and support, educators can overcome barriers to successful anti-bullying interventions.

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Practising Effective Instructional Leadership as a School Principal

Landon White

Abstract

School principals are currently looking for ways to enhance their effectiveness as leaders by improving their instructional leadership. As the duties of principals expand, they are no longer the expert on what happens in the classroom and must find new ways to help their teachers grow and improve student learning. Instructional leadership includes everything from relationship building, to supporting growth and achievement, to getting the most out of one's particular context. The importance of the principal's role as an instructional leader should not be overlooked, because it continues to have considerable influence on the success of a school.

Over the course of history, the role of a principal has seen a vast amount of change. At one point, principals were considered the top teacher in the school. They were viewed as the person with the greatest understanding of curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment, but this is no longer the case (Hoerr, 2015). Today, school principals are expected to lead in new ways. They must communicate effectively in order to gain the trust of their teachers. They must lead teachers with the understanding that they do not know best, and provide opportunities for teachers to grow professionally. Principals must also determine how they can best impact student achievement through such aspects as engagement and equity. Finally, they must consider their context in order to create a climate wherein individuals perform to their true potential.

Building Trust

A pivotal part of instructional leadership is creating a welcoming environment that is centred around trust. Establishing a sense of trust, order, and support is one of the most important responsibilities of a principal in order to ensure the efficiency of a school (Huang et al., 2020). This is considered so significant because the effectiveness of a principal is often gauged by how much they are trusted as a leader (Boise & Fiset, 2019). Trust is created through open, honest communication. When leaders communicate, they must remember that people appreciate clarity and will respect honesty (Brown, 2018). It is also important to remember that communication is not just about the way one speaks or presents information but also about how one listens (Hoerr, 2015). Teachers now know more about student learning than ever before, and the job of a principal has come to include much more than modelling best practices for teachers (Hoerr, 2007). Simply because principals are no longer necessarily the experts on what happens in the classroom does not mean they cannot make an impact on teaching and learning. Leadership must be sustainable, which entails not merely accepting what has been done in the past, but striving to change in positive ways for those they serve (Sanford et al., 2019).

As the world changes, the students and families that we welcome into our schools change as well. The role of a leader, however, has remained "static, hierarchical, and linear" (Sanford et al., 2019), and needs to be viewed differently as a new wave of leaders enter the educational system. It is necessary for leaders to communicate with others in order to make the best decisions based on the needs of their people (Brown, 2018; Sanford et al., 2019). Leaders who display a clear understanding of how to encourage and foster teacher growth will be seen as more trustworthy by their staff (Boies & Fiset, 2019), and will adapt their leadership accordingly.

Facilitating Growth

As part of effective instructional leadership, it is essential for principals to provide opportunities for meaningful teacher learning in order to shape this growth among their staff.

These opportunities could include professional development, professional learning communities, and teacher evaluation. Much of what government departments attempt to introduce into the education system, in terms of reform, focuses on teacher performance and accountability in response to governmental reviews (Day, 2020). This emphasis often comes with "external pressure" (Aninluoma et al., 2018, p. 76) for upgrades in policies and procedures. A focus on accountability brings into question the autonomy that continues to be crucial to the professionalism of teachers (Day, 2020). While attempts to improve education do not always eliminate autonomy, they do tend to decrease the voice of teachers when considering what strategies or programs are implemented in their classrooms (Day, 2020).

Some educators argue that teacher autonomy is not the biggest factor in improving teacher performance, and leaders should instead be striving for whole-school autonomy (Day, 2020). Teachers appreciate administrators who outline their expectations for "professional growth and setting goals" (Paufler et al., 2020, p. 5), especially during the evaluation process. Without sacrificing teacher autonomy in both professional development and classroom settings, this may be an optimal place to begin laying the foundation of a school's collective autonomy. This exemplifies the importance for principals to consider both accountability and autonomy when designing plans for teacher learning. This balance is crucial because a "culture of collegiality, trust, commitment and professional collaboration" (Antinluoma et al., 2018, p. 84) continue to be critical pillars in establishing sound teacher learning practices among efficient instructional leaders. Principals must create learning opportunities for teachers in the same way that teachers would create learning experiences for students. Professional development needs to be relevant to teachers, must be presented in a way that engages the audience, and requires that the importance of what teachers are learning be clearly articulated (Hoerr, 2016).

How school leaders plan for and meet the needs of teacher learning can be eased by the creation of professional learning communities. In the current educational climate, quality instructional leadership involves the establishment of these learning communities that are indicative of strong organization and a positive culture (Antinluoma et al., 2018). A challenging part of instructional leadership is creating conditions that are optimal for teacher learning, because teachers may view new ideas as a threat rather than as an opportunity (Berg, 2020). This can be true even when data proves that teachers are not connecting with students academically, socially, or behaviourally. Various studies have considered learning communities to be one of the most successful approaches to improve teacher and student outcomes (Antinluoma et al., 2018).

Influencing Achievement

With changes in the role of a principal over time, the connection between instructional leadership and student achievement is not as direct as it may have been in the past. Using trusting relationships and teacher learning, principals can still enhance classroom instruction, which will in turn influence student learning. However, it is now more important that principals act as catalysts for engagement and equity. Students who find what they are learning "relevant and interesting" (Hoerr, 2016, p. 86) are more likely to experience higher levels of success. Considering how one learns best is a good way to see the value of being engaged in one's learning. Principals can use their instructional leadership to increase student engagement by assisting teachers to appreciate how this engagement can translate to student success.

Conducting instructional leadership with a mindset for equity in education can alter the effect that a principal has on student achievement. Principals can encourage teachers to enact efforts that afford each student the chance to "make connections, think analytically, solve problems" (Nadelson et al., 2020, p. 2) and make their learning relevant. Regardless of their ability or standing, every student deserves the opportunity to create understandings that will benefit them when they leave our educational systems.

A significant barrier for students reaching their full potential during their time in school continues to be attendance. Understanding that the effects principals have on student achievement are generally indirect, attendance seems to be an aspect of the educational experience on which principals can have a considerable impact. In order to improve student attendance, schools must leverage relationships and communication with families. Principals are able to communicate directly with families, establish guidelines for teachers to contact the parents of students, and establish and enforce rules that attempt to control student absences (Bartanen, 2020). This proves that while the role principals play in affecting student outcomes is different from it once was, it is still considered very important.

Acknowledging Context

The daily routines of a principal are becoming a more impulsive balance between concentrating on the teaching and learning in classrooms and the management of the school as an organization (Huang et al., 2020). Therefore, instructional leadership does not look the same for every principal. The work context often determines how they are able to lead. Successful leaders can emerge from different situations; however, the methods that each use may vary. A primary example of differing contexts is that of schools in rural areas compared to those in urban centres. Many schools in rural areas have teaching principals who perform both the role of a teacher and the duties of an administrator. In some cases, this is due to the size of the school, but in others there is a belief that those who are "connected to teaching and learning are better able to enact instructional leadership" (Wallin et al., 2019, p. 23). Teaching principals hold a unique position as instructional leaders because of their work in classrooms; these principals draw on their first-hand experiences in order to model best practices (Preston & Barnes, 2017).

Teaching principals are able to practise instructional leadership in a different way than the conventional principal. This dual role can have obstacles such as limited time to visit classrooms, scheduling difficulties, minimal resources, or having low achievement averages as a result of small populations (Wallin et al., 2019). Teaching principals see benefits to their position, as well. With smaller numbers of teachers on staff, rural principals tend to depend on teamwork and believe in the idea of working with teachers rather than teachers working for them (Preston & Barnes, 2017). Rural principals also tend to be more approachable and meet with teachers in both officials and casual settings to discuss aspects of classroom teaching, which teachers appreciate (Preston & Barnes, 2017).

Another relationship that is very important to principals in rural areas, which assists with effective instructional leadership, is that with parents and the community. Instructional leaders can develop the environment for learning by taking advantage of their connections within the community (Wallin et al., 2019). Effective instructional leadership in rural settings "is about welcoming, listening, and responding" (Preston & Barnes, 2017, p. 9), which can apply to staff and students, but also parents and other members of the community. This can leverage the acquisition of resources from the community that can assist in improving student achievement and well-being, such as Child and Family Services and other agencies that support students and their families (Wallin et al., 2019). It can also be said that principals, especially teaching principals, in rural schools need to be leaders in both the school and the community (Preston & Barnes, 2017). This continues to display the importance for instructional leadership when it comes to elements of the community and its context.

Conclusion

As the role of principals continues to evolve, the facets of instructional leadership become more crucial. Even though the daily routines of principals can be scattered between leadership and management duties (Huang et al., 2020), principals still play a vital role in how teachers instruct and how students learn. In fact, it has been proposed that "12% to 25% of overall

student attainment" can be attributed to school leadership (Boies & Fiset, 2019, p. 226). This supports that how principals build trusting relationships, facilitate teacher learning, impact student achievement, and work within their context will continue to determine their effectiveness as instructional leaders and the consequent success of their school.

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Transition to High School: Added Risk Factors

Nicole Harwood

Abstract

For many students, the journey from middle school to high school is marked by significant social, emotional, and behavioural changes. Undetected student needs and lack of parental engagement can contribute to a negative transition experience. When students struggle to adapt to new challenges and demands without supports, they are at a greater risk of failure. Although the transition to high school can be a formidable time, when teachers and guardians intervene in a timely manner by identifying student needs and providing support and engagement, there is an increased likelihood of smooth adjustment and academic success.

The transition from middle school to high school can be a daunting experience. Social, emotional, and behavioural changes make it challenging for students to adjust to a new environment (Longobardi et al., 2016). If their academic abilities and needs are not detected early, they can be placed into the wrong programming. Lack of parental engagement can also contribute to a negative transition experience, leading to reduced student regulated learning (SRL) and lower achievement levels (Thomas et al., 2019). The passage from middle school to high school can be a critical factor in projecting a student's overall success, and must not be overlooked by educational systems.

Identifying and Responding to Changes

The transition from grade 8 to grade 9 can pose to be a very challenging period marked by socio-emotional changes, friendship changes, and academic changes (Benner et al., 2017). During this transition, a student's adaptive motivation and achievement goals can also be put to the test (YoonJung & Kim, 2019), with students reporting that they have more expectations placed upon them, with commensurate added responsibilities (Corbett, 2019). Additional factors include moving away from friends and family in home communities, navigating a new school, the development and loss of friendships, adjustment to new teachers, faster paced curriculums, and new ways of assessment such as a credit-based acquisition system.

Not all students cope well with the challenges, stressors, and anxiety that can accompany the transitional changes from middle school to high school. Poor mental toughness can make a student's transition a debilitating experience (St. Clair-Thompson et al., 2016), and can create apprehension over grades (Strand, 2020). Adolescents can perceive imminent school transition as a threat, while others may perceive it as a challenge (Roder & Muller, 2020). High school transition may also trigger a decreased sense of school belonging and an increased sense of depression and loneliness for students who have fewer friendship supports (Benner et al., 2017). When students transition to a new school, they may lack trust and express hesitancy in reaching out for support as a result of previous negative school experiences (Yeager et al., 2020). It is critical that teachers are cognizant of the many changes and additional risk factors that can impede a student from experiencing a smooth transition to high school.

Educators who recognize and validate the changes and challenges that students face during their transitional journey to high school will be more successful in supporting their students during this vulnerable period (Longobardi et al., 2016). Students who have the required tools to cope are more successful at controlling their emotions and physical symptoms of anxiety, and are more likely to have a positive transition (St. Clair-Thompson et al., 2016). In addition to teaching individual social competencies and academic skills, teachers can benefit by striving to establish a welcoming environment and a positive classroom management style (Roder & Muller, 2020). Teachers and support staff can model resilience and perseverance, and

assist students in setting goals in order to help boost their mental toughness, which will help them to manage their newfound academic workload as they begin to feel more comfortable in a high school setting (St. Clair-Thompson et al., 2016). When students establish trust in their teachers, they will be more likely to discuss their emotional state of well-being and their future aspirations (Yeager et al., 2020). Educators who recognize and respond to students' social, emotional, and behavioural changes can play a monumental role in their students' positive transition to high school.

Effective Communication and Programming

Unfortunately, students can be placed into the wrong programming if middle school teachers and high school teachers do not have the opportunity to collaborate in order to discuss student needs and plan necessary adaptations. Students who are misplaced experience greater stress and frustration during the transition process (Strand, 2020), and they may view their new teachers as impersonal and unsympathetic of their needs, creating a perceived lack of support and understanding (Longobardi et al., 2016). Students with special education requirements can have a concerning low level of goal achievement, adding another level of vulnerability to the transition process. Sadly, schools are not always prepared to meet the diverse needs of students in advance, which can make it difficult to place students in the programming that they may require. When teachers are not familiar with ninth grade academics, or are not confident in their teaching assignment, this can cause friction and contribute to a rough transition period for students (Somers & Garcia, 2016). High school transitions can also be hampered by increased waiting time and added frustration when a student has transferred from a different school division and the cumulative file has not yet been received by the new school. When programming requirements are not met, students can lose self-confidence and trust, and have more difficulty coping with the transitional experience.

When grade 8 and grade 9 teachers have an opportunity to collaborate prior to students entering high school, teachers can be much more prepared to meet the academic and emotional needs of the students, starting on day one of their arrival. Interdisciplinary teaching teams can subsequently benefit ninth-grade educators by convening regularly to coordinate class work, instruction, and behavioural management practices to enhance students' academic performance and engagement (Somers & Garcia, 2016). Students' relationships with teachers and peers can be improved when teachers are prepared in advance for the students that they will be welcoming into their class (Longobardi et al., 2016). The most successful students are often those that are guided by individuals who are caring, personal, and motivational (Yeager et al., 2020). Teachers can benefit by gathering information regarding students' academic history and the previous adaptations that may have been made for them (Mackenzie et al., 2012). It is important for teachers and support staff to take advantage of all opportunities to collaborate with one another, because lack of communication and improper programming can impede smooth high school transitions.

Parental Engagement

When parents and guardians are not engaged in their child's education, they are not equipped to identify their child's academic and emotional stress (DeSpain et al., 2018). Students who have reported that their parents have had less engagement with their learning have also reported lower autonomous motivation and academic efficacy (Thomas et al., 2018). There is an alarming negative relationship between the number of students who are strained during their initial year of high school and the quality of provision programs offered to parents and guardians during this transition period (Mac Iver et al., 2015). Teachers often grapple with how to build strong partnerships with students and their families (DeSpain et al., 2018). Some schools fall short of effectively communicating information to parents in regards to student course

requirements, student progress, and available student supports, causing more difficulties for students as they transition into high school (Mac Iver et al., 2015). Healthy parental engagement is a significant component of a positive high school transition.

Schools can use many strategies to enhance parental engagement. Although some parents tend to take a step back with the expectation of their children to be more independent as their children transition into high school, parental involvement can play a large role in adolescents prevailing over critical moments that may be characterized by trepidation, uncertainty, and peer shortcomings that are often associated with the transition to high school (Muscara et al., 2018). It is important for guardians to show interest in their adolescents' education by being informed and initiating discussion, rather than controlling their academic work (Strand, 2020). Parental influence can also depend on a family's socio-economic position, subjective characteristics, and cultural status (Ule et al., 2015). Mindful of the diversity and range of students who may participate, schools can provide informal campus tours and welcoming activities such as barbeques or meet-and-greet activities in order to help facilitate parental involvement (Chambers & Coffey, 2019). Communication with parents and guardians via newsletter, synervoice messages, and positive phone calls home can be very effective in keeping parents informed, which can increase understanding, support, and engagement (Chambers & Coffey, 2019). Automated weekly memos, classroom apps, podcasts, and up-to-date school websites can also inform parents about upcoming events and deadlines, student assessments, and community supports. Schools have the capacity to support parental engagement and can assist in building positive relationships between students and their parents.

Conclusion

The transitional journey from middle school to high school can be a challenging aspect of development for many adolescents. Imminent changes, communication and programming, and parental engagement must all be taken into account when students transition from middle school to high school. A negative transition experience can be a catalyst for added social, emotional, and behavioural stress, whereby students find themselves struggling to cope with new adaptations and developmental tasks. If students have difficulty navigating their way through their initial year of high school, they may find themselves at an increased risk of academic distress and failure, consequently veering off track for graduation. Although the transition from middle school to high school can be a precarious time for many students, when educators and guardians intervene early in this journey by identifying individual student needs and providing support and engagement, there is a greater likelihood of student success.

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