
Electronic Theses and Dissertations, 2004-2019

2015

Principals' Lived Experiences in Childhood Poverty Impacting Resiliency of Students in Poverty

Jonathan Rasmussen
University of Central Florida

 Part of the [Education Commons](#)

Find similar works at: <https://stars.library.ucf.edu/etd>

University of Central Florida Libraries <http://library.ucf.edu>

This Doctoral Dissertation (Open Access) is brought to you for free and open access by STARS. It has been accepted for inclusion in Electronic Theses and Dissertations, 2004-2019 by an authorized administrator of STARS. For more information, please contact STARS@ucf.edu.

STARS Citation

Rasmussen, Jonathan, "Principals' Lived Experiences in Childhood Poverty Impacting Resiliency of Students in Poverty" (2015). *Electronic Theses and Dissertations, 2004-2019*. 1172.

<https://stars.library.ucf.edu/etd/1172>

PRINCIPALS' LIVED EXPERIENCES IN CHILDHOOD POVERTY IMPACTING
RESILIENCY OF STUDENTS IN POVERTY

by

JONATHAN RASMUSSEN
B.A. Western State College of Colorado, 2002
M. Ed. Nova Southeastern University, 2007

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Education
in the College of Education and Human Performance
at the University of Central Florida
Orlando, Florida

Spring Term
2015

Major Professor: Suzanne Martin

© 2015 Jonathan E. Rasmussen

ABSTRACT

The number of children living in poverty within the United States is on the rise, which translates to more public school students experiencing those risk factors associated with poverty. Given the severity of the negative effect living in poverty has on the likelihood of academic success, paired with the current climate of accountability in U.S. public schools, it is imperative that educational leaders understand how to create a school culture that fosters resilience in students from poverty. The purpose of this study was to examine principals' lived experiences in childhood poverty impacts the decisions they make. More precisely, it examines how their childhood affects their decision making in regard to creating a culture of academic resilience for students living in low socioeconomic conditions. Additionally, this study identified strategies that are effective, as perceived by school principals who grew up in low socioeconomic conditions, in creating a culture of resilience to improve academic success for students living in low socioeconomic conditions. This study provides valuable information to school leaders who strive to create an environment that fosters educational resilience in children living in poverty. The results are particularly salient to principals, as the information comes directly from the perspective of school principals who grew up in poverty, were educationally resilient, and are now creating a school atmosphere that fosters educational resilience in their students who live in poverty.

This dissertation is dedicated to my amazingly supportive family who have provided me with so much through my life.

Michele, for more than twenty years you have been my strength; supporting me no matter what I decide to do – even something as crazy as going for my doctorate. Thank you for the love-filled life you have provided me and our daughters. “And the wonder of it all, is that you just don’t realize how much I love you.”

Mom and Dad, without the support and encouragement you have provided me through the years there is no way I would have the life I have today. Thank you for putting up with a child like me.

Michael, it is from you that I have learned to always stay positive – no matter what tests God may give. Your strong will and boundless humor provide me a model that I strive to achieve.

Frank and Beverly, your support and love is truly appreciated. I will never be able to repay you for all you’ve done for me.

Kaelyn and Haylee, don’t tell everyone else, but you are the most important people on this list and in my life. When God blessed me with the two of you, He gave my life purpose and meaning. Each of you is a smart, talented, beautiful woman who will accomplish great things.

Thank you all for your love and support!

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I must first acknowledge the person who gave me this opportunity. Dr. Suzanne Martin, without you and your creation of the National Urban Special Education Leadership Initiative, this would not be possible. I am blessed to be part of NUSELI. Thank you for your dedication and devotion to students with disabilities, and your belief that well trained school leaders can create an environment in which all students can be successful. I am grateful for all you have taught me, and the support you have provided.

Thank you Dr. Deborah Brown for the support and advice you have given me throughout this process. You have been a trusted counselor, whose wisdom has assisted and comforted me both academically and professionally.

Thank you Dr. Martha Lue Stewart for sharing your passion for and knowledge of helping students in need. I hope that the work I do for students in poverty will make you proud.

Thank you Dr. Rosemarye Taylor for sharing with me your knowledge of school leadership. Your assistance in this process has been invaluable.

To my dissertation committee as a whole, thank you for the guidance and feedback you have provided. Your assistance has made me a better scholar, and improved my dissertation so that it will hopefully have an impact on education.

I would also like to acknowledge the other members of my NUSELI cohort. Betsy, Chris, Eric, Hannah, Ian, and Julie; thank you for the friendship, support, and laughs you have given me through this process. I am still unsure how I was chosen to be part of such an amazing group of individuals, but I am grateful that I was. I have met six lifelong friends.

Lastly, I must acknowledge my family – Michele, Kaelyn, Haylee, Mom, Dad, Michael, Frank, and Beverly. Thank you all so much for the love and support you have provided me throughout my life. I do not have enough space in this document to explain how much you all mean to me and all the reasons why I love each of you. I hope that my daily actions show you how important you – and your love and support – are to me. Thank you!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES	xii
LIST OF TABLES	xiii
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY	1
Achievement Gap.....	3
Statement of the Problem.....	5
Purpose of Study.....	5
Conceptual Framework.....	6
Research Questions.....	8
Research Design.....	8
Definitions of Terms.....	10
Delimitations.....	11
Limitations	12
Significance of the Study.....	12
Summary.....	13
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW.....	14
Introduction.....	14
Poverty and the Achievement Gap	14

Resilience	15
Protective Factors in the Community	18
Protective Factors in School	19
The Resiliency Wheel	20
School Leadership.....	27
Leadership Theories.....	28
Transactional and Transformational Leadership Theories	29
Instructional Leadership Theory	30
Distributed and Shared Leadership Theories	31
Situational Leadership Theory	33
Servant Leadership Theory	34
Summary.....	35
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY	36
Introduction.....	36
Phenomenological Research	36
Research Questions.....	37
Reliability.....	38
Validity	38
Procedures for Sample Selection	39

Population—Sample	39
Target Schools	40
Effectively Created Culture of Resilience	40
Raised in Low-socioeconomic Conditions	41
Data Collection	42
Data Analysis	44
Limitations	45
CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS	46
Introduction.....	46
Purpose of Study.....	46
Research Questions.....	46
Participant Summary.....	47
Mrs. Rosario.....	48
Mr. Jamal	49
Mr. Stevens	50
Research Question Results.....	52
Research Question 1	52
Meeting Individual Student and Staff Needs	53
Establishing High Expectations for Staff and Students	55

Involving Students and Parents in the Education Process	57
Respecting all Students	59
Research Question 2	62
Mrs. Rosario.....	62
Mr. Jamal	64
Mr. Stevens	67
Additional Findings	70
CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION	73
Introduction.....	73
Need for Resilience Research.....	73
Purpose of the Study	75
Discussion.....	76
Recommendations for Further Research.....	78
Conclusion	82
APPENDIX A: TABLE OF SCHOOLS WITH FRL AND AMO CRITERIA	87
APPENDIX B: UCF IRB APPROVAL LETTER	91
APPENDIX C: SCHOOL DISTRICT RESEARCH REQUEST/APPROVAL.....	93
APPENDIX D: LETTER TO PERSPECTIVE PARTICIPANTS	100
APPENDIX E: SCREENING QUESTIONNAIRE.....	103

APPENDIX F: SCREENING QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS FOR FINAL PARTICIPANTS	105
APPENDIX G: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL	108
LIST OF REFERENCES	111

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1 The Resiliency Wheel.....	22
------------------------------------	----

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Participant Demographic Information	52
Table 2: Leadership Belief Themes of Principals.....	61
Table 3: Leadership Practices	69
Table 4: Leadership Beliefs Correspondence to Resiliency Wheel and TSL Practices	71
Table 5: Leadership Practices Correspondence to Resiliency Wheel and TSL Practices	72
Table 6: Leadership Connections to Resiliency Wheel Steps	84

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

According to U.S. Census Bureau reports for the year 2012, 16.1 million children under the age of 18 were living in poverty – that equates to 21.8% of our nation’s children living in poverty (DeNavas-Walt, Proctor, & Smith, 2013). In fact, while children under the age of 18 make up only 24.4% of the total population of the United States, they represent 35% of all the people living in poverty here (Aud et al., 2012).

The 2013 poverty guideline, the family income level that is used in determining eligibility for most government assistance programs, states that the poverty level for a family of four is \$23,550 (Department of Health and Human Services, 2013). This income guideline is important in education, because poverty levels are used to determine a student’s eligibility for assistance through the National School Lunch Program. According to the Department of Agriculture (2013), the government agency that oversees the National School Lunch Program, in order for a child to receive reduced price meals, their family income level must be at, or below, 185% of the national poverty guideline (\$43,568 for a family of four). The threshold for a child to receive free meals is a family income at, or below, 130% of the national poverty guideline (\$30,615 for a family of four).

While it differs by region of the country and the community in which a family resides, it is estimated that a family needs a minimum of twice the poverty guideline to survive – not thrive (Fass, 2009). In fact, the National Center for Children in Poverty (NCCP) classifies low-income families as a combination of those who are poor (earning less than 100% Federal Poverty Level [FPL]) and those who are near-poor (earning 100-199% FPL) (Addy, Englehardt, & Skinner, 2013).

A child who comes from a poor home is more likely to experience multiple risk factors, including living in a single parent home, health problems, poor school environments and high absenteeism, just to name a few, all of which are factors that contribute to the likelihood of poor school performance (Felner & DeVries, 2006; Romero & Lee, 2008).

Data for children under the age of 18 living in homes with a single mother show that 47.2% were in poverty, while only 11.1% of children living with married parents were in poverty (DeNavas-Walt et al., 2013). The poverty gap is even wider for children under the age of six, with 56% of those living with a single mother living in poverty compared to 12.5% of children under six living with married parents (DeNavas-Walt et al., 2013).

Children living in, or being born into, poverty are more likely than those from higher socioeconomic statuses to experience health risk factors including low birth weight, nutrient deficiencies, increased fetal exposure to alcohol and nicotine, increased exposure to lead, increased childhood exposure to second hand smoke, all of which have been shown to have a detrimental effect on school performance (Brooks-Gunn & Duncan, 1997; Donovan & Cross, 2002; Fiscella & Williams, 2004). Each of these factors impact cognition independently, and magnify the negative effects when more than one is present in a child. Donovan and Cross (2002) add that “while the influence of each factor is detrimental regardless of income, the incidence of each rises as income level drops, increasing the risk that a child living in poverty will experience multiple biological insults” (pp. 375-376).

In addition to the health risks stated above, children living in low-income environs often also face educational risk factors involving the school environment. Schools in high poverty and/or urban areas typically have teachers who are less qualified and have less experience than

more affluent schools (Darling-Hammond, 2010; Donovan & Cross, 2002). Inexperienced, non-credentialed teachers can have a detrimental effect on students who are already at a disadvantage (Clotfelter, Ladd, & Vigdor, 2007; Fullan, 2006).

Low-income students are also at risk of academic failure due to absenteeism from school. While the likelihood that chronic absenteeism will occur changes by grade level, children living below the Federal Poverty Line (FPL) are more likely to be chronic absentees than their peers from higher socioeconomic status backgrounds (Romero & Lee, 2008). For example, 21% of kindergarteners living in poverty are chronically absent, compared to 8% of their peers who are not living in poverty (Romero & Lee, 2008). Sickness and school absence, along with other factors associated with living in poverty, have an impact on students' academic achievement.

Achievement Gap

The many risk factors students from impoverished homes experience can lead to situations in which students from poverty are more often labeled as needing special education services, or as being at-risk for academic failure (Williams, 2003). Identifying a student as having a disability or tracking them as being at-risk often results in lower educational expectations; thus, leading to lower test scores, higher dropout rates, and lower grade point averages (Artiles, Kozleski, Trent, Osher, & Ortiz, 2010; Newman et al., 2011). On the other end of the disproportionality spectrum is the underrepresentation of low-socioeconomic students “in programs or tracks for ‘gifted,’ ‘talented,’ ‘college bound,’ ‘level-one,’ and ‘honors’ students” (Williams, 2003, p. 66). This underrepresentation within the high level academic

programs, such as gifted, leaves high ability students from low-socioeconomic groups “failing to reach their potential and failing to gain access to needed educational services” (Whiting, 2009, p. 232)

Multiple measures of achievement across numerous studies have identified differences in the success rates between different groups of students, these are referred to as achievement gaps. Achievement gaps are most widely prevalent between socioeconomic groups, racial/ethnic groups, and students of varying abilities (i.e. general education and special education; Howard, 2010; Aud et al., 2012; Aud et al., 2013). Some examples of measures in which the achievement gap is evident include dropout rate, graduation rate, and grade point average (GPA). For instance, a gap is evident between socioeconomic groups in regard to graduation rate, with the lowest rate amongst low-income students (52%) increasing to the highest rate for high-income students (82%; Aud, et al., 2013).

Williams (2003) stated the issue with achievement best when she wrote, “As long as there are gaps in achievement between groups of students, we are not doing all that we need to do to make sure that all children are going to be competitive in the 21st century” (p. 58). Thus, it is important for school principals to understand the factors that lead to achievement gaps, and have the knowledge and resources to close the achievement gap.

Adding to the pressure for school principals to close the achievement gap is the presence of language in the No Child Left Behind Act (2001), which specifically states a requirement for each school to make “adequate yearly progress” through the creation of “measurable annual objectives for continuous and substantial improvements for ... the achievement of ... economically disadvantaged students” among other typically disadvantaged subgroups (No Child

Left Behind Act, 2001,). The responsibility of showing academic progress for low-income students places extra pressure on schools that serve a large percentage of students living in poverty.

Today's school principal must find a way to increase the academic achievement of students living in poverty. The answer lies in understanding educational resilience and the ways in which a school can create a culture of resilience amongst its students. In order to create the proper conditions for resilience, it is important to not only create programs and policies that increase the protective factors to poverty, but to also mitigate the risk factors experienced by children living in poverty (Cauce, Stewart, Rodriguez, Cochran, & Ginzler, 2003).

Statement of the Problem

A magnitude of data shows that the number of children living in poverty is on the rise, which translates to more public school students experiencing those risk factors associated with poverty. Given the severity of the negative effect living in poverty has on the likelihood of academic success, paired with the current climate of accountability in U.S. public schools, how do educational leaders create a school culture that fosters resilience in students from poverty?

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study was to determine whether the lived experiences of childhood poverty have an effect on decisions principals make as school leaders. Additionally, this study

identified strategies that are effective, as perceived by study participants, in creating a culture of resilience to improve academic success for students living in low-socioeconomic conditions.

The results of this study provide valuable information to school principals who strive to create an environment that fosters educational resilience in children living in poverty. The results are particularly salient to the principals, as the information comes directly from the perspective of school principals who grew up in poverty, were educationally resilient, and are now creating a school atmosphere that fosters educational resilience in their students who live in poverty.

Conceptual Framework

Henderson and Milstein (2003) utilized risk factor research and resiliency research to develop *The Resiliency Wheel*. This tool for educators “indicates what must be in place in institutions, especially schools, for resiliency to flourish in the lives of students and adults who learn and work there” (Henderson & Milstein, 2003, p. 12). *The Resiliency Wheel* is made up of six sections, that when combined, should “mitigate risk factors in the environment” and “build resiliency in the environment” (Henderson & Milstein, 2003, p. 12).

Steps one through three of *The Resiliency Wheel*, are intended to mitigate risk factors in the environment. Those steps are increase bonding, set clear and consistent boundaries, and teach life skills (Henderson & Milstein, 2003). These three steps come from the risk factor research of Hawkins and Catalano (1990). Additionally, Hawkins, Catalano, and Miller (1992) state that “a risk-focused prevention approach does not require that risk factors be manipulated directly” (p. 85). It is understood that there are some risk factors that may be impossible to remove or manipulate. “In these instances, the goal of prevention efforts will be to mediate or

moderate the effects of the identified but non-manipulable risk factors” (Hawkins, Catalano & Miller, 1992, pp. 85-86). In terms of this study, the principals are unable to take the families out of poverty, so they must put practices in place to lessen the negative effects of poverty on their students’ academic success.

The three steps (steps four through six) for building resiliency in the environment – provide caring and support, and communicate high expectations, and provide opportunities for meaningful participation – are derived from the work of Benard (1991) and elaborated upon by Henderson and Milstein (2003). According to Benard (1995):

When a school redefines its culture by building a vision and commitment on the part of the whole school community that is based on these three critical factors of resilience, it has the power to serve as a “protective shield” for all students and a beacon of light for youth from troubled homes and impoverished communities. (p. 4)

The researcher used *The Resiliency Wheel*, created by Henderson and Milstein (2003), as the conceptual framework by which he analyzed the interview data that was collected from study participants. The idea to use *The Resiliency Wheel* as the conceptual framework arose during the data collection and analysis processes of this study. The identification of a conceptual framework at this stage in research is supported by the work of Leshem and Trafford (2007), which states that one of the “traditional locations of conceptual framework” is that it “may emerge as a conceptual model after the fieldwork, thereby providing theoretical cohesion to the evidence and conclusions from theory-building research” (Leshem & Trafford, 2007, p. 100)

Research Questions

The following research questions will be investigated through this study:

1. How do effective school principals from a low socioeconomic childhood report that their background impacts their leadership beliefs in creating a culture of resilience when serving students living in poverty?
2. What practices do effective school principals from a low socioeconomic childhood perceive to be most productive for creating a culture of resilience when serving students living in poverty?

Research Design

This qualitative research design utilized the transcendental phenomenological research method to offer an explanation of the impact of a low socioeconomic childhood on principals of target elementary schools, as perceived by the principals themselves. Transcendental phenomenological research endeavors to provide a rich description of a lived experience, rather than an interpretation of the experience (Creswell, 2007; Groenewald, 2004; Moustakas, 1994). In reporting the findings the researcher focused on common themes experienced by study participants, utilizing direct quotes from interviews to support the identified themes (Slavin, 2007). The researcher minimized bias and prejudgment through the epoche process, which involved openly and repeatedly identifying and setting aside prejudgments (Moustakas, 1994).

The researcher utilized publicly accessible Florida Department of Education (FLDOE) school grades, annual measurable objectives (AMO), and demographic data to identify school

principals who have at least three years of experience as a school principal of a school with at least 40% of its students receiving free or reduced lunch benefits, and whose school met AMO goals in reading and mathematics for the economically disadvantaged subgroup in the 2012-13 school year.

All school principals who met the above criteria were sent a description of the study, and a screening questionnaire. This questionnaire contained general questions about their background, e.g., parents' highest level of education, grandparents' highest level of education, and socioeconomic status while growing up. Using the results of the questionnaire, the researcher identified three leaders who met the above listed criteria and who grew up in a low socioeconomic environment to participate in this study.

Once the study participants were identified, a semi-structured interview was conducted with each participant. Interview questions were open-ended questions designed to get to the essence of the lived experience of being a school principal from a low-socioeconomic background who has effectively created a culture of resilience for students living in poverty. The interview also focused on whether each principal's childhood has an impact on their leadership and decision making. Audio recordings utilizing a LiveScribe Pen were used to capture interview information.

The audio recordings from the interviews were then transcribed, and the researcher performed phenomenological reduction of the data. Beginning with bracketing to minimize researcher bias, thus allowing the researcher to look at the data from a fresh, unprejudiced point of view, horizontalization was performed on the data. Once the data was horizontalized – by removing any data that did not pertain to the topic or was repetitive, the researcher grouped the

horizons into themes. From the identified themes, the researcher wrote a textual description of the phenomena and then provided the description to the appropriate interviewee for member checking. Once this process was complete for the data collected from all study participants, the researcher compiled all of the individual textual descriptions into one description of the essence of the phenomena.

Definitions of Terms

It is important that all readers have the same definition of terms that are used regularly throughout the description of this study. The following terms and phrases are utilized in this study in accordance with the definitions below:

Annual Measurable Objective (AMO): Reading, mathematics and writing proficiency goals calculated yearly for Florida schools for the subgroups American Indian, Asian, Black or African American, Hispanic, White, Economically Disadvantaged, English Language Learners, Students with Disabilities, and All Students (FLDOE, 2013a). These goals meet the Annual Yearly Progress requirement of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001.

Annual Yearly Progress (AYP): Requirements set forth by NCLB necessitating states to show adequate academic achievement for students who: (a) are economically disadvantaged, (b) are from major racial and ethnic categories, (c) have disabilities, and/or (d) are limited English proficient (NCLB, 2002).

educational resilience: Obtaining academic success despite the negative effects of risk factors experienced by an individual (Swanson & Spencer, 2012).

low socioeconomic: Any family earning less than 200% Federal Poverty Level (Addy, Englehardt, & Skinner, 2013b).

poverty: The state of living in which families are unable to provide for the basic necessities of life. Statistically, the US government considers poverty to be that in which a family earns 100% or less Federal Poverty Level (Department of Health and Human Services, 2013).

protective factors: An outside influence on a person that promotes academic success (Werner, Bierman, & French, 1971).

resilience: “A label that defines the interaction of a child with trauma or a toxic environment in which success, as judged by societal norms, is achieved by virtue of the child’s abilities, motivations, and support systems” (Condly, 2006, p. 213).

risk factor: An outside influence on a person that makes academic success more difficult (Swanson & Spencer, 2012).

study school: The United States Census Bureau defines its Category IV (the highest category) “poverty area” as an area in which 40% or more of the residents live at or below poverty (Bishaw, 2011). For the purposes of this study, the researcher will utilize the 40% marker set by the USCB to identify study schools.

Delimitations

This study was delimited to elementary schools with 40% or greater free or reduced lunch participation in a large, urban Central Florida. Additionally, the sample schools had met their AMO in mathematics and reading for economically disadvantaged students. Data for this study

was collected through face-to-face interviews, as well as, follow up phone conversations and e-mails.

Limitations

The major limitation of this study was the reliance on self-reporting information of childhood socioeconomic status, which some people may not have been comfortable reporting. The lack of willingness to self-report may have limited the pool of possible research participants. Additionally, once the final participants were identified, the data collected through interviews relied on the memory of the participants, as well as their honesty and willingness to share openly. Some participants may have found it difficult to share details of their childhood. The researcher attempted to minimize these limitations through building a relationship with the participants and ensuring the confidentiality of the participants.

Significance of the Study

This study of the leadership beliefs and practices of elementary school principals who grew up in low socioeconomic conditions and are now creating a culture of resilience for economically disadvantaged students contributes new knowledge and informs practice and policy. Existing information is limited in the area of principals' lived experiences in childhood poverty impacting academic resiliency of students living in poverty. A study of this type enhances the current body of research on resiliency, and initiates contribution to a new body of research on the impact of childhood poverty on school leadership.

Additionally, this study informs school principals and should have a positive impact on leadership practices in serving students living in poverty. Given that fewer than 16% of the high poverty schools in this population met their AMO in reading and mathematics for economically disadvantaged students, school principals can use the information found in this study to assist in building a culture of resilience in their school. Likewise, school districts can use this study to inform policy for schools within their district that have large concentrations of students living in poverty.

Summary

This chapter has provided an introduction to the risk factors students living in poverty face in achieving academic success, as well as how the Resiliency Wheel can help to create a culture of resilience to mitigate these risk factors. A review of the literature concerning resiliency and leadership theories as they pertain to improving academic success for students living in poverty is presented in Chapter 2. Chapter 3 discusses the screening questionnaire and research methodology utilized in this study. A summary of the research participants, as well as, the findings of this study are provided in Chapter 4. In Chapter 5, there is a discussion on the results of the study, its implications, and recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter has been organized to provide perspective on the protective factors that promote academic resilience in students from poverty. Special attention is paid to the six steps in *The Resiliency Wheel*, which provides the conceptual framework for this study. Additionally, this chapter provides a review of the major leadership theories most prevalent in the current educational leadership theory literature. The information provided in this chapter provides a foundational knowledge for the collection, analysis, and interpretation of the data for this study.

Poverty and the Achievement Gap

“Over 50 years, numerous studies have documented how poverty and related social conditions (e.g., lack of access to health care, early childhood education, stable housing, etc.) affect child development and student achievement” (Noguera, 2011, p. 10). Unfortunately, even with all the studies showing the effect living in poverty has on a student’s chances of academic success, no progress has been made in closing the achievement gap between students living in low-income and high-income families.

Using data from 19 nationally representative studies for cohort groups of children born from 1943 to 2008, Reardon (2011) measured the trend in the achievement gap between students living in low- and high-income families, and found an approximate 75% increase in the achievement gap between children born in the early 1940s and those born in 2001, and a 30-40%

increase between children born in the mid-1970s and those born in 2001. Reardon (2011) warns that the data prior to 1975 is not as reliable as the data from 1975 to present, but even if that portion of the data is ignored, there is still an upward trend in the size of the achievement gap based on family income. In contrast, the same study found that the black-white achievement gap has followed an opposite trend from the income achievement gap – decreasing substantially from the 1940s to present (Reardon, 2011).

Bringing renewed fervor to the discussion of the income achievement gap was the authorization of the NCLB (2001), which specifically requires each school to make “adequate yearly progress” through the creation of “measurable annual objectives for continuous and substantial improvements for ... the achievement of ... economically disadvantaged students” among other typically disadvantaged subgroups (NCLB, 2001, Title I. Part A. SEC 1111(b)(2)(C)(v)(II)). This requirement to show academic progress for low-income students, while necessary, places added pressure on the principals of schools that serve a large percentage of students living in poverty. The question then becomes, how do these school leaders increase the likelihood of academic success for students living in low-income families? The answer lies in understanding educational resilience and the ways in which a school can promote resilience amongst its students.

Resilience

Since the context of this study is based on creating a school environment that promotes resiliency in students to achieve academic success, when the researcher refers to resilience, he is more specifically referring to educational resilience, which “represents a specific domain where

youth have positive educational adaptations and outcomes within the context of significant diversity” (Swanson & Spencer, 2012, p. 288).

It must be clarified that resilience is not measured in research studies, but is instead, inferred based on the presence and measurement of risk and positive adaptation (Luthar & Zelazo, 2003). A risk factor is a life event or condition that is “significantly linked with children’s subsequent maladjustment in important domains” (Luthar & Zelazo, 2003, pp. 514-515). The term positive adaptation refers to achievement “which is substantially better than what would be expected given exposure to the risk circumstance being studied” (Luthar & Zelazo, 2003, p. 515). When positive adaptation occurs in the presence of risk factors, resilience is considered to have occurred.

Resilience is not a naturally occurring trait that is inherent in all children. Instead, some children seem to be born naturally resilient, while others appear to have little or no resilience. A child’s level of resilience is formed through an “interaction between [a person’s] genetic makeup and the kind of support they receive” (Condly, 2006, p. 216). In fact, research shows that given the proper conditions, resilience can be cultivated in anyone (Cohen, 2006). In order to create the proper conditions for resilience, it is important to create programs and policies that increase the protective factors of poverty and to also mitigate the risk factors experienced by children living in poverty (Cauce et al., 2003).

The landmark longitudinal studies by Werner et al., (1971) and Werner and Smith (1992, 2001) identified several family characteristics, or protective factors, that are associated with families of children living in high-risk environs, including caring and positive mothers, educational stimulation, steadily employed mothers, and emotionally supportive family

members. Also, young children who experienced stimulating activities (e.g., visiting a zoo or park or attending church) with their mother demonstrated improved intellectual functioning and thus increased the likelihood of educational resilience (Kim-Cohen, Moffitt, Caspi, & Taylor, 2004).

It must be noted that resiliency does not just happen within at-risk youth, but occurs through the interaction between the youth and the protective factors present in the family, school, and community (Benard, 1991; Brooks, 2006; Harvey, 2007; Linqunti, 1992; Luthar, 2006; Louis, et al., 2004; Noguera, 2014). Resilience researchers are recommending approaches that bring all of these protective factors together for the benefit of children. A whole community approach is one in which the critical domains of resilience, family, school environment and community are integrated in the mission of fostering resilience through collaborative partnership and engagement” (Khanlou & Wray, 2014, p. 76). In fact, schools and communities that are working together have already seen improvement in student academic achievement. For example, in Newark, New Jersey, they have implemented the Broader, Bolder Approach, in which schools and public and private organizations work together to improve student learning. Through this program, Central High School’s “Student scores on the state assessment exam showed a 32.5 percentage point growth in the amount of students categorized as proficient in English language arts (from 36.6% in 2010 to 69.1% in 2011), and a 25.9 percentage point growth in mathematics (from 19.9% in 2010 to 46% in 2011)” (Noguera, 2011, p. 13). Thus, providing proof that protective factors in the community and schools can create resiliency in students living in poverty.

Protective Factors in the Community

Examples of protective factors at the community level include positive role models, church affiliation, and the availability of productive activities (Reis, Colbert, & Hébert, 2005; Wang, Haertel, & Walberg, 1997). In order to promote resilience, a community “must support its families and schools, have high expectations and clear norms for its families and schools, and encourage the active participation and collaboration of its families and schools in the life and work of the community” (Benard, 1991, p. 18).

According to Ungar (2011), community resilience is “the result of a tangled web of services, supports and social policies” (p. 1744). The level of and interactions between the physical capital – such as public transportation, housing, and proximity of relevant services – and social capital – such as child care, public safety, mental health services, and medical services – determines the level to which a community promotes resilience in its residents (Ungar, 2011)

With this in mind, some theorists are promoting the idea of a “whole community” method of support delivery. “A whole community approach is one in which the critical domains of resilience, family, school environment and community are integrated in the mission of fostering resilience through collaborative partnership and engagement” (Khanlou & Wray, 2014, p. 76). Many believe that a strong collaboration between community organizations including faith-based and non-faith-based groups, health and human services, governmental agencies, families, and schools is the best way for communities provide the appropriate level of protective factors to overcome the many stressors present in the lives of some of today’s youth (Khanlou & Wray, 2014; Linquanti, 1992; Wolkow & Ferguson, 2001). An example of the importance of the interconnectedness of schools and the other social supports within communities is seen in the

interaction between education and social capital. “Educated people and educated communities have skills and resources that enable them to form and exploit social networks more readily, whereas less educated communities have to struggle harder to do so” (Putnam & Feldstein, 2003, p. 272).

Additionally, while all community protective factors are important, according to the results of Werner and Smith’s (1992) Kauai Longitudinal Study, two of the most commonly encountered protective factors for children who overcame multiple risk factors, including poverty, were their teachers and school.

Protective Factors in School

Through a firm understanding of the concepts of resilience, risk factors, and protective factors, school principals can develop school cultures that foster resiliency in all students, including those who are living in low-socioeconomic conditions. In the words of Garmezy (1991), “schools serve as a critical support system for children seeking to escape the disabling consequences of poor environments” (pp. 424-425).

Considering that school is where students spend the majority of their waking hours, schools are in a unique position to provide a) opportunities for students to build “relationships with caring adults who have high expectations;” b) provide students “opportunities for meaningful participation;” c) assist students in the “development social competence;” and d) “involve parents in resilience-building efforts” (Brooks, 2006, p. 74). Additionally, a study by Hojer and Johansson (2013) found that “when school provided a safe and secure environment,”

the school acted “as compensation for a lack of security and attention at home,” thus mitigating the negative effects of home life (p. 34).

According to Felner and DeVries (2006), efforts to increase the likelihood of resilience for low-income students should include...

focused strategies that (1) seek to reduce levels of conditions of risk or increase levels of protective factors; (2) directly, or indirectly through the previous step, reduce the incidence rates of person-level vulnerabilities or the enhancement of personal competencies and strengths; and (3) alter levels of conditions of risk and of protective factors that have been shown to interact with acquired vulnerabilities and strengths to trigger the onset of more serious disorder or to produce resilience in the face of serious challenge (p. 113).

To accomplish the three directives prescribed by Felner and DeVries (2006), school principals can consult the work of Henderson and Milstein (2003), who compiled common themes from resilience research and risk factor research to develop *The Resiliency Wheel* (see Figure1).

The Resiliency Wheel

The Resiliency Wheel is comprised of six sections, that when combined, should “mitigate risk factors in the environment” and “build resiliency in the environment” (Henderson & Milstein, 2003, p. 12). The work of Henderson and Milstein (2003) “challenges educators to focus more on *strengths instead of deficits*, to look through a lens of strength in analyzing individual behaviors, and confirms the power of those strengths as a lifeline to resiliency” (p. 3).

Steps one through three, which mitigate risk factors in the environment, are increase bonding, set clear and consistent boundaries, and teach life skills (Henderson & Milstein, 2003). These steps were pulled from the work of Hawkins, Catalano, and Miller (1992), which examined decades of risk factor research. While there are risk factors that cannot be eradicated (poverty for instance), the work of Hawkins, Catalano, and Miller (1992) advocate these three steps to lessen the effect of risk factors on future success.

In order to build resiliency in the environment, school leaders and teachers should incorporate the last three steps (steps four through six), which include provide caring and support, set and communicate high expectations, and provide opportunities for meaningful participation (Henderson & Milstein, 2003). These steps of The Resiliency Wheel were derived from previous resiliency research. By synthesizing decades of research on resilience and school effectiveness, Benard (1995) provided the “characteristics of the family, school, and community environments that may alter or even reverse expected negative outcomes and enable individuals to circumvent life stressors and manifest resilience despite risk” (p. 2). Benard (1995) clustered the "protective factors... into three major categories: caring and supportive relationships, positive and high expectations, and opportunities for meaningful” (p. 2).

To promote resiliency, school principals should understand and implement each of the six steps of Henderson & Milstein’s *Resiliency Wheel* (2003). A more in-depth description of each step of *The Resiliency Wheel* follows.

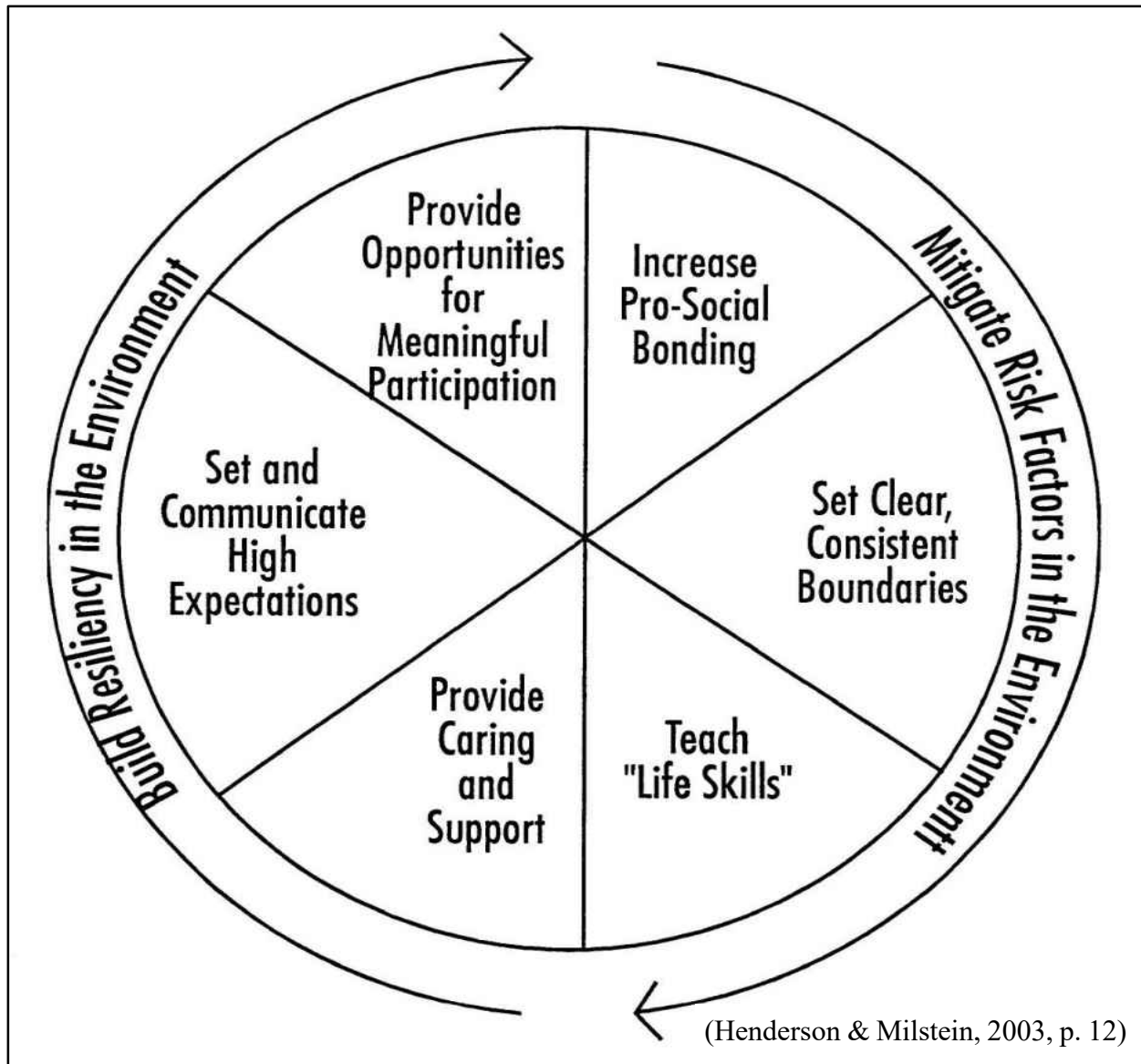


Figure 1 The Resiliency Wheel

Step 1: Increase Bonding

Schools should provide students with the opportunity to safely and positively bond with peers and adults. Having a relationship with an adult outside the immediate family provides a positive role model for low-socioeconomic students to emulate, which is a powerful protective

factor (Hundeide, 2005). While this positive relationship with an adult is not limited to the school setting, students from poverty are more likely to find academic success when school environments are set up to promote interactions between students and staff in a way that allows students to bond with adults on a personal level (Darling-Hammond, 2010).

Creating opportunities for and a climate conducive to positive interactions with peers should also be a priority for schools. Positive peer relationships and social climate have been linked to increased academic motivation and satisfaction with school (Baker, Dilly, Aupperlee, & Patil, 2003). Additionally, research shows that a student who is involved in multiple extra-curricular activities (e.g. athletics, clubs, employment) shows more signs of resilience than students who are not involved in extra-curricular activities (Reis et al., 2005; Seidman & Pedersen, 2003).

Step 2: Set Clear and Consistent Boundaries

“The classroom structure and school climate shape the contextual and educational experiences of students” (Swanson & Spencer, 2012, p. 290). School staff should utilize explicit language and model the behaviors they expect to see from students to ensure that students and parents understand the expectation (Ross, Bondy, Galligane, & Hambacher, 2008). To be a protective factor for children from poverty, schools must be a safe and organized environment comprised of classrooms that are highly structured and contain effective classroom management (Bell, 2001; Donovan & Cross, 2002; Garmezy, 1991). Borman and Overman (2004) found that a safe and orderly environment is positively linked to fostering resilience in children living in poverty.

Step 3: Teach Life Skills

It is important for teachers and other school personnel to explicitly teach and model life skills, such as planning, organization and self-monitoring, skills that students from poverty are often lacking (Wang, Walberg, & Haertel, 1998). Werner and Smith (2001) found a significant positive association between problem-solving skills and resilient high-risk children. Considering the risks students from poverty experience each day, it is critical that schools teach positive coping skills, and provide safe opportunities for students to practice using coping skills (Kitano & Lewis, 2005). Through teaching life skills to students from poverty, a school is essentially increasing the effectiveness of protective factors within the child. Students will not begin to effectively utilize the necessary social competence skills immediately, therefore schools must continuously model and reinforce the appropriate skills (Brooks, 2006).

Step 4: Provide Caring and Support

Positive school experiences combined with teacher support have been shown to be protective factors for low-socioeconomic children (Condly, 2006; Luthar, 1999; Wang & Gordon, 1994). According to Hudley and Chhuon (2012), “positive relationships with teachers have the greatest motivational impact” (p. 275) on low-income African American students. Research by Ramalho, Garza, and Merchant (2010) showed that high risk students were more academically successful when school staff regularly implemented strategies to create healthy and supportive relationships between staff, students and parents. In regard to teacher support, Elias and Haynes (2008) found that the change in a student’s perception of teacher support was predictive of student end of year academic achievement. Additionally, the more positive the

teacher-student relationships within a school, the less likely students are of dropping out of high school (Lee & Burkam, 2003).

Step 5: Set and Communicate High Expectations

Setting high, yet realistic, expectations is a powerful motivator toward academic success for students who live in low-socioeconomic conditions (Bondy, Ross, & Galligane, 2007; Wang et al., 1997). While it is vitally important that schools set high expectations, schools must also convey the belief that all students will be able to meet those expectations. “Young people have to believe that they can succeed in order to put forth the effort to do so” (Darling-Hammond, 2010, p. 65). In a recent study of high achieving students with multiple risk factors, the students “believed that honors classes provided them with the opportunity to work hard and to be grouped with other students who wanted to work and to learn” (Reis et al., 2005, p. 116).

In addition to setting and communicating high expectations, it is imperative that the school have the necessary academic supports in place to help all students reach the expectations (Brooks, 2006).

Step 6: Provide Opportunities for Meaningful Participation

Students should be involved in multiple facets of the school, including planning, decision-making, and helping others (Henderson & Milstein, 2003). “Students who are at risk for academic failure need to develop a sense of purpose and responsibility for what goes on in the class and school” (Downey, 2008, p. 60). Within the school, students should be provided

opportunities to provide input on rules, procedures, and consequences; thus, giving them a voice in classroom and school decisions (Bondy et al., 2007).

It is also important for school principals to understand that these opportunities for meaningful participation should not only include the students, but also their parents and members of the local community. According to Wang, Walberg, and Haertel (1998), maintaining collaborative relationships with families and community is an important organizational characteristic of “effective, high-achieving schools serving students at risk of failure” (pp. 29-30).

Parents from poverty are often “vulnerable and unconfident in their relationship to schools,” therefore, the school administrators and teachers must “reach out, be empathetic, and create possibilities for parent involvement” (Fullan, 2005, p. 61). Building family relationships that will support academic success of children living in poverty should include: a) focusing on student and family strengths as opposed to the limitations caused by poverty; b) engaging in consistent two-way communication with parents and avoid the inclination to contact home only when something negative has occurred; c) nurturing trust in dealings with students; and d) creating accessible opportunities for involvement that do not exclude poor families from attending (Gorski, 2013b). Schools and teachers who are effective in educating children from poverty work to make parents an active partner in the education process (Haberman, 2005; Wang, Haertel, & Walberg, 1998).

Next to completely eradicating poverty, “the best thing we can do in the name of educational equity is honor the expertise of people in poor communities by teaming with them as partners in educational equity” (Gorski, 2013a, p. 50). One of the major types of school reform

effort as of late believes that there must be a mixture of school-level and community-level reforms working together to close the achievement gap (Sadovnik & Davidson, 2012).

Advocates of school reform stress that policy makers must begin to work with outside agencies to counteract the multiple risk factors that lead to adverse academic outcomes for children living in poverty (Ladd, 2012). Basch (2011) argues that in order to close the achievement gap, schools, communities, and health-care providers will need to employ coordinated health efforts to meet the medical needs of children living in poverty.

School Leadership

Multiple studies by various researchers have shown that school leadership has both direct and indirect effects on student learning (Leithwood, Louis, Wahlstrom, & Anderson, 2004; Leithwood, Day, Sammons, Harris, & Hopkins, 2006). Although classroom instruction has the largest impact on student academic achievement, school leadership has the second largest impact among school-related factors (Leithwood et al., 2004). While most studies on the principal's effect on student achievement find minimal direct impact, the indirect effect is substantial (Chenoweth, Theokas, & Harvard University, 2011). In total, school leadership accounts for nearly 25% of the overall effect, including the combined direct and indirect effects, on student academic achievement (Hallinger & Heck, 1996; Harris, & Hopkins, 2006; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000).

A recent meta-analysis by Leithwood and Sun (2012a) found that across the many theoretical models of transformational leadership that exist, the leadership practices that have the most powerful positive effect on school culture are practices related to setting directions (e.g.,

“develop[ing] a shared vision and building goal consensus” and “hold[ing] high performance expectations”, p. 400) and developing people (e.g., “provid[ing] individualized support,” “provid[ing] intellectual stimulation,” and “model[ing] valued behaviors, beliefs, and values”, p. 400). Leithwood and Sun (2012a), write: “Leaders influence school conditions through their achievement of a shared vision and agreed-on goals for the organization, their high expectations and support of organizational members, and practices that strengthen school culture and foster collaboration within the organization” (p. 403).

“Although there may be little debate about the significant effects of well-exercised leadership on schools, teachers, and students, there is growing interest in which approaches or models of leadership in particular make the greatest contribution to student learning” (Leithwood & Sun, 2012a, p. 409).

Since one purpose of this study is to investigate the leadership beliefs of leaders of effective high-poverty schools who, themselves, come from a low-socioeconomic background, it is important to have an understanding of predominant school leadership theories past and present.

Leadership Theories

Leithwood, Jantzi, and Steinbach (1999), Marzano, Waters, and McNulty (2005), Mulford (2008) and Leithwood and Sun (2012b) each address the leadership theories most notably discussed and researched in the recent school leadership literature. The leadership theories identified are (a) transformational and transactional leadership, (b) instructional leadership, c) distributed (or collective) leadership, and d) situational leadership.

Transactional and Transformational Leadership Theories

The concepts of transactional and transforming leadership originated with Burns (1978), whose book *Leadership* discussed the ways in which the relationship between the leader and follower spurred action on the part of the follower. “We must see power – and leadership – as not things but as *relationships*” (Burns, 1978, p. 11).

While transactional leadership takes multiple forms and degrees of leadership behavior, the basic idea of transactional leadership is a relationship in which the leader and follower exchange one thing for another. Transactional leaders capitalize on their followers’ self-interests through positive and negative reinforcements – rewards for a job well done, and disciplinary action for inadequate performance (Bass, 1990; Burns, 1978; Marzano et al., 2005).

Transformational leadership, on the other hand, is a relationship between the leader and the follower, characterized by a leader who looks to meet the needs of their followers and “engages the full person of the follower” (Burns, 1978, p. 4). The work of Bass and Steidlmeier (1999) shows us that the four components of transformational leadership are “idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration” (p. 181). It is also important through transformational leadership that principals work to develop the leadership skills of others within their school to strengthen the school leadership beyond themselves (Fullan, 2003).

It is also important to note that there are many variations in theories of transformational leadership. Recent models of transformational leadership not only build on the base laid by the work of Burns (1978), but also incorporate aspects of other leadership models,

such as instructional leadership and shared leadership among others; thus, creating hybrid leadership models (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999; Leithwood & Sun, 2012b).

A leader may operate anywhere along a leadership continuum, with transformational leadership on one end and transactional leadership on the other. Exactly where on the continuum a leader operates will depend on the leader's personality, the culture of the organization, and the needs of the situation. According to Bass (2000), "The good leader of the learning organization will be both [transactional and transformational] but more transformational and less transactional" (p. 21). A recent study of principals in "challenging schools" in an area of "social deprivation" found that while leaders moved along a continuum between transactional and transformational leadership based on years of experience and pressures from outside the school (Smith & Bell, 2011). In that study, Smith and Bell (2011) found that "it is the transformational leadership activities that largely facilitate long-term improvements in pupil attainment and the development of staff, and that strengthen valuable links with the wider community" (Smith & Bell, 2011, p. 61).

Instructional Leadership Theory

According to Hallinger and Huber (2012), the origins of instructional leadership can be traced back to the 1950's and 1960's with the research of Grobman and Hynes in 1956 and Uhls in 1962. The instructional leadership concept has had several variations over the years, but all the variations center around the principal being highly knowledgeable in curriculum and instruction, and possessing the ability to communicate this information to teachers in a way to improve their instruction (Hallinger, 1992). Instructional leadership theory asserts that "the

critical focus for attention by leaders is the *behaviours of teachers as they engage in activities directly affecting the growth of students*” (Leithwood et al., 1999, p. 8).

Leithwood et al. (1999) argues that instructional leadership’s focus specifically on first-order change prevents it from being a viable leadership model when attempting to restructure a school. When undergoing restructuring, a school is in the realm of second-order change, a change which “involves dramatic departures from the expected, both in defining a given problem and in finding a solution” (Marzano et al., 2005, p. 66). To successfully create second-order change, a school principal who follows the instructional leadership model should combine this model with transformational leadership or distributed leadership (Blase, Blase, & Phillips, 2010; Leithwood et al., 1999). In this new conception of instructional leadership the school leader models behaviors of instructional leadership and inspires others (i.e. transformational leadership), including lead teachers, instructional coaches, and others to join in the process (Ylimaki, 2007).

Distributed and Shared Leadership Theories

While examples of the practice of distributed leadership can be seen as far back as humans have organized themselves (MacBeath, 2009), according to Gronn (2008), the study of distributed leadership was first touched upon by Benne and Sheats (1948), and subsequently named by Gibb (1954). Although discussion of the theory has appeared in scholarly literature for over half a century, there is still disagreement over what exactly constitutes distributed leadership. While it has been described in various ways by several theorists, in general terms, distributed leadership is a process by which leaders and followers in an organization – with a

shared vision and mission – actively share leadership responsibilities at varying degrees to achieve the organization’s goals. Through distributed leadership, the principal identifies team members with a willingness and desire to lead and provides them responsibilities commensurate with their abilities while monitoring their leadership work and providing feedback and mentoring as necessary (Dimmock, 2012).

More specifically, Spillane (2006) identifies three elements essential to distributed leadership. Those elements are: (a) “leadership *practice* is the central and anchoring concern;” (b) “leadership practice is generated in the *interactions* of leaders, followers, and their situation – each element is essential for leadership practice;” and (c) “the *situation* both defines leadership practice and is defined through leadership practice” (Spillane, 2006, p. 4).

According to Kezar (2012), shared leadership “examines both downward and upward hierarchical influence” (p. 94), as opposed to previous theories that looked at leadership as the influence of an authority figure on a follower. While shared leadership traditionally has looked at the distribution of leadership amongst stakeholders within an organization, Kezar (2012) proposes that organizations look outside the organization for stakeholders to participate in leadership, an idea he has termed “community-informed leadership”. This idea is an intriguing concept in the study of low-income and urban schools given the preponderance of researchers suggesting that true strides toward closing the achievement gap cannot be made without the help of community resources (Darling-Hammond, 2010; Ladd, 2012; Noguera, 2011). As discussed previously, the practice of involving multiple stakeholders from the private and public sectors in schools has been effective in cities like Newark, New Jersey where the Broader, Bolder

Approach has increased student proficiency on standardized mathematics and English language arts standardized exams (Noguera, 2011).

Situational Leadership Theory

Situational leadership theory, which was developed by Paul Hersey and Kenneth Blanchard (1969), states that there is no right way to influence followers, the technique a leader utilizes is dependent upon the “readiness” level of the followers (Hersey, Blanchard, & Johnson, 2001). Within each leadership situation, a leader utilizes varying levels of task behavior and relationship behavior as needed for the particular task at hand and the followers or groups readiness (ability and willingness) to complete the assignment. Task behavior, as described by Hersey et al. (2001), refers to the describing and assigning of duties and responsibilities to followers. Relationship behavior refers to the actions taken by leaders to communicate, listen and provide support or feedback to followers (Hersey et al., 2001). The four leadership styles of the situational leadership theory are: (a) telling – high task/low relationship, (b) selling – high task/high relationship, (c) participating – low task/high relationship, and (d) delegating – low task/low relationship.

Principals understanding the strengths and weaknesses of their teachers in regard to different tasks and being able to use this knowledge to determine the appropriate leadership style for each teacher in each unique situation is an important leadership trait. “Situational leadership stresses that a principal's effectiveness is dependent upon the ability to analyze the competencies, abilities, and commitments of teachers with regard to the task at hand and then respond accordingly” (Kelley, Thornton, & Daugherty, 2005, p. 23).

Servant Leadership Theory

The theory of servant leadership was first introduced by Greenleaf (1970) in his work *The Servant as Leader*. The emphasis of servant leadership is that the individual is servant first, and leader second (Greenleaf, 1977). Greenleaf (1977) stated of leadership: “the only authority deserving one’s allegiance is that which is freely and knowingly granted by the led to the leader in response to, and in proportion to, the clearly evident servant stature of the leader” (p. 20).

A recent study of servant leadership found five servant leadership factors – altruistic calling, emotional healing, persuasive mapping, wisdom, and organizational stewardship – with significant relations to transformational leadership” (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006, p. 300). While similarities are seen between servant leadership and transformative leadership, the difference between servant leadership and other leadership theories “manifests itself in the care taken by the servant first to make sure that other people’s highest priority needs are being served” (Greenleaf, 1977, p. 22).

Proponents of servant leadership tout its effectiveness in creating positive employee morale, shared organizational values, and increased organizational communication (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006; Russell & Stone, 2002; Tate, 2003). “Servant leadership is a concept that can potentially change organizations and societies because it stimulates both personal and organizational metamorphoses” (Russell & Stone, 2002, p. 154). In order to produce these results, it is important skills for servant leaders to possess include: a) “understanding the personal needs of those within the organization;” b) “healing wounds caused by conflict within the organization;” c) “being a steward of the resources of the organization;” d) “developing the skills

of those within the organization;” and e) “being an effective listener (Marzano et al., 2005, p. 17).

Summary

The literature and data on poverty and the achievement gap, necessitate that schools provide a culture of resilience for students living in poverty. As a study by Whitney , Splett & Weston (2008) showed that implementing steps from *The Resiliency Wheel*, for mitigating risk factors and building resiliency in the environment led to higher academic performance. The effort to create this culture of resiliency requires the leadership of the school principals who are under great pressure to meet district and state accountability requirements. In this effort it is important for principals to be knowledgeable of not only the steps of the resiliency wheel, but also effective school leadership theory. Leithwood et al (2006) said it best when they wrote: “As far as we are aware, there is not a single documented case of a school successfully turning around its pupil achievement trajectory in the absence of talented leadership” (p. 5).

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter provides background knowledge on phenomenological research design, and how it was utilized to conduct this research. Also found in this chapter is a description of how study participants were selected – including the criterion for participating and the means by which these criterion were met – as well as, how qualitative was collected and analyzed for this study.

Phenomenological Research

This qualitative research design followed a transcendental phenomenological research design to offer an explanation of the impact a low socioeconomic childhood had on principals with a proven record of creating a culture of resilience for students living in poverty.

Phenomenological researchers are interested in determining the essence of an experience, and how that experience affects the subject(s) of the study. “Phenomenology does not offer us the possibility of effective theory with which we can now explain and/or control the world, but rather it offers us the possibility of plausible insights that bring us in more direct contact with the world” (van Manen, 1990, p. 9). Transcendental phenomenological research endeavors to provide a rich description of a lived experience, rather than an interpretation of the experience (Creswell, 2007; Groenewald, 2004; Moustakas, 1994).

Through in-depth interviews with the research participants who have a common lived experience, overcoming childhood poverty to become a school principal who successfully creates a climate of resilience, the researcher is able to capture the essence of the phenomenon. In addition to interviewing people who have experienced the phenomenon, when appropriate, researchers may also utilize “observations, art, poetry, music, journals, drama, films, and novels” (Ary, Cheser Jacobs, & Sorensen, 2010, p. 472) to achieve a more in-depth understanding of the phenomenon. Through their collection of data, the phenomenologist constructs “a rich, detailed description of a central phenomenon” (Creswell, 2009, p. 64). Through this narrative, the researcher focuses on common themes experienced by study participants, utilizing direct quotes from interviews to support the identified themes (Slavin, 2007).

It is of utmost importance that the phenomenological researcher brackets his prior knowledge about the topic before beginning data collection. According to Morse and Richards (2002), “by writing their assumptions, knowledge, and expectations, [researchers] enter the conversation with no presuppositions” (p. 47). This process presents difficulty for many researchers. As Slavin (2007) explains, “researchers who are interested enough in a topic to conduct an in-depth study of it are likely to have a fairly strong opinion about it” (p. 150).

Research Questions

The following research questions were investigated through this study:

1. How do effective school principals from a low socioeconomic childhood report that their background impacts their leadership beliefs in creating a culture of resilience when serving students living in poverty?

2. What practices do effective school principals from a low socioeconomic childhood perceive to be most productive for creating a culture of resilience when serving students living in poverty?

Reliability

Reliability is a measure of whether, if replicated, the study would achieve the same results (Morse & Richards, 2002). As qualitative research is dependent upon the personal experiences of the participants, the likelihood of achieving the same results through replication of the study is improbable.

Validity

Validity is a measure of whether the results of a study are an accurate reflection of the phenomenon that is being studied (Morse & Richards, 2002). According to Moustakas (1994) the validity of a phenomenological study relies upon the researcher reducing his bias and prejudgments about the phenomenon being studied. The researcher minimized bias and prejudgment through the epoche process, which involved openly and repeatedly identifying and setting aside prejudgments (Moustakas, 1994). Once identified, the prejudgments were written in a research journal to be revisited as necessary to clear the mind of the researcher.

Additionally, once the researcher completed the initial analysis of the interview data, member checking was performed. That is, the researcher sought clarification on his

interpretation of interview responses from the corresponding interview subject (Merriam, 2009; Moustakas, 1994).

Procedures for Sample Selection

The sample for this study was pulled from elementary schools in a large Central Florida urban school district with 40% or greater student participation in free or reduced price lunch, under the National School Lunch Program. Additionally, sample schools were led by a principal who had a lived experience in childhood poverty, and were effective in creating a culture of resilience for economically disadvantaged students.

Population—Sample

The population for this study were elementary school principals from a large Central Florida urban school district containing 122 traditional elementary schools. The sample consisted of elementary school principals who:

- led an elementary school with a low-socioeconomic student population of 40% or greater;
- have shown effectiveness in creating a culture of academic resilience for low-socioeconomic students; and
- were raised in low-socioeconomic conditions.

Satisfaction of these three criteria will be determined as described below.

Target Schools

A target elementary school was a school in which 40% or more of the student body qualifies for assistance, either free or reduced price lunch, under the National School Lunch Program. The United States Census Bureau (USCB) defines its Category IV, the highest category, “poverty area” as an area in which 40% or more of the residents live at or below poverty (Bishaw, 2011). For the purposes of this study, the researcher utilized the 40% marker set by the USCB to identify target schools.

In the identified school district, the free/reduced lunch rate at the elementary schools range from 13% to 100% with a mean rate of 70.48% (FLDOE, 2013b). Of the 122 traditional elementary schools in the identified school district, 101 have a free/reduced lunch rate of greater than or equal to 40%.

Effectively Created Culture of Resilience

The state of Florida has a waiver that allows the state not to report Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in accordance with NCLB, but to instead report school level, district level and state level performance on annual measurable objectives (AMOs) for reading, mathematics, and writing performance, as well as graduation rate. The purpose of AMOs, which are calculated for every monitored subgroup within each individual school for each performance indicator, is to cut in half the percent of students not meeting proficiency in the baseline year 2010-11 by 2016-17 (FLDOE, 2013a). The subgroups for which AMOs are created and monitored are American Indian, Asian, Black or African American, Hispanic, White, Economically Disadvantaged,

English Language Learners, Students with Disabilities, and All Students. To determine whether the identified schools were effective in meeting the academic needs of their economically disadvantaged students, the researcher disaggregated Florida Department of Education (FLDOE) school grade and AMO data. The researcher will only use AMO results for reading and mathematics which are measured in grades 3, 4 and 5. However, since writing AMO proficiency is only measured at the 4th grade level in elementary school, this information will not be used in data collection.

Schools in which the reading and mathematics annual measurable objectives were met for economically disadvantaged students in the 2012-13 school year will be considered effective in creating a culture of academic resilience for low-socioeconomic students. Of the 123 elementary schools in the school district, 101 met the criteria of 40 percent or more free/reduced lunch rate. Only 16 of that 101 elementary schools met their AMO in reading and mathematics for economically disadvantaged students in the 2012-13 school year (See Appendix A). These 16 schools were the target schools from which the researcher identified a sample of three school principals who were raised in low socioeconomic conditions.

Raised in Low-socioeconomic Conditions

Once this study was approved by the university's Institutional Review Board and the school district (See Appendices B and C), the principals of 15 of the schools that met the free/reduced lunch requirement and the AMO requirement discussed above were sent a description of the study (See Appendix D), and a screening questionnaire (See Appendix E).

The principal of one of the schools meeting the free/reduced lunch requirement and the AMO requirement was not contacted upon request of the school district.

The screening questionnaire sent to the principals of the identified schools contains questions adapted from the Census Bureau's Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP), which is utilized by the US Census Bureau to determine the economic circumstances of people and families in the United States ("Survey of Income and Program Participation ", 2008). The results of the screening questionnaire were used to determine whether the respondent lived in a low socioeconomic household while growing up.

Four attempts utilizing mail, e-mail and phone calls were made over a three month period to collect completed screening questionnaires from the principals of the target elementary schools. Of the 15 principals contacted, 14 (93.3%) returned completed screening questionnaires. Using the screening questionnaire, the researcher was able to identify three principals (21%) of target schools who grew up in a low socioeconomic environment (See Appendix F).

Data Collection

Once the study participants were identified, the researcher contacted the three principals via email to request an interview time. An interview was scheduled with each principal to take place at a location chosen by the participant – two were held in the principal's office, and one was held in the office of a colleague in the school district. In accordance with the recommendation by Burkard, Knox, and Hill (2012) , the researcher provided each participant

the interview protocol (see Appendix G) prior to the scheduled interview to allow participants adequate time to “reflect on their experiences before the interview itself” (p. 96).

Prior to conducting the interviews, the researcher performed the Epoche process - openly and repeatedly identifying and setting aside prejudgments (Moustakas, 1994). As the researcher’s prejudgments were identified, each was written down in a journal. This list of prejudgments was reviewed repeatedly preceding each interview to allow the researcher to enter the interview with an open mind, free of preconceived notions.

The researcher conducted a semi-structured interview with each participant. A semi-structured interview format was utilized to allow for the flexibility to ask follow-up questions as necessary within the interview (Bailey, 2007). According to Moustakas (1994), “The phenomenological interview involves an informal, interactive process and utilizes open-ended comments and questions” (p. 114). Interview questions are designed to get to the essence of the lived experience of being a school principal from a low-socioeconomic background who has effectively created a culture of resilience for students living in poverty. The interviews also focused on whether each principal’s childhood had an impact on their leadership and decision making.

During the interviews, with the permission of the participants, the researcher recorded the interview both through audio recording, as well as written notes utilizing a Livescribe Smartpen. Data collected through interviews were downloaded to a computer for analysis (see “Data Analysis” section of this chapter).

Initial interviews with study participants ranged from 47 minutes to one hour and 32 minutes in length. Additional follow up phone interviews occurred as necessary for clarification of the information provided by study participants in their initial interviews.

Data Analysis

Following each interview, the audio recordings and hand written notes from each interview were transcribed into a password protected document onto a password protected laptop that is utilized only by the researcher. Interview transcripts are not included in this document due to confidentiality concerns. Utilizing the data analysis framework of Moustakas (1994), the researcher completed the following steps to analyze the transcribed data:

1. Perform epoche to bracket judgments and preconceptions in an effort to minimize researcher bias when analyzing data.
2. Listen to the audio recording and read the transcript repeatedly to get a feel for the essence of the subject's lived experience.
3. Horizontalize – initially each statement will be treated equally, but through continued reflection, the researcher will remove the statements that are irrelevant to the study, or are redundant. This leaves only the horizons, or “the textural meanings and invariant constituents of the phenomenon” (Moustakas, 1994, p. 97).
4. Identify the meanings or meaning units from the horizons.
5. Cluster the meanings and meaning units into common themes.
6. Utilize the horizons and themes to create a textural description of the phenomenon.
7. Repeat process for transcribed data from each interview.

8. Provide textural description to each corresponding subject for member checking, instructing the participant to read the textural description and provide feedback on any corrections they may feel necessary.
9. Utilizing the textural description from each individual interview, create a composite description of the essence of the phenomenon representing entire sample.
10. Every effort has been made to maintain the confidentiality of the study participants. The researcher is the only person who has had access to the data in any format that can connect the data to the study participants. Electronic data is stored in encrypted files, and physical data is stored in a lock box in the researcher's residence. All data will be stored for a period of three years, at which time it will be destroyed.

Limitations

A limitation of this study is its reliance on self-reporting of childhood socioeconomic status, which some people may not be comfortable reporting. The lack of willingness to self-report may limit the pool of possible research participants. Additionally, once the final participants were identified, the data collected through interviews relied on the memory of the participants, as well as their honesty and willingness to share openly. Some participants may have found it difficult to share details of their childhood. The researcher attempted to minimize these limitations through building a relationship with the participants to increase their comfort level and willingness to share openly and honestly.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

Introduction

In this chapter, the findings of the screening questionnaires and phenomenological interviews of study participants are described. Analysis of the data involved close examination of interview transcripts to determine the common themes that arose from answers corresponding with each research question. The chapter is organized by research question, with research question one findings being organized by the common themes that were found in the interviews, and research question two findings being organized by study participant.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to develop a textural description that will help explain the effect that childhood poverty has on the decisions made by school principals who themselves grew up in low socioeconomic conditions. Additionally, this study identified strategies that are effective, as perceived by school principals who grew up in low socioeconomic conditions, in creating a culture of resilience to improve academic success for students living in low-socioeconomic conditions.

Research Questions

The following research questions were investigated through this study:

1. How do effective school principals from a low socioeconomic childhood report that their background impacts their leadership beliefs in creating a culture of resilience when serving students living in poverty?
2. What practices do effective school principals from a low socioeconomic childhood perceive to be most productive for creating a culture of resilience when serving students living in poverty?

Participant Summary

Through the phenomenological research framework, the principal investigator (researcher) and the school principals were able to become co-researchers (Moustakas, 1994).

The sample consisted of elementary school principals who:

- lead an elementary school with a low-socioeconomic student population of 40% or greater;
- have demonstrated effectiveness in creating a culture of academic resilience for low-socioeconomic students as displayed through meeting annual measurable objectives in reading and mathematics for disadvantaged students in the 2012-13 school year (See Appendix A); and
- were raised in low-socioeconomic conditions as determined by participants' responses on a screening questionnaire.

Each of the three participants were asked to provide an alias to be identified by in this study. A brief personal profile for each participant – Mrs. Rosario, Mr. Jamal, and Mr. Stevens – follows. A summary of demographic information can be found in Table 1.

Mrs. Rosario

Mrs. Rosario is a 40-year-old Hispanic female with 19 years of experience as an educator, 7 of which were as a principal. The year following the 2012-13 study year Mrs. Rosario was promoted to a district level supervisory position.

As a child she lived with her father, mother and two brothers in a remote area of Puerto Rico before moving to Florida. In Puerto Rico her father was a farmer and her mother a housewife. Once they moved to Florida, her father worked as an electrician, and her mother took a job as a hotel maid so the family could make ends meet. While growing up, Mrs. Rosario reports having “many different people live with us such as an aunt, three uncles, a cousin and his wife, etc.” According to Mrs. Rosario, the constant in her house where her and her parents, and the other family members came and went as they needed to, staying for various lengths of time.

Being the first of her family to attend college, Mrs. Rosario states that her mother was very encouraging, and her father felt college “would be a good place to meet a good man to marry”. While her mother was encouraging, Mrs. Rosario adds that “she did not have the knowledge or tools to help me maneuver through the necessary preparation or to navigate in that world”. Fortunately, Mrs. Rosario received the assistance she needed from a teacher, “who took [the student] under her wing and helped [Mrs. Rosario] prepare for that journey.” She also reports having “good peer models” in the form of “friends for whom college was just the logical

next step.” Mrs. Rosario reports that spending time with these friends and their families encouraged her to attend college.

As a principal, Mrs. Rosario describes herself as being “very demanding,” expecting that teachers will meet the needs of all of their students. She states: “With my staff, it’s not that I expect a lot; it’s that I expect everything.” While she has high expectations of her staff, she adds that in exchange, she takes “really good care of them,” providing time off when they need to be it, and supporting their needs.

Mr. Jamal

Mr. Jamal is a 39-year-old black male with 17 years’ experience as an educator, 12 of which have been as a principal. After turning around the school he lead during the 2012-13 study year, Mr. Jamal was moved to another high-poverty, struggling school. The expectation of the school district is that Mr. Jamal will turn around the school to which he was moved.

As a child he and his sister lived with their maternal grandmother and step-grandfather following Mr. Jamal’s parents’ death in a crash when he was five years old. They lived in a “lower middle class African American” neighborhood that Mr. Jamal describes as “not the hood, but not working class”.

Mr. Jamal’s grandmother, a retired dietician, was the first person in her family to attend college, having completed two years at Bethune Cookman College. She set clear expectations that Mr. Jamal and his sister would both attend college. Mr. Jamal states that he grew up knowing that “education was the only way [he] was going to get out” of the economic conditions in which he was raised.

As a boy, he remembers “being teased for being biracial.” While Mr. Jamal identifies himself as African American, he states that his “mom is black and dad is white.” He was also teased in school “for being one of only four blacks in Honors and Advanced Placement classes – the four of us were accused of ‘acting white’.”

As a principal, Mr. Jamal has high expectations for his staff, and expects them to work with an urgency. He is data-driven in his decision making, and explicit with his expectations. At the same time, he is supportive of and loyal to his staff, providing incentives to those who meet expectations.

Mr. Stevens

Mr. Stevens is a 39-year-old Caucasian male with 17 years’ experience as an educator, 4 of which have been as a principal. Mr. Stevens was recently transferred from the target school discussed in this study to a newly built elementary school.

As a child he lived with his father, mother, and half-sister. Mr. Stevens’ father was a construction worker, and his mother was a grocery store cashier. Having a construction worker as the main income earner for the household, Mr. Stevens states that depending on the economy, his family’s living conditions fluctuated between lower middle-class and lower lower-class. He explains that from middle school through high school his family were in financially hard times due to the economy. Mr. Stevens explained the socioeconomic shift his family experienced when the economy changed, by saying that his family “went from eating steak to eating ground beef”.

Mr. Stevens decided in high school that he wanted to attend college. While he knew there were no guarantees for financial stability, he felt an education would help him to have a career that wouldn't be as greatly impacted by changes in the economy as his father's career in construction had been. Although Mr. Stevens' parents were proud of him for becoming the first person in their family to attend college, it was not something they were indifferent to during his high school career. Additionally, they were unable to help him navigate the process of applying for college and financial aid. He credits his own determination and drive for his acquisition of a college education; which he believes ultimately led to an improvement in his economic situation from his childhood.

As a principal, Mr. Stevens describes himself as organized, detail oriented, and loyal to his staff. A self-described "obsessive compulsive," Mr. Stevens ensures that there is a detailed system in place for each undertaking within the school. He is loyal to his staff and believes in rewarding them for the hard work that effective teaching entails.

Table 1: Participant Demographic Information

	Mrs. Rosario	Mr. Jamal	Mr. Stevens
Gender	Female	Male	Male
Age	40	39	39
Race	White	Black	White
Ethnicity	Hispanic	Not Hispanic or Latino	Not Hispanic or Latino
Years as an Educator	19	17	17
Years as a Principal	7	12	4

Research Question Results

Research Question 1

How do effective school principals from a low socioeconomic childhood report that their background impacts their leadership beliefs in creating a culture of resilience when serving students living in poverty?

Analysis of participant responses to interview questions (See Appendix G) finds that all three school leaders feel that their low socioeconomic childhood has some level of impact on their leadership beliefs in creating a culture of resilience for students in poverty. While none of the leaders stated that they actively call on childhood experience when making leadership decisions, each made reference to their childhood shaping the “lens” through which they view education and leadership. During the discussion on how their childhood affects their leadership beliefs, four common themes emerged with all three participants. Those themes were (a) meeting individual student and staff needs, (b) establishing high expectations for staff and

students, (c) involving students and parents in the education process, and (d) respecting all students. A description of how each participant described the identified themes follows.

Meeting Individual Student and Staff Needs

The participants of this study all demonstrated a belief in the importance of meeting the individual needs of students and staff. In relation to students, participants made reference to understanding and meeting each student's needs so that they may focus on their education. Mrs. Rosario refers to these needs as "roadblocks" that principals and staff must "clear out of the way so that students can meet high expectations." For some students these roadblocks are as straightforward as not having the necessary school supplies, which Mr. Jamal rectifies by partnering with local churches to do school supply drives. As he puts it, "if there are any kids that need something, we're going to get it for them." Similarly, Mrs. Rosario works with her school's business partners to ensure her students have the materials they need to be successful.

Another student academic need these principals often deal with is the need for students to have extra time and support in completing their work. This becomes especially apparent in regard to homework according to the principals. All three principals find ways to provide time outside the school day for students to receive extra assistance. Mrs. Rosario's school had "Welcome Centers," where students could go to get homework assistance in the morning before school. Similarly, when Mr. Jamal's students have big assignments to complete, like the science fair project he requires of all fourth and fifth grade students, he opens the school in the evenings so students can get assistance from teachers. At Mr. Stevens' school, teachers make themselves available before or after school to provide support. As Mr. Stevens explains to his teachers, if

students don't have their homework, "open your doors before or after school, let them come in, and help them out." Additionally, Mr. Stevens' teachers have collaborated to set grade level guidelines on how many minutes of homework can be assigned per night. The principals in this study consider these strategies important in supporting students living in low socioeconomic conditions, because, as Mrs. Rosario puts it, "a hotel room with 10 people is not very conducive to learning."

These school leaders cannot meet the needs of their students on their own. Ensuring the success of students living in poverty requires the dedication of the entire school staff. These school leaders also work to meet the needs of their staff, so they, in turn, will be able to meet their students' needs. The predominant way in which the school leaders meet the needs of their staff is through professional development. The professional development provided differed at each school, based on the needs of the faculty and students.

For instance, Mr. Jamal reported a need for teachers to understand how to utilize student data in making instructional decisions. With free time being at a minimum during the teacher contract day, Mr. Jamal found the funding to pay teachers to attend a half day professional development camp on a Saturday. During this camp, teachers attended a general session, and then were allowed to select breakout sessions that met their professional development needs.

Mr. Stevens reported an increase in the percentage of students living in low socioeconomic conditions over a period of approximately three years. This shift in demographics was not met with a shift in the instructional strategies being utilized by the teaching staff, which caused a reduction in academic success. To meet the needs of his staff in assisting these students in finding academic success, Mr. Stevens brought in trainers from his

school district's professional development department to provide training on *A Framework for Understanding Poverty*, the book by Ruby Payne (2005).

During her interview, Mrs. Rosario stressed the importance of teachers having strong pedagogical and content knowledge, areas in which she provides needed professional development to her staff. Mrs. Rosario stated that through professional development, she can “teach [teachers] anything about education, but [she] cannot teach [teachers] to love children.”

By no means did the principals discuss the myriad of needs of students living in poverty or the teachers that serve them, but rather, they provided the above listed examples to show how they work to meet the needs of their students and staff.

Establishing High Expectations for Staff and Students

The effective school leaders who participated in this study all demonstrate a belief in the importance of establishing high expectations for their staff and students to create a culture of resilience when serving students living in poverty. While the exact expectations differed by school, based on student needs and topic, the principals all agree in the necessity of ensuring that students are held to high standards. According to Mrs. Rosario, principals must maintain high expectations for students living in poverty, “because at the end of the day, [students living in poverty are] going to compete with everyone else.”

These school leaders also agreed on the importance of rewarding students when they meet or exceed the expectations. The leaders report that these rewards come in the form of honor roll certificates, classroom celebrations, lunch with the principal, and other methods.

High expectations are also seen as a necessity for the staff. The study participants expressed the importance of high expectations for teachers in the classroom to create a culture of resilience for students living in poverty. Mr. Jamal explained the need for school leaders to ensure that teachers are providing highly rigorous instruction in the classroom, stating that teachers sometimes “love their kids to academic death.” He expounded on this thought stating that teachers sometimes relax their academic expectations for students because they know that the student experiences hardships due to living in poverty. Mr. Jamal maintains high expectations of his teachers because a school’s “core business is moving kids to academic success.”

Similarly, Mr. Stevens sets high expectations for teachers through the creation of classroom and grade level goals for reaching certain percentages of student proficiency on progress monitoring exams. Mr. Stevens ensures everyone knows the expectations and how each class is advancing toward the goal by keeping their progress charted in the hallway.

In regard to maintaining high expectations for her teachers, Mrs. Rosario stated, “during the day you have to be on; I don’t want a little bit of you, I want all of you, because that’s what it takes.” She referred to the fact that students living in poverty have more risk factors in regard to academic success.

While all three school leaders have high expectations for their staff, they also express great appreciation for the hard work involved in teaching in a school with an elevated level of students living in low socioeconomic conditions. To show appreciation, when teachers meet expectations, these school leaders reward them with gift cards, electronic devices, and time off when needed.

Involving Students and Parents in the Education Process

Participant responses to interview questions reveal a leadership belief in involving students and parents in the education process. While this belief is put into practice in different ways at each school, the reasoning for each practice is the same; helping students develop a sense of ownership over their education, and facilitating collaborative relationships with parents.

To involve students in the education process, Mr. Jamal instituted “class meetings” at his school. These meetings allow students the opportunity to discuss any issues that have occurred, or celebrate any successes. While each classroom’s meeting procedures differ slightly, the essential structure of the meetings is that each room has a “Glow and Grow” box in which students place comment cards. At least once a week, the teacher holds a class meeting in which the class discusses the Glows and Grows for the week. This allows the students to take ownership of the way their class operates.

Similarly, Mrs. Rosario’s teachers held weekly “Minute Meetings” with each student in their class. In these meetings, the teacher works one-on-one with each student to review her progress toward the goal she set for herself the previous week. The student will explain her progress toward reaching her goal, and discuss what helped or hindered her progress. She will then set a new goal to reach by the next “Minute Meeting.” Additionally, Mrs. Rosario began meeting with students around December of each year. She would hold individual meetings with each student in grades three through five to discuss their progress, as well as the upcoming state assessments. Part of these meetings was a discussion of how a school graded, and how “no one is exempt from responsibility to the school community.” Also in these meetings, Mrs. Rosario

would discuss long term goals, such as taking college dual enrollment courses in high school, and how the student can begin preparing herself for those opportunities.

Mr. Stevens utilizes clubs and organizations to develop, within the students, a sense of purpose and responsibility for what happens in the classroom and the school. For example, the establishment of a student council has allowed students the opportunity to perform school beautification projects, canned food drives, and assist in other events to benefit the school and community.

In relation to involving parents in the education process, these school leaders work to form collaborative relationships that will ultimately benefit the child. In the same manner as their dealings with the students, the school leaders utilized different strategies for involving parents.

Much like she met with students one-on-one, Mrs. Rosario often spent time meeting individually with parents. Frequently, these encounters would be through home visits Mrs. Rosario would make. Mrs. Rosario made a minimum of one home visit per week, often more when events in school or the neighborhood warranted. During these home visits, to which Mrs. Rosario sometimes brought teachers, she would discuss the student's educational progress and ways in which the parents and school could work together for academic success.

Mr. Jamal, on the other hand, involved parents in their students' education process by educating them on ways to assist their child at home. For example, Mr. Jamal and his staff administered a program they called "Partners in Print," at which they taught parents strategies for helping their children read. This program consisted of five evenings over five consecutive weeks where parents ate with their students and school staff, and then attended a training session. In

each hour long training session, a teacher would model a strategy for the parents and students, and then the parents would use the strategy with their child while the teacher was there to provide assistance as needed. At the end of the five week workshop, Mr. Jamal provided attendees a collection of up to 15 books for a home library, based on the number of workshops the families attended.

Similarly, Mr. Stevens involves parents through various curriculum nights. One such night is called “Parent University,” at which parents attend “breakout sessions regarding reading, mathematics, science, writing, technology, and Autism Spectrum Disorder.” Mr. Stevens also mentioned involving parents through the School Advisory Council (SAC) and the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) to communicate with parents through a weekly electronic newsletter, and support school projects.

Respecting all Students

All three school leaders who participated in this study made multiple references to having and showing respect for all students and their families. These school leaders practice the respectful treatment of students and families, and expect their staff to do the same.

Mr. Stevens referred to his childhood and how his parents disciplined him through “verbal intimidation;” something he also often sees with his students’ parents. He stated that as a school leader, instead of “leading by fear, [he] lead[s] by listening and treating students with respect.”

Similarly, Mr. Jamal discussed the need for respect in dealing with students who have broken a rule. He points out that yelling is “what they hear at home,” but they should not

experience it at school. Mr. Jamal concedes that there will be times when a staff member may need to raise their voice to a child, but it should not escalate to yelling.

A differing view of respect comes from Mrs. Rosario, who discussed ensuring that staff members show respect for the families and the life they lead. She stresses the importance of not devaluing a student's or family's behavior because it doesn't fit middle class norms. While she believes that students need to know the behavioral norms for different situations, Mrs. Rosario respects the circumstances under which they live, and expects her staff to do the same.

For a visual representation of how each principal puts into practice their leadership beliefs, refer to table 2.

Table 2: Leadership Belief Themes of Principals

Leadership Belief Themes from Research Question 1	Corresponding Leadership Practices of Mrs. Rosario	Corresponding Leadership Practices of Mr. Jamal	Corresponding Leadership Practices of Mr. Stevens
Meeting individual student and staff needs	School supplies from business partners Homework assistance at “Welcome Centers” Professional development based on staff needs and data	School supply drives with local churches Evening project assistance time for students Saturday professional development day for teachers	Local school supply drives Before and after school homework assistance Grade level homework guidelines Ruby Payne training for staff
Establishing high expectations for staff and students	High academic and behavior expectations for students Rewards for students who meet expectations Expectation of rigorous instruction Complete dedication from staff	High academic and behavior expectations for students Rewards for students who meet expectations Expectations of rigorous instruction	High academic and behavior expectations for students Rewards for students who meet expectations Classroom and grade level proficiency goals
Involving students and parents in the education process	“Minute meetings” between student and teacher Home visits with parents Student meetings with Mrs. Rosario	Class meetings to involve students “Parents in Print” parent academy	Student clubs and organizations “Parent University” Parent leadership groups – SAC and PTA
Respecting all students	Show respect for students and where they come from	Be respectful in dealings with students	Be respectful in dealings with students

Research Question 2

What practices do effective school principals from a low socioeconomic childhood perceive to be most productive for creating a culture of resilience when serving students living in poverty?

Analysis of participant responses to interview questions based on research question two found that while the specific practices differed somewhat, there were several similarities in the purpose for the practices utilized to create a culture of resilience when serving students living in poverty.

Mrs. Rosario

In her interview, Mrs. Rosario identified three practices that she perceives to be most productive for creating a culture of resilience when serving students living in poverty. The practices she disclosed are “have the right staff,” “provide enrichment opportunities,” and “cut variability.”

Have the Right Staff

Mrs. Rosario described the “right staff” as people who “love kids” and have a “foundational belief that [education] is the only way that these children’s lives will change.” Mrs. Rosario has an unremitting belief that children living in low socioeconomic conditions have the ability to leave those circumstances through education, and inspires that belief in her staff. In

some cases, staff members have not agreed with this philosophy, and have chosen to teach elsewhere, which allowed Mrs. Rosario to hire teachers who share the belief. Additionally, Mrs. Rosario finds it to be “key for the staff to have a sense of urgency in their work with students, which acts as a catalyst for high expectations.” The “right staff” must also have “a strong content knowledge and the ability to implement teaching strategies that bring about high levels of thinking and move curriculum forward.” Equally important is the teacher’s “ability to engage the students to the lesson and to the learning experience as a whole.” Lastly, “the right staff” is one that will “recognize that education is never ending and therefore seek to continue to grow in their profession, for their benefit as much as for the students.”

Provide Enrichment Opportunities

To “provide enrichment opportunities” for her students, Mrs. Rosario utilized two main strategies, school based clubs and activities, and off campus field trips. Understanding that there were many of her students who “cannot practice for school plays after school because they have to get on the school bus,” Mrs. Rosario created ways for clubs meetings and drama rehearsals to occur during the school day; thus, allowing students opportunities they would not have otherwise.

Believing in the importance of students having enrichment opportunities, Mrs. Rosario insisted on her students going on field trips. “Many of my colleagues for years have not allowed field trips due to the [Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test], but for me, everyone had to go on field trips before testing each year.” Referring to the state’s writing assessment and her students’ living conditions, Mrs. Rosario said, “my children didn’t leave their hotel room, what

did they have to write about?” Students at Mrs. Rosario’s school went to St. Augustine, the Orlando Science Center, Rollins College, and the University of Central Florida, just to name a few. Mrs. Rosario worked with business partners to find funding for field trips for her students.

Cut Variability

With the term “cut variability,” Mrs. Rosario is referring to ensuring consistency in the classroom. She explains that while she believes that every teacher should have their own “flair” in the way they teach, the content should be the same. “If I have seven teachers in the same grade level, they can teach in their own style; but when the kids come out of each one of those seven rooms, they have to have received the same content.” She goes on to say, “kids have to have the same foundational skills, and the same enrichment opportunities no matter which classroom they’re in.” Mrs. Rosario feels this is the only way to ensure that students from poverty achieve the same academic success as those not living in poverty.

Mr. Jamal

Mr. Jamal also identified three practices that he perceives to be most productive for creating a culture of resilience when serving students living in poverty. The practices he associated with creating a culture of resilience are “provide opportunities for broader experiences,” build relationships,” and “teach life skills.”

Provide Opportunities for Broader Experiences

Much like Mrs. Rosario, Mr. Jamal worked to provide his students with opportunities outside the academic classroom; especially field trips. The reason for these trips, according to Mr. Jamal is that his “students don’t have background knowledge in most areas.” He stated that he came to this realization after seeing a clip of a *60 Minutes* interview with Lorraine Monroe, in which she discussed the importance of students from poverty having the same experiences as children in other social classes (Kroft, 1996). Mr. Jamal utilizes assistance from school business partners to fund student field trips to provide opportunities for his students to build background knowledge. Mr. Jamal paraphrases the interview with Lorraine Monroe by saying: “the only thing that differs between my kids from poverty and kids from middle class or wealth are their opportunities for experiences.” He goes on to explain that his students’ parents don’t have the ability to take them to experience cultural events or historic locations, so it is up to him to provide the students with those experiences.

Build Relationships

Mr. Jamal also believes strongly in practices that build relationships between adults and students. Personally, Mr. Jamal “tak[es] the time just to talk with kids and build a relationship.” He also stresses that teachers need to build the same relationships with the students in their classroom, pointing out that “the classrooms where there is rapport are the classrooms that are thriving.” Emphasizing the importance of his students having at least “one significant relationship in their life,” Mr. Jamal has also worked with local churches to create a mentoring program. The mentors in this program are able to build relationships with the students because

they have the luxury, according to Mr. Jamal, of being able to say: “I’m not here to grade you or judge you, I’m just here to talk.” With this program Mr. Jamal targets students who “are easily misled by peer pressure, but in conversations with adults show remorse for what they’ve done.” The church members who volunteer to be mentors go through mentor training at their respective church and are cleared through the school district’s volunteer program. Mr. Jamal’s goal with the mentoring program is “to decrease discipline issues, and increase academic success.”

Teach Life Skills

Lastly, Mr. Jamal believes that schools must teach life skills to students from poverty, because often they are “internalizing the struggles their parents are dealing with, but they don’t have the necessary conflict resolution skills, so they are just angry a lot.” To assist students with building life skills, Mr. Jamal’s teachers utilize the class meetings described previously, as well as direct teaching of character education and having students work in collaborative groups in the classroom. According to Mr. Jamal, schools must “take the time to teach kids how to work with others.” He adds that in the classrooms where the teachers are utilizing the class meetings, the discipline data shows a “decrease in the percentage of students committing acts that result in suspension or alternate placement.” Mr. Jamal stresses the importance of teaching life skills is not only to improve discipline data, but also to prepare students for their futures. Through class meetings and character education lessons, his students are learning “21st century skills like collaboration, leadership, communication, and social skills.”

Mr. Stevens

During his interview, Mr. Stevens noted that the practices he perceives to be most productive for creating a culture of resilience when serving students living in poverty are to “build a culture of acceptance” and “provide structure and discipline.”

Build a Culture of Acceptance

In order to “build a culture of acceptance,” Mr. Stevens stated that with his staff he sets the expectation that “they accept everyone, and they own everyone.” His school uses the saying “Get on the BOAT,” in which BOAT is an acronym for “Belief, Ownership, Accountability, and Team-work.” With this acronym, Mr. Stevens stresses to his staff that they must “ ‘believe’ in each other’s abilities, as well as the abilities of every student.” They must “take ‘ownership’ and responsibility for the education of every student who walks through their doors, and for everything [the teachers] and their teammates do.” Additionally, “every member of the staff is responsible for holding themselves ‘accountable’ for everything that goes right or wrong within the school.” Finally, “they must work together as a ‘team’ or none of this will build the culture of acceptance we want.” When implementing this initiative, Mr. Stevens introduced it to the faculty in May so everyone would be prepared to fully contribute to its success when it began the following year. Over the summer, “some staff members chose not to be a part of the new culture and moved to another school.” In their place, Mr. Stevens “hired teachers who believed in the ideals we were planning to implement.” Mr. Stevens was also very clear that “it’s not ‘those kids who live in the mobile home park’, they are all our kid.” He adds that he has “asked teachers who used the term ‘those kids’ to leave staff meetings and his office to stress that it will not be

tolerated.” Since implementing his “Get on the Boat” initiative, Mr. Stevens’ school showed an increase in points every year in the Florida school grading system.

Provide Structure and Discipline

Mr. Stevens also works to “provide structure and discipline” for his students, and views this as an important practice for creating a culture of resilience for students living in poverty. Pointing out that “often, students from lower socioeconomics don’t have a well-structured home life,” Mr. Stevens stated that “students are looking for that structure and discipline.” He adds, “when disciplining a student, you have to give tough love, but you also have to give them a hug, or arm around the shoulder.”

A visual representation of the leadership practices identified by the study participants as being the most productive for creating a culture of resilience when serving students living in poverty can be found in Table 3.

Table 3: Leadership Practices

School Principal	Leadership Practices	Evidence
Mrs. Rosario	Have the right staff	<p>“Love kids”</p> <p>“Foundational belief that [education] is the only way that these children’s lives will change”</p> <p>“Ability to engage the students”</p> <p>“Seek to continue to grow in their profession, for their benefit as much as for the students.”</p>
	Provide enrichment opportunities	<p>Clubs and activities during the school day</p> <p>Field trips</p>
	Cut variability	<p>“Kids have to have the same foundational skills, and the same enrichment opportunities no matter which classroom they’re in.”</p>
Mr. Jamal	Provide opportunities for broader experiences	<p>“The only thing that differs between my kids from poverty and kids from middle class or wealth are their opportunities for experiences.”</p>
	Build relationships	<p>“Take the time just to talk with kids and build a relationship.”</p> <p>Mentoring program with local churches</p>
	Teach life skills	<p>Class meetings</p> <p>Direct teaching of character education</p> <p>Collaborative group work in classrooms</p>
Mr. Stevens	Build a culture of acceptance	<p>“Get on the BOAT,”</p> <p>“Belief, Ownership, Accountability, and Team-work.”</p>
	Provide structure and discipline	<p>“Often, students from lower socioeconomics don’t have a well-structured home life.”</p> <p>“When disciplining a student, you have to give tough love, but you also have to give them a hug, or arm around the shoulder.”</p>

Additional Findings

During the interview process, the researcher quickly began seeing clear connections between the study participants' answers to the interview questions and the six steps on *The Resiliency Wheel*. At the end of each interview, the researcher asked each study participant if they had any familiarity with the work of Henderson and Milstein (2003) in regard to *The Resiliency Wheel*. While the researcher was utilizing *The Resiliency Wheel* as the conceptual framework of this study, none of the study participants reported having any previous knowledge of *The Resiliency Wheel*.

Additionally, the researcher found that the leadership beliefs and practices reported by the study participants corresponded to the Transformational School Leadership work of Leithwood and Sun (2012a).

A visual representation of how the answers provided by the study participants corresponds to *The Resiliency Wheel* and Transformational School Leadership can be found in Tables 4 and 5 respectively.

Table 4: Leadership Beliefs Correspondence to Resiliency Wheel and TSL Practices

Leadership Belief Themes from Research Question 1	Corresponding Resiliency Wheel Step (Henderson & Milstein, 2003)	Corresponding Transformational School Leadership Practices (Leithwood & Sun, 2012a)
Meeting individual student and staff needs	Provide caring and support	Provide individualized support
Establishing high expectations for staff and students	Set and communicate high expectations	Hold high performance expectations
Involving students and parents in the education process	Provide opportunities for meaningful participation	Engaging parents and the wider community
Respecting all students	Provide caring and support Increase pro-social bonding	Model valued behaviors, beliefs, and values

Table 5: Leadership Practices Correspondence to Resiliency Wheel and TSL Practices

School Principal	Leadership Practices from Research Question 2	Corresponding Resiliency Wheel Step (Henderson & Milstein, 2003)	Corresponding Transformational School Leadership Practices (Leithwood & Sun, 2012a)
Mrs. Rosario	Have the right staff	Increase prosocial bonding Set and communicate high expectations Provide caring and support	Develop a shared vision and build goal consensus
	Provide enrichment opportunities	Increase prosocial bonding Provide caring and support	Not Applicable
	Cut variability	Provide caring and support Set clear, consistent boundaries	Build structures to enable collaboration
Mr. Jamal	Provide opportunities for broader experiences	Increase prosocial bonding Provide caring and support	Not Applicable
	Build relationships	Increase prosocial bonding Provide caring and support	Strengthening school culture
	Teach life skills	Teach life skills	Model valued behaviors, beliefs and values
Mr. Stevens	Build a culture of acceptance	Increase prosocial bonding Provide caring and support	Strengthening school culture Build structures to enable collaboration Develop a shared vision and build goal consensus
	Provide structure and discipline	Set clear, consistent boundaries	Model valued behaviors

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

This chapter provides a review of the purpose of this study, as well as the interpretation of the findings. Additionally, the researcher discusses the implications of the findings, and recommendations for future research in this and similar areas.

Need for Resilience Research

“Reducing achievement gaps recognizes the importance of education to the life chances of individuals and the fact that the United States as a whole has a stake in assuring that all citizens can participate fully in the economic and political life of the country” (Ladd, 2012, p. 212).

According to U.S. Census Bureau reports for the year 2012, 16.1 million children under the age of 18 were living in poverty – that equates to 21.8% of our nation’s children living in poverty (DeNavas-Walt, Proctor, & Smith, 2013). A child who comes from a poor home is more likely to experience multiple risk factors, including living in a single parent home, health problems, poor school environments and high absenteeism, just to name a few, all of which are factors that contribute to the likelihood of poor school performance (Felner & DeVries, 2006; Romero & Lee, 2008).

Numerous studies have identified achievement gaps between socioeconomic groups (Howard, 2010; Aud et al., 2012; Aud et al., 2013). Some examples of measures in which the

achievement gap is evident include dropout rate, graduation rate, and grade point average (GPA). For instance, a gap is evident between socioeconomic groups in regard to graduation rate, with the lowest rate amongst low-income students (52%) increasing to the highest rate for high-income students (82%; Aud, et al., 2013).

Williams (2003) poignantly addressed the importance of closing the achievement gap when she wrote, “As long as there are gaps in achievement between groups of students, we are not doing all that we need to do to make sure that all children are going to be competitive in the 21st century” (p. 58). Thus, it is important for school principals to understand the factors that lead to achievement gaps, and have the knowledge and resources to close the achievement gap.

The responsibility, placed on principals by the No Child Left Behind Act (2001), of showing academic progress for low-income students places extra pressure on schools that serve a large percentage of students living in poverty. The answer to showing academic progress for low-income students lies in understanding educational resilience and the ways in which a school can create a culture of resilience amongst its teachers and students. In order to create the proper conditions for resilience, it is important to not only create programs and policies that increase the protective factors to poverty, but to also mitigate the risk factors experienced by children living in poverty (Cauce, Stewart, Rodriguez, Cochran, & Ginzler, 2003).

U.S. Census Bureau data shows that the number of children living in poverty is on the rise, which translates to more public school students experiencing those risk factors associated with poverty (DeNavas-Walt et al., 2013). Given the severity of the negative effect living in poverty has on a student’s likelihood of academic success, paired with the current climate of

accountability in U.S. public schools, it is imperative that educational leaders understand how to create a school culture that fosters resilience in students from poverty.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine to what extent, if any, growing up in poverty has an effect on the leadership beliefs of school principals who lead an elementary school with a high population of students living in low socioeconomic conditions. To do this, I interviewed elementary school principals within a large Central Florida urban school district who:

- led an elementary school with a low-socioeconomic student population of 40% or greater (determined through free/reduced price lunch participation data);
- have shown effectiveness in creating a culture of academic resilience for low-socioeconomic students (as demonstrated through meeting annual measurable objectives for economically disadvantaged students in the 2012-13 school year); and
- were raised in low-socioeconomic conditions (ascertained through responses to a screening questionnaire; See Appendix E).

Additionally, this study sought to identify strategies that are effective, as perceived by school principals who grew up in low socioeconomic conditions, in creating a culture of resilience to improve academic success for students living in low socioeconomic conditions. The intent was to provide valuable information to school principals who strive to create an environment that fosters educational resilience in children living in poverty. The results are particularly salient to principals, as the information comes directly from the perspective of school

principals who grew up in poverty, were educationally resilient, and are now creating a school atmosphere that fosters educational resilience in their students who live in poverty.

Discussion

Research question one sought to determine how effective school principals from a low socioeconomic childhood report that their background impacts their leadership beliefs in creating a culture of resilience when serving students living in poverty. Participants' answers to interview questions concerning research question one found that while they do not believe it directly impacts their day-to-day decision making, all participants feel that growing up in low socioeconomic conditions shaped the "lens" through which they make leadership decisions.

In regard to their leadership beliefs, the same four themes emerged with each principal: (a) meeting individual student and staff needs, (b) establishing high expectations for staff and students, (c) involving students and parents in the education process, and (d) respecting all students. While participants all report having no prior knowledge of Henderson and Milstein's *Resiliency Wheel*, the themes found in their answers regarding their leadership beliefs in creating a culture of resilience correlate with the three steps associated with building resiliency in the environment – provide caring and support, set and communicate high expectations, and provide opportunities for meaningful participation (2003). Furthermore, the themes that emerged also correspond to the research conducted by Leithwood and Sun (2012a), in which they identified the most effective practices for transformational school leadership.

Finding a correspondence between the participants' leadership beliefs, *Resiliency Wheel* steps (Henderson & Milstein, 2003) and the effective transformational school leadership

practices identified by Leithwood and Sun (2012a) is important given the research that has already been performed showing the effectiveness of both transformational school leadership and the steps of *The Resiliency Wheel*.

Research question two sought to identify which practices effective school principals from a low socioeconomic childhood perceive to be most productive for creating a culture of resilience when serving students living in poverty.

While the practices identified by the participants were not as closely aligned with one another as their leadership beliefs, there were some similarities. For instance, all three participants identified a practice that had relationships with students as its central theme – “have the right staff,” “build relationships,” and “build a culture of acceptance.” Also, both Mrs. Rosario and Mr. Jamal believe it is important to provide students with opportunities to experience the world outside their school and neighborhood.

The practices Mrs. Rosario associated with creating a culture of resilience are “have the right staff,” “provide enrichment opportunities,” and “cut variability.” Mr. Jamal identified “provide opportunities for broader experiences,” “build relationships,” and “teach life skills” as the practices he associates with creating a culture of resilience. Lastly, the practices Mr. Stevens perceives to be most productive for creating a culture of resilience when serving students living in poverty are to “build a culture of acceptance” and “provide structure and discipline.” For a detailed discussion on the practices identified by these school leaders, refer to chapter four. Much like with the leadership beliefs, a parallel was found between the practices the study participants find effective and the works of Henderson and Milstein (2003), and Leithwood and Sun (2012a).

As with the correspondence between the leadership beliefs and the previous research, finding the same connections between the effective practices of these principals and the work of Henderson and Milstein (2003), and Leithwood and Sun (2012a) is important. These connections work to reinforce the previous works, while simultaneously providing credence to the work being performed by these effective principals.

It is essential, also, to note the emphasis the participants placed on school staff, most specifically teachers, in discussions of leadership beliefs and practices in creating a culture of resiliency for students living in poverty. This underscores their faith in the power teachers have to make a difference in the lives of their students. This belief is supported by a multitude of research showing that of all school factors, teachers have the largest impact on student performance (Leithwood, Louis, Wahlstrom, & Anderson, 2004).

Also important to note is that throughout their comments, all three principals had an underlying tone of urgency in their work. They believe that their students from poverty are too far behind where they need to be and there is no time to wait. The feeling is that the longer the schools wait to make changes to meet the needs of students in poverty, the further behind the students become. As Mr. Jamal stated, “we have work to do, and we have to do it now.”

Recommendations for Further Research

While much was learned through this study, there is more knowledge to be gained in the area of effectively serving students living in poverty, and more specifically, how educators who grew up in low socioeconomic conditions serve students living in poverty. To continue to

improve the education system for students who are economically disadvantaged, future research is recommended in the following areas:

- A follow-up study gathering the perceptions of the teachers working for the study participants, in regard to the leadership beliefs and practices in creating a culture of resilience for students living in poverty.
- A follow-up study gathering the perceptions of parents, students and community members, in regard to these leaders' beliefs and practices in creating a culture of resilience for students living in poverty.
- A similar study of leaders who grew up in low socioeconomic conditions and effectively create a culture of resilience for middle and high school students living in poverty.
- A similar study looking at the educational beliefs and practices of classroom teachers who grew up in low socioeconomic conditions.
- The scope of this study should be broadened to include other educational leaders who grew up in poverty – including school district administrators, assistant principals, and teacher leaders.

Through the process of conducting this study, the researcher found troubling results at certain points along the way. For instance, of the 101 elementary schools that were identified as having a free/reduced lunch rate of greater than or equal to 40%, only 16 (15.8%) met their AMO in reading and mathematics for economically disadvantaged students in the 2012-13 school year (See Appendix A). When the other elementary schools from the school district are added in (a total of 122 elementary schools), only 22 (18%) of the district's elementary schools met their AMO in reading and mathematics for economically disadvantaged students in the

2012-13 school year (See Appendix A). While these data raise concerns as to the overall effectiveness of schools in creating a culture of resilience for economically disadvantaged students, according to Sirin (2005) “the impact of family SES [on academic achievement] varies for individuals depending on where they live and the cohort with whom they go to school” (p. 442). Based on this information, future research should be conducted in the following:

- What factors outside the control of school leaders influence the level of impact a school leader has on creating a culture of resilience for students living in poverty?
- To what extent do these factors influence the level of impact a school leader has on creating a culture of resilience for students living in poverty?

Another concern that was raised through this research was the low percentage of principals found to have grown up in low socioeconomic conditions. According to data from the 2011–12 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS:12), 47.3% of bachelor degree seeking students majoring in education are from homes that earn at or below 185% of the national poverty guideline, which would qualify them for the reduced price school lunch program (Wine, Bryan & Siegel, 2014; U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food, and Nutrition Service, 2013). Also from this study, 35.6% of bachelor degree seeking students majoring in education are from homes that earn at or below 130% of the national poverty guideline, which would qualify them for the free school lunch program (Wine, Bryan & Siegel, 2014; U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food, and Nutrition Service, 2013). These statistics raise questions as to why more principals from poverty were not found through the questionnaire process. Of the 14 screening questionnaires completed by principals at the identified schools, only 3 (21%) met the criteria of growing up in low socioeconomic conditions (See Appendices E & F). Why

the disparity? Three simple explanations would be that (a) the percentage of teachers from poverty entering school leadership roles closely resemble the percentage of students from poverty entering the teaching profession, but they were not as successful in creating a culture of resilience for economically disadvantaged students; (b) the percentage of teachers from poverty entering school leadership roles does not resemble the percentage of students from poverty entering the teaching profession; or (c) the percentage of teachers from poverty entering school leadership roles closely resemble the percentage of students from poverty entering the teaching profession, but they were not all willing to disclose the personal information of their youth.

The way in which a low socioeconomic (LSE) student escapes the bonds of poverty can be explained through their awareness of ‘life-tracks’, development of ‘access skills’, and understanding and taking advantage of ‘opportunity situations’. From the socio-cultural perspective, life-tracks “are tracks of development embedded in tradition with cultural conceptions linked to different social categories like status, gender, ethnicity, which set limits to what are appropriate developmental life-careers” (Hundeide, 2005, p. 243). The term opportunity situations “refers both to which opportunities are available in his social environment, and which opportunities the actor can perceive as relevant and available from his position” (Hundeide, 2005, p. 248). Access skills are those “skills, that qualify the person for entrance into a particular life-path or –track (Hundeide, 1991)” (as cited in Hundeide, 2005, p. 251). Combine this theory with what Payne (2005) says about how “hidden rules govern so much of our immediate assessment of an individual and his/her capabilities” (p. 44), and one possible explanation is that while students from poverty made it into college and the teaching profession, perhaps they don’t

understand the “hidden rules” or possess the access skills needed to enter the realm of school leadership. Based on these findings, future research should be conducted in the following:

- Does the percentage of teachers from poverty entering school leadership roles closely resemble the percentage of students from poverty entering the teaching profession? If not, why?
- How do school and district leaders identify potential future school leaders? And, is this process biased in favor of educators from a particular socioeconomic background?
- What, if any, are the “hidden rules” and “access skills” necessary for educators from poverty to move into the ranks of school leadership?
- Are school leaders from poverty more, less, or just as effective at creating a culture of resilience for students in poverty as leaders who are not from poverty?
- Do the leadership beliefs and practices differ between leaders from poverty and leaders who are not from poverty in the context of creating a culture of resilience for students living in poverty?
- A quantitative study to determine if there is a difference in the academic success rate of students living in poverty between those at schools led by a principal who was raised in poverty and those at schools led by a principal who was not raised in poverty.

Conclusion

Principals in this study were heavily focused on the resiliency wheel step of “providing caring and support” for their students, as well as their teachers. An analysis of how their

leadership beliefs and practices aligned with the six steps of *The Resiliency Wheel* reveals that these principals place the most emphasis on “Provide Caring and Support,” followed closely by “Increase Pro-Social Bonding.” (See Table 6).

Table 6: Leadership Connections to Resiliency Wheel Steps

Resiliency Wheel Steps	Mrs. Rosario	Mr. Jamal	Mr. Stevens
Increase Pro-Social Bonding	Have the right staff (P) Provide enrichment opportunities (P) Have the right staff (P) Respecting all students (B)	Provide opportunities for broader experiences (P) Build relationships (P) Respecting all students (B)	Build a culture of acceptance (P) Respecting all students (B)
Set Clear, Consistent Boundaries	Cut variability (P)		Provide structure and discipline (P)
Teach “Life Skills”		Teach life skills (P)	
Provide Caring and Support	Provide enrichment opportunities (P) Cut variability (P) Meeting individual student and staff needs (B) Respecting all students (B)	Provide opportunities for broader experiences (P) Build relationships (P) Meeting individual student and staff needs (B) Respecting all students (B)	Build a culture of acceptance (P) Meeting individual student and staff needs (B) Respecting all students (B)
Set and Communicate High Expectations	Have the right staff (P) Establishing high expectations for staff and students (B)	Establishing high expectations for staff and students (B)	Establishing high expectations for staff and students (B)
Provide Opportunities for Meaningful Participation	Involving students and parents in the education process (B)	Involving students and parents in the education process (B)	Involving students and parents in the education process (B)

(P) = Practice identified by study participant (B) = Belief identified by study participant

The findings of the current study reinforce the study by Whitney, Splett, and Weston (2008), which found that “high-risk schools performed better on a standardized test of communication arts when they employed strategies that mitigate risk factors in the environment and build resiliency in the environment” (p. 46).

The study participants fostered relationships between (a) principal and students; (b) principal and teachers; (c) teachers and students; (d) school and home; (e) school and community; and (f) community members and students. The principals in this study utilized the relationships they built with students, parents, and teachers to gain buy-in for the other practices they implemented to increase resilience. For example, all three principals alluded to the fact that their teachers and students would not have striven to reach the high expectations they had set if it weren't for the relationships they had already built.

Additionally, it is important to note the relationship between the principal and the school staff in creating a culture of resilience. “Teacher-student relationships often reflect administrator-teacher relationships: to provide the support and encouragement that adolescents require, teachers and staff members must feel supported and encouraged by their school administrators” (Harvey, 2007, p. 11). Study participants invested a large amount of time and resources to create positive relationships with their staff. The principals created these relationships in order to have a positive impact on the relationships between the staff and students, and the overall culture of the school.

While the study participants' emphasis on relationships in their leadership could be interpreted as servant leadership or transformational leadership, it is in fact transformational leadership. The study participants do work tirelessly to build relationships and meet the needs of

their staff, their main intent is for these actions to positively impact the academic success of their students. “The transformational leader's focus is directed toward the organization, and his or her behavior builds follower commitment toward organizational objectives, while the servant leader's focus is on the followers, and the achievement of organizational objectives is a subordinate outcome” (Stone, Russel & Patterson, 2003, p. 349). For this reason, combined with the strong association of their leadership practices and beliefs with the work of Leithwood and Sun (2012a; See Table 5), the researcher believes these principals utilize Transformational School Leadership, not Servant Leadership.

It is recommended that a principal looking to create a culture of resilience for students living in poverty begin by placing the most emphasis in the steps of “Provide Caring and Support,” and “Increase Pro-Social Bonding,” and then branch into the other steps of *The Resiliency Wheel*. Based on the results of this study, implementation of these steps of *The Resiliency Wheel* can best be achieved through using Transformational School Leadership.

This study has clarified the specific leadership beliefs and practices utilized by elementary school principals who grew up in low socioeconomic conditions in order to create a culture of resilience for students living in poverty. These beliefs and practices can be employed by other elementary school principals attempting to create a culture of resilience for students living in poverty. Additionally, while this study looked specifically at creating a culture of resilience for students who live in low socioeconomic conditions and attend a school with an elevated level of students living in low socioeconomic conditions, the researcher believes that the leadership beliefs and practices utilized by these school principals can benefit a variety of students.

APPENDIX A: TABLE OF SCHOOLS WITH FRL AND AMO CRITERIA

Randomly Generated School ID	Free or Reduced Lunch Rate 2012-13	Met Econ Dis AMO Target Reading 2012-13	Met Econ Dis AMO Target Math 2012-13	Meets Criteria to be Study School?	Included in Study
7343104	13	Yes	Yes	No	No
1423415	14	Yes	Yes	No	No
5879543	18	No	Yes	No	No
7768556	24	No	No	No	No
9550203	24	No	Yes	No	No
4872669	25	No	Yes	No	No
1800543	26	Yes	Yes	No	No
4869681	26	Yes	No	No	No
6129238	26	Yes	No	No	No
9439128	26	No	Yes	No	No
3629198	27	Yes	Yes	No	No
5855739	32	No	No	No	No
9976940	32	No	No	No	No
5659412	32	No	No	No	No
4946611	33	No	Yes	No	No
7226246	35	Yes	No	No	No
5651451	36	Yes	Yes	No	No
3096212	37	Yes	Yes	No	No
5686974	37	No	No	No	No
1576504	37	No	No	No	No
6660582	39	Yes	No	No	No
8913107	40	No	No	No	No
5401552	40	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
1864488	43	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
3220002	43	No	No	No	No
3457718	44	No	No	No	No
2003569	44	No	No	No	No
8580277	45	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
5355870	49	No	No	No	No
2537333	50	No	No	No	No
5979392	50	No	Yes	No	No
7115414	51	No	No	No	No
1681203	54	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
7608134	54	No	No	No	No
5664550	55	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
2694521	55	No	Yes	No	No
9879574	57	No	Yes	No	No
9785036	58	No	No	No	No

Randomly Generated School ID	Free or Reduced Lunch Rate 2012-13	Met Econ Dis AMO Target Reading 2012-13	Met Econ Dis AMO Target Math 2012-13	Meets Criteria to be Study School?	Included in Study
1888502	87	No	Yes	No	No
8188223	88	No	No	No	No
9809924	88	No	No	No	No
3079032	89	No	Yes	No	No
4347623	89	No	No	No	No
8038037	89	No	Yes	No	No
6590467	89	No	Yes	No	No
1075393	90	No	Yes	No	No
6218620	90	No	No	No	No
3754151	90	No	No	No	No
9088649	91	No	No	No	No
2956586	91	No	No	No	No
3939654	91	No	No	No	No
8714048	91	No	No	No	No
1384478	91	No	Yes	No	No
9612704	91	No	No	No	No
8798681	91	No	No	No	No
1776518	92	No	No	No	No
7559009	92	No	No	No	No
7203981	92	No	No	No	No
2741575	93	No	No	No	No
6096073	93	No	Yes	No	No
6930419	93	No	No	No	No
6340919	94	No	Yes	No	No
9039530	94	No	No	No	No
5513646	95	No	No	No	No
1073174	95	Yes	No	No	No
5459620	99	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
9846365	99	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
5519203	100	Yes	No	No	No
9769605	100	No	No	No	No
7822502	100	No	Yes	No	No
5966587	100	No	No	No	No
6960269	100	No	No	No	No
9405897	100	No	No	No	No
6824525	100	No	Yes	No	No
5012337	100	No	Yes	No	No
1658815	100	No	Yes	No	No

Randomly Generated School ID	Free or Reduced Lunch Rate 2012-13	Met Econ Dis AMO Target Reading 2012-13	Met Econ Dis AMO Target Math 2012-13	Meets Criteria to be Study School?	Included in Study
3289899	100	No	No	No	No
9324865	100	No	No	No	No
5422249	100	No	No	No	No
4335352	100	No	No	No	No
6574790	100	No	No	No	No
8690340	100	No	No	No	No
5159771	100	No	No	No	No
9777427	100	No	No	No	No

APPENDIX B: UCF IRB APPROVAL LETTER



University of Central Florida Institutional Review Board
Office of Research & Commercialization
12201 Research Parkway, Suite 501
Orlando, Florida 32826-3246
Telephone: 407-823-2901 or 407-882-2276
www.research.ucf.edu/compliance/irb.html

Approval of Exempt Human Research

From: UCF Institutional Review Board #1
FWA00000351, IRB00001138

To: Jonathan Rasmussen

Date: July 08, 2014

Dear Researcher:

On 7/8/2014, the IRB approved the following activity as human participant research that is exempt from regulation:

Type of Review: Exempt Determination
Project Title: HOW PRINCIPALS FROM A LOW SOCIOECONOMIC CHILDHOOD SERVE STUDENTS LIVING IN POVERTY
Investigator: Jonathan Rasmussen
IRB Number: SBE-14-10420
Funding Agency:
Grant Title:
Research ID: N/A

This determination applies only to the activities described in the IRB submission and does not apply should any changes be made. If changes are made and there are questions about whether these changes affect the exempt status of the human research, please contact the IRB. When you have completed your research, please submit a Study Closure request in iRIS so that IRB records will be accurate.

In the conduct of this research, you are responsible to follow the requirements of the Investigator Manual.

On behalf of Sophia Dziegielewski, Ph.D., L.C.S.W., UCF IRB Chair, this letter is signed by:

Signature applied by Joanne Muratori on 07/08/2014 02:47:57 PM EDT

IRB Coordinator

APPENDIX C: SCHOOL DISTRICT RESEARCH REQUEST/APPROVAL



Research Request Form

Complete this form in full and send a copy, along with all required attachments, to:

Accountability, Research and Assessment

GENERAL INFORMATION

Requester's Name Jonathan Rasmussen

Date June 13, 2014

E-mail jonathan.rasmussen@knights.ucf.edu

Phone [redacted] N/A [redacted]
Cell Home Work

Address [redacted]
Street City, State Zip

Institutional Affiliation University of Central Florida

Project Director/Advisor Dr. Suzanne Martin

Project Director/Advisor Phone Number [redacted]

Project Title Examining the Beliefs and Practices of Effective School Principals from a Low Socioeconomic Childhood as they Relate to Creating a Culture of Resilience When Serving Students Living in Poverty

DEGREE PROGRAM

- Associate's
- Bachelor's
- Master's
- Specialist
- Doctorate
- Not Applicable

DIRECT CONTACT WITH █████ STUDENTS AND/OR PERSONNEL

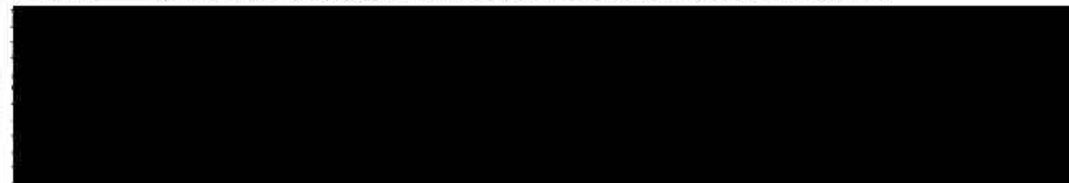
- This research will require direct contact with students, teachers and/or administrators.

Please describe in detail the number and type of participants needed, the amount of time each participant will be engaged in the project and the methods that will be used to gather data. Include any school identified as a participant in the project. Include a description of the measures taken to ensure the confidentiality of all participants.

The sample will consist of elementary school principals who:

- Lead an elementary school with a low-socioeconomic student population of 40% or greater;
- have shown effectiveness in creating a culture of academic resilience for low-socioeconomic students, as evidenced by meeting the math and reading AMO for the 2012-13 school year; and
- were raised in low-socioeconomic conditions, as determined by principals' answers to a screening survey.

Within █████, there are 16 schools that meet the first two criteria listed above: █████



The researcher will contact the persons who were the principals of these schools for the 2012-13 school year and request they complete a screening questionnaire to determine if they meet the final criterion of growing up in a low socioeconomic environment. The researcher will use the results of this questionnaire to determine 5-7 research participants. Research participants will be interviewed (see Interview Protocol) in their office or a location of their choosing. The interview, which should last less than one hour will be audiotaped for accuracy.

Confidentiality: Every effort will be made to maintain the confidentiality of your participation in this project. Each subject's name will be paired with a code number by the principal investigator. This code number will appear on all written materials. The list pairing the subject's name to the assigned code number will be kept in a password protected server, and will be maintained separate from all research materials. Once the study is complete, and the data analyzed, this list will be destroyed. The interview audio recording and hand-written notes will be kept in a lockbox in the researcher's residence until the end of the dissertation process, at which time both will be destroyed. When the researcher reports on the study results, he will not use names or any other information that may enable readers to identify the study participants. There may be times when the researcher must share information with personnel from the University of Central Florida or state, federal or local agencies or others who pay to have the research done so that they may verify the research was conducted correctly. If this occurs, these individuals are bound to the same confidentiality requirements as the Principal Investigator.

Revised 9.30.13

SUMMARY OF RESEARCH PROJECT

Please provide a brief summary of your research project that includes your research questions, the relevance of your project and your research methods.

The following research questions will be investigated through this study:

1. How do effective school principals from a low socioeconomic childhood report that their background impacts their leadership beliefs in creating a culture of resilience when serving students living in poverty?
2. What practices do effective school principals from a low socioeconomic childhood perceive to be most productive for creating a culture of resilience when serving students living in poverty?

Relevance: A magnitude of data shows that the number of children living in poverty is on the rise, which translates to more public school students experiencing the risk factors associated with poverty. Given the severity of the negative effect living in poverty has on the likelihood of academic success, paired with the current climate of accountability in US public schools, it is imperative that educational leaders understand how to create a school culture that fosters resilience in students from poverty.

Research Method: Five to seven research participants will be selected utilizing the procedure described in the "Direct Contact with [REDACTED] Students and/or Personnel" section of this document. The research participants will be interviewed utilizing the attached "Interview Protocol". The audio recordings from the interviews will be transcribed, and the researcher will perform phenomenological reduction on the data. Beginning with bracketing to minimize researcher bias and look at the data from a fresh, unprejudiced point of view, the researcher will then perform horizontalization on the data. Once the data has been horizontalized – by removing any data that does not pertain to the topic, or is repetitive, the researcher will group the horizons into themes. From the identified themes, the researcher will write a textural description of the phenomena and then provide the description to the appropriate interviewee for member checking. Once this process is complete for the data collected from all study participants, the researcher will compile all of the individual textural descriptions into one description of the essence of the phenomena.

Requested [REDACTED] Support: While I will not need student archival data, I will need the names of the personnel who were the principals of the target schools [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] during the 2012-13 school year, as well as their current work location if they are no longer at the above stated elementary school.

BENEFIT FOR [REDACTED] PUBLIC SCHOOLS

All research approved must have a specific benefit to the students, teachers and/or administrators of [REDACTED] Public Schools. Please describe in detail how this research project directly benefits the district.

The purpose of this study is to develop a textual description that will describe the effect of childhood poverty on the decisions made by school principals who grew up in those conditions. Additionally, this study will identify strategies that are effective – as perceived by school principals who grew up in low socioeconomic conditions – in creating a culture of resilience to improve academic success for students living in low-socioeconomic conditions.

The results of this study will provide valuable information to school principals in regard to fostering educational resilience in children living in poverty from the perspective of school principals who grew up in poverty, were educationally resilient, and are now creating a school atmosphere that is fostering educational resilience in their students who live in poverty.

ATTACH THE FOLLOWING ITEMS TO THIS FORM:

- A copy of your IRB approval (if available) – This study has been submitted for UCF IRB approval – currently awaiting approval. I will send a copy of the approval to [REDACTED] when it is received.
- (2) Two copies of your approved proposal, grant, or project
- All survey and/or interview instruments – Included as appendices in dissertation proposal

ASSURANCE

Using the proposed procedures and instrument, I hereby agree to conduct research within the policies of [REDACTED] Public Schools. Deviations from the approved procedures must be cleared through the Senior Director of Accountability, Research and Assessment. Reports and materials should be supplied when specified.

Requester's Signature  Date 6/13/14

NOTE TO REQUESTER: When seeking approval at the school level, a copy of the entire Request Form, signed by the Senior Director, Accountability, Research, and Assessment, should be shown to the school principal who has the option to refuse participation depending upon any school circumstance or condition. The original Research Request Form is preferable to a faxed document.

APPROVAL STATUS

- Approved:** The research request was completed in full and the research meets all [redacted] requirements. The following must be completed to meet security requirements before your research can begin:

All security procedures must be followed.

- Conditionally Approved:** The research request contains one or more elements that must be clarified or are missing. However, the request has an opportunity to be approved if the following is completed:

Please make these changes within two weeks and resubmit the entire Request Form and supporting documents.

- Rejected:** The research request contains significant omissions and/or does not meet [redacted] requirements. This research request has been rejected due to the following:

Signature of the Senior Director for Accountability, Research and Assessment



Date

7.14.2014

APPENDIX D: LETTER TO PERSPECTIVE PARTICIPANTS

Date



Dear Principal,

My name is Jonathan Rasmussen, and I currently serve as the principal of the [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. I am working on my doctoral dissertation through the National Urban Special Education Leadership Initiative at the University of Central Florida. I have been granted permission by the office of Accountability, Research, and Assessment to conduct my research study in select elementary schools within [REDACTED] Public Schools. The title of my research study is *How Principals From a Low socioeconomic Childhood Serve Students Living in Poverty*. This phenomenological study is designed to determine the beliefs and practices of principals who have a proven track record of meeting the academic needs of economically disadvantaged students – as evidenced by meeting this subgroup’s Annual Measurable Objectives Goals for mathematics and reading during the 2012-13 school year in elementary schools with 40% or more of its students on free or reduced price lunch. More specifically, this study will focus on principals who not only met the aforementioned criteria, but also grew up in a low socioeconomic environment. As a principal who grew up in poverty, I believe that this information will benefit all school leaders by providing insight into creating a culture of resilience as accomplished by school leaders who are intimately familiar with the barriers students from poverty face each and every day.

I am requesting that you take part in my study. The school you led in the 2012-13 school year met the criteria stated above. I am writing to ask that you participate in my research study. The first stage of the study involves your completion of a short screening questionnaire to determine

whether you meet the criterion of growing up in a low-socioeconomic environment. If you meet this criterion, you will then be asked to participate in a face-to-face interview that should take less than one hour of your time, and can take place in your office, or another location of your choosing. Knowing that your time is extremely valuable, and full of activity, it is my hope to conduct interviews prior to the start of the 2014-15 school year.

Please review the enclosed materials, and contact me by phone at [REDACTED] or by email at jonathan.rasmussen@knights.ufl.edu if I can answer any questions for you. Participation in this study is completely voluntary. All the information collected from principals will remain confidential – please see the “Explanation of Research” included in this packet.

Thank you for taking the time to assist me in my doctoral work. I hope to hear from you soon!

Sincerely,

Jonathan Rasmussen

Principal

[REDACTED]

Doctoral Candidate

National Urban Special Education Leadership Initiative

University of Central Florida

APPENDIX E: SCREENING QUESTIONNAIRE

SCREENING QUESTIONNAIRE

Respondent's Code Number: _____

Years Experience as a Principal: _____

QUESTION	YES	NO
1. While growing up, were the children living in your household eligible for free or reduced price lunches?		
2. While growing up, did your family reside in public housing - that is, housing that was owned by a local housing authority or other public agency? DO NOT INCLUDE MILITARY HOUSING		
3. While growing up, was the rent for your home lower because the Federal, State, or Local government was paying part of the cost through Section 8 or a similar program? DO NOT INCLUDE MILITARY HOUSING		
4. While growing up, did your family receive any form of energy assistance from the Federal, State, or Local government or from the utility companies to pay utility bills?		
5. Did your family receive any income from a program called Supplemental Security Income - that is, SSI – through the state and/or federal governments?		
6. At any time during your childhood, did your family receive benefits from WIC - the Women, Infants, and Children nutrition program?		
7. While growing up, did your family receive food stamps or any other form of food assistance?		
8. While growing up, did your family receive any child support as a bonus or pass-through from a state or county welfare program, or any disregard payments?		
9. While growing up, did your family receive any transportation assistance to help get to work, school, training, or doctor's appointments -- such as gas vouchers, bus passes or help repairing a car?		
10. While growing up, did your family receive child care services or assistance to allow a parent or guardian to go to work or school or training?		
11. While growing up, did your family receive free clothes, or any form of clothing assistance?		
12. While growing up, were members of your family covered by Medicaid or some other government assistance program that paid for health care?		
13. At any time while you were a child, did your family receive any form of welfare or public assistance benefits from a federal, state, or county program that has not been mentioned in this questionnaire? If yes, please list assistance benefits: _____ _____		
14. When you attended college for your bachelor's degree, did you receive a PELL Grant, and/or tuition assistance from a state or local welfare office?		
15. What is the highest level of education you have completed?		

Please designate the answer to the questions below by marking the box for "YES" or "NO"

APPENDIX F: SCREENING QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS FOR FINAL PARTICIPANTS

QUESTION	Mrs. Rosario	Mr. Jamal	Mr. Stevens
Years of experience as a principal	7	12	4
1. While growing up, were the children living in your household eligible for free or reduced price lunches?	YES	YES	YES
2. While growing up, did your family reside in public housing - that is, housing that was owned by a local housing authority or other public agency? DO NOT INCLUDE MILITARY HOUSING			
3. While growing up, was the rent for your home lower because the Federal, State, or Local government was paying part of the cost through Section 8 or a similar program? DO NOT INCLUDE MILITARY HOUSING			
4. While growing up, did your family receive any form of energy assistance from the Federal, State, or Local government or from the utility companies to pay utility bills?		YES	
5. Did your family receive any income from a program called Supplemental Security Income - that is, SSI – through the state and/or federal governments?		YES	
6. At any time during your childhood, did your family receive benefits from WIC - the Women, Infants, and Children nutrition program?	YES	YES	
7. While growing up, did your family receive food stamps or any other form of food assistance?	YES	YES	
8. While growing up, did your family receive any child support as a bonus or pass-through from a state or county welfare program, or any disregard payments?			
9. While growing up, did your family receive any transportation assistance to help get to work, school, training, or doctor's appointments -- such as gas vouchers, bus passes or help repairing a car?			

10. While growing up, did your family receive child care services or assistance to allow a parent or guardian to go to work or school or training?			
11. While growing up, did your family receive free clothes, or any form of clothing assistance?	YES		
12. While growing up, were members of your family covered by Medicaid or some other government assistance program that paid for health care?		YES	
13. At any time while you were a child, did your family receive any form of welfare or public assistance benefits from a federal, state, or county program that has not been mentioned in this questionnaire? If yes, please list assistance benefits: _____			
14. When you attended college for your bachelor's degree, did you receive a PELL Grant, and/or tuition assistance from a state or local welfare office?	YES	YES	YES
15. What is the highest level of education you have completed?	Master of Science	Doctorate in Education	Master's – Educational Leadership

APPENDIX G: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Interview Protocol

The purpose of this study is to determine if growing up in low socioeconomic conditions impacts the way in which a principal creates a culture of resilience for students living in poverty, as well as identifying practices principals who grew up in low socioeconomic conditions believe to be most effective in creating the afore mentioned culture of resilience. Based on the fact that you grew up in low socioeconomic conditions, and your school met the annual measurable objective goals in the economically disadvantaged subgroup, you are in a unique position to provide information that could help other principals create a culture of resilience in their school.

The interview has been designed with 4 open-ended questions to guide our conversation, but there is also flexibility built in to allow for follow up questions as needed for clarification. Your responses will be combined with the responses other elementary school principals who met the same screening criteria as yourself. Your answers will remain confidential, with me being the only person who will have access to the data in any format that will connect your answers to you personally.

With your permission, I will record the audio of our interview utilizing a Livescribe Smartpen. The recording will be saved to a flash drive and be kept in a lockbox in my residence until the end of the dissertation process, at which time it will be destroyed. I will also take handwritten notes during the interview, which will be stored along with the audio-recording.

Through this process, I will identify you as School Leader number ____ based on your name's alphabetical placement in a list of the study participants.

If, at any point in the interview, you have questions, please feel free to ask me. Do you have any questions before we begin the actual interview?

Research Question 1: How do effective school principals from a low socioeconomic childhood report that their background impacts their leadership beliefs in creating a culture of resilience when serving students living in poverty?

1. Do you believe your low socioeconomic childhood affects the way in which you lead your school? In what ways?
2. Do you call on childhood experiences when making decisions that will affect your students living in poverty? Provide examples

Research Question 2: What practices do effective school principals from a low socioeconomic childhood perceive to be most productive for creating a culture of resilience when serving students living in poverty?

1. What practices do you perceive best mitigate the adverse effects of poverty on academic success? Provide examples.
2. Describe your approach as a leader to serving students from poverty. What is important to you? Does this approach differ from the approach you take with students who are not from poverty? Provide examples

Those are all the questions I have for you at this time. If I need clarification of anything you've said today, would it be okay for me to contact you by phone?

Once I have conducted reduction of the data and created a textural description of your lived experience, I would like to send it to you so that you may ensure it accurately represents your experience. Would you be willing to member check the textural description?

Thank you very much for your time. Do you have any questions before we conclude the interview?

LIST OF REFERENCES

- Addy, S., Englehardt, W., & Skinner, C. (2013a). *Basic Facts About Low-income Children: Children Aged 6 through 11 Years, 2011*. New York, NY: National Center for Children in Poverty.
- Addy, S., Englehardt, W., & Skinner, C. (2013b). *Basic Facts About Low-income Children: Children Under 18 Years, 2011*. New York, NY: National Center for Children in Poverty.
- Artiles, A. J., Kozleski, E. B., Trent, S. C., Osher, D., & Ortiz, A. (2010). Justifying and Explaining Disproportionality, 1968-2008: A Critique of Underlying Views of Culture. *Exceptional Children, 76*, 279-299.
- Ary, D., Cheser Jacobs, L., & Sorensen, C. K. (2010). *Introduction to Research in Education (8th ed.)*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- Aud, S., Hussar, W., Johnson, F., Kena, G., Roth, E., Manning, E., Wang, X., and Zhang, J. (2012). *The Condition of Education 2012* (NCES 2012 - 045). U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. Washington, DC. Retrieved from <http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch>.
- Aud, S., Wilkinson-Flicker, S., Kristapovich, P., Rathbun, A., Wang, X., & Zhang, J. (2013). *The Condition of Education 2013* (NCES 2013 - 037). U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. Washington, DC. Retrieved from <http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch>
- Bailey, C. A. (2007). *A guide to qualitative field research* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press.
- Baker, J. A., Dilly, L. J., Aupperlee, J. L., & Patil, S. A. (2003). The developmental context of school satisfaction: Schools as psychologically healthy environments. *School Psychology Quarterly, 18*, 206-221. doi: 10.1521/scpq.18.2.206.21861
- Barbuto Jr., J. E., & Wheeler, D. W. (2006). Scale Development and Construct Clarification of Servant Leadership. *Group & Organization Management, 31*(3), 300-326.
- Basch, C. E. (2011). Healthier Students Are Better Learners: A Missing Link in School Reforms to Close the Achievement Gap. *Journal of School Health, 81*, 593-598. doi: 10.1111/j.1746-1561.2011.00632.x
- Bass, B. M. (1990). From transactional to transformational leadership: Learning to share the vision. *Organizational Dynamics, 18*(3), 19-31. doi: 10.1016/0090-2616(90)90061-S

- Bass, B. M. (2000). The future of leadership in learning organizations. *Journal of Leadership Studies*, 7(3), 18-40. doi: 10.1177/107179190000700302
- Bass, B. M., & Steidlmeier, P. (1999). Ethics, character, and authentic transformational leadership behavior. *Leadership Quarterly*, 10(2), 181-217.
- Bell, J. A. (2001). High-performing, high-poverty schools. *Leadership*, 31(1), 8-11.
- Benard, B. (1991). *Fostering resiliency in kids: Protective factors in the family, school, and community*. Portland, OR: Western Center for Drug-Free Schools and Communities.
- Benard, B. (1995). Fostering Resilience in Children. ERIC Digest.
- Benne, K. D., & Sheats, P. (1948). Functional roles of group members. *Journal of Social Issues*, 4(2), 41-49.
- Bishaw, A. (2011). *Areas with concentrated poverty: 2006-2010: American community survey briefs*. U.S. Department of Commerce, Economics and Statistics Administration. Washington, DC. Retrieved from <http://www.census.gov/prod/2011pubs/acsbr10-17.pdf>
- Blase, J., Blase, J., & Phillips, D. Y. (2010). *Handbook of school improvement: How high-performing principals create high-performing schools*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- Bondy, E., Ross, D. D., & Gallingane, C. (2007). Creating environments of success and resilience: Culturally responsive classroom management and more. *Urban Education*, 42(4), 326-348. doi: 10.1177/0042085907303406
- Borman, G. D., & Overman, L. T. (2004). Academic resilience in mathematics among poor and minority students. *The Elementary School Journal* 104(3), 177 - 195.
- Brooks-Gunn, J., & Duncan, G. J. (1997). The effects of poverty on children. *Future of Children*, 7(2), 55-71.
- Brooks, J. E. (2006). Strengthening resilience in children and youths: Maximizing opportunities through the schools. *Children & Schools*, 28(2), 69-76.
- Burkard, A. W., Knox, S., & Hill, C. E. (2012). Data collection. In C. E. Hill (Ed.), *Consensual qualitative research: A practical resource for investigating social science phenomena*. (pp. 83-101). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Burns, J. M. (1978). *Leadership* (1st ed.). New York, NY: Harper & Row.
- Cauce, A. M., Stewart, A., Rodriguez, M. D., Cochran, B., & Ginzler, J. (2003). Overcoming the odds? Adolescent development in the context of urban poverty. In S. S. Luthar (Ed.),

- Resilience and vulnerability: Adaptation in the context of childhood adversities.* (pp. 343-363). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Chenoweth, K., Theokas, C., & Harvard University, G. S. o. E. (2011). *Getting it done: Leading academic success in unexpected schools.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.
- Clotfelter, C. T., Ladd, H. F., & Vigdor, J. L. (2007). Teacher credentials and student achievement: Longitudinal analysis with student fixed effects. *Economics of Education Review, 26*, 673-682.
- Cohen, J. (2006). Creating a positive school climate: A foundation for resilience. In S. Goldstein & R. B. Brooks (Eds.), *Handbook of resilience in children* (pp. 411-423). New York, NY: Springer.
- Condly, S. J. (2006). Resilience in children: A review of literature with implications for education. *Urban Education, 41*(3), 211-236.
- Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry & research design: Choosing among five approaches* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications
- Creswell, J. W. (2009). *Research design : Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Darling-Hammond, L. (2010). *The flat world and education: How America's commitment to equity will determine our future.* New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- DeNavas-Walt, C., Proctor, B. D., & Smith, J. C. (2013). *Income, poverty, and health insurance coverage in the United States: 2012* (U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Reports P60-245). Washington DC: U.S. Government Printing Office
- Department of Health and Human Services (2013). *Annual Update of the HHS Poverty Guidelines.* Retrieved from <https://www.federalregister.gov/articles/2013/01/24/2013-01422/annual-update-of-the-hhs-poverty-guidelines#t-1>
- Dimmock, C. (2012). *Leadership, capacity building and school improvement: Concepts, themes and impact.* New York, NY: Routledge.
- Donovan, S., & Cross, C. T. (2002). *Minority students in special and gifted education.* Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press.
- Downey, J. A. (2008). Recommendations for fostering educational resilience in the classroom. *Preventing School Failure, 53*(1), 56-64.
- Elias, M. J., & Haynes, N. M. (2008). Social competence, social support, and academic achievement in minority, low-income, urban elementary school children. *School Psychology Quarterly, 23*, 474-495.

- Fass, S. (2009). *Measuring income and poverty in the United States*. New York, NY: National Center for Children in Poverty, Columbia University.
- Felner, R. D., & DeVries, M. L. (2006). Poverty in childhood and adolescence: A transactional-ecological approach to understanding and enhancing resilience in contexts of disadvantage and developmental risk. In S. Goldstein & R. B. Brooks (Eds.), *Handbook of resilience in children* (pp. 105-126). New York, NY: Springer.
- Fiscella, K., & Williams, D. R. (2004). Health disparities based on socioeconomic inequities: Implications for urban health care. *Academic Medicine*, 79, 1139-1147.
- Florida Department of Education. (2013a). *Reporting Florida's annual measurable objectives (AMOs) in compliance with ESEA flexibility requirements: Technical assistance paper for 2012-13*. Tallahassee, FL.
- Florida Department of Education. (2013b). School grades 2013: Detailed information on non-high schools. Tallahassee, FL.
- Fullan, M. (2003). *The moral imperative of school leadership*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- Fullan, M. (2005). *Leadership & sustainability: System thinkers in action*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- Fullan, M. (2006). *Turnaround leadership*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Garnezy, N. (1991). Resiliency and vulnerability to adverse developmental outcomes associated with poverty. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 34, 416-430. doi: 10.1177/0002764291034004003
- Gibb, C. A. (1954). Leadership. In G. Lindzey (Ed.), *Handbook of social psychology* (pp. 877-917). Cambridge, MA: Addison-Wesley.
- Gorski, P. C. (2013a). Building a pedagogy of engagement for students in poverty. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 95(1), 48-52.
- Gorski, P. C. (2013b). *Reaching and teaching students in poverty: Strategies for erasing the opportunity gap*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Greenleaf, R. (1970). *The servant as leader*. Indianapolis: Robert K. Greenleaf Center for Servant-Leadership.
- Greenleaf, R. (1977). *Servant leadership: A journey into the nature of legitimate power and greatness*. New York: Paulist Press.

- Groenewald, T. (2004). A phenomenological research design illustrated. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 3(1), 1-26.
- Gronn, P. (2008). The future of distributed leadership. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 46(2), 141-158.
- Haberman, M. (2005). *Star teachers: The ideology and best practice of effective teachers of diverse children and youth in poverty*. Houston, TX: Haberman Educational Foundation.
- Hallinger, P. (1992). The evolving role of American principals from managerial to instructional to transformational leaders. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 30(3).
- Hallinger, P., & Heck, R. H. (1996). Reassessing the principal's role in school effectiveness: A review of empirical research, 1980-1995. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 32, 5-44. doi: 10.1177/0013161X96032001002
- Hallinger, P., & Huber, S. (2012). School leadership that makes a difference: International perspectives. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, 23, 359-367.
- Harvey, V. (2007). Schoolwide Methods for Fostering Resiliency. *Principal Leadership: High School Edition*, 7(5), 10-14.
- Hawkins, J. D., & Catalano, R. F. (1990). 20 questions: Adolescent substance abuse risk factors. *Development Research and Programs, Inc, Seattle, Washington*.
- Hawkins, J. D., Catalano, R. F., & Miller, J. Y. (1992). Risk and protective factors for alcohol and other drug problems in adolescence and early adulthood: Implications for substance abuse prevention. *Psychological Bulletin*, 112(1), 64-105. doi:10.1037/0033-2909.112.1.64
- Henderson, N., & Milstein, M. M. (2003). *Resiliency in schools: Making it happen for students and educators*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- Hersey, P. and Blanchard, K. H. (1969). *Management of Organizational Behavior – Utilizing Human Resources*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Hersey, P., Blanchard, K. H., & Johnson, D. E. (2001). *Management of organizational behavior: Leading human resources* (8 ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Höjer, I. I., & Johansson, H. (2013). School as an opportunity and resilience factor for young people placed in care. *European Journal Of Social Work*, 16(1), 22-36.
- Hudley, C., & Chhuon, V. (2012). Motivation for academic achievement in urban American schools. In K. S. Gallagher, R. Goodyear, D. Brewer & R. Rueda (Eds.), *Urban education: A model for leadership and policy* (pp. 271-282). New York, NY: Routledge.

- Hundeide, K. (2005). Socio-cultural tracks of development, opportunity situations and access skills. *Culture & Psychology, 11*, 241-261. doi: 10.1177/1354067x05052353
- Khanlou, N., & Wray, R. (2014). A Whole Community Approach toward Child and Youth Resilience Promotion: A Review of Resilience Literature. *International Journal of Mental Health and Addiction, 12*(1), 64-79.
- Kelley, R. C., Thornton, B., & Daugherty, R. (2005). Relationships between measures of leadership and school climate. *Education 126*(1), 17 - 25.
- Kezar, A. (2012). Mutuality and reciprocity in urban renewal through shared leadership. In K. S. Gallagher, R. Goodyear, D. Brewer & R. Rueda (Eds.), *Urban education: A model for leadership and policy* (pp. 88-104). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Kim-Cohen, J., Moffitt, T. E., Caspi, A., & Taylor, A. (2004). Genetic and environmental processes in young children's resilience and vulnerability to socioeconomic deprivation. *Child Development, 75*, 651-668.
- Kitano, M. K., & Lewis, R. B. (2005). Resilience and coping: Implications for gifted children and youth at risk. *Roeper Review, 27*(4), 200-205. doi: 10.1080/02783190509554319
- Kroft, S. (1996, September 22). Lorraine Monroe's Doctrine. [Television series episode]. In C. Weinstein (Producer), *60 Minutes*. New York, CBS Broadcasting.
- Ladd, H. F. (2012). Education and poverty: Confronting the evidence. *Journal of Policy Analysis & Management, 31*(2), 203 - 227.
- Lee, V. E., & Burkam, D. T. (2003). Dropping out of high school: The role of school organization and structure. *American Education Research Journal, 40*, 353-393.
- Leithwood, K., Day, C., P. Sammons, P., Harris, A., & Hopkins, D. (2006). *Seven strong claims about successful school leadership*. London: Department for Education and Skills.
- Leithwood, K., & Jantzi, D. (2000). The effects of transformational leadership on organizational conditions and student engagement with school. *Journal of Educational Administration, 38*(2), 112-126.
- Leithwood, K., Jantzi, D., & Steinbach, R. (1999). *Changing leadership for changing times*. Philadelphia, PA: Open University Press.
- Leithwood, K., Louis, K. S., Anderson, S., & Wahlstrom, K. (2004). How leadership influences student learning: Review of research. New York: The Wallace Foundation.
- Leithwood, K., & Sun, J. (2012a). The Nature and effects of transformational school leadership: A meta-analytic review of unpublished research. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 48*, 387-423.

- Leithwood, K., & Sun, J. (2012b). Transformational school leadership effects on student achievement. *Leadership and Policy in Schools, 11*, 418-451.
- Leshem, S., & Trafford, V. (2007). Overlooking the conceptual framework. *Innovations In Education & Teaching International, 44*(1), 93-105.
- Linquanti, R. (1992). *Using community-wide collaboration to foster resiliency in kids: A conceptual framework*. San Francisco: Western Regional Centre for Drug Free Schools and Communities.
- Luthar, S. S. (1999). *Developmental Clinical Psychology and Psychiatry: Poverty and children's adjustment*. (Vols. 1 - 41). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Luthar, S. S., & Zelazo, L. B. (2003). Research on resilience: An integrative review. In S. S. Luthar (Ed.), *Resilience and vulnerability: Adaptation in the context of childhood adversities*. (pp. 267-292). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- MacBeath, J. (2009). Distributed leadership: Paradigms, policy, and paradox. In K. A. Leithwood, B. Mascall, & T. Strauss (Eds.), *Distributed leadership according to the evidence* (pp. 41-58). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Marzano, R. J., Waters, T., & McNulty, B. A. (2005). *School Leadership That Works: From Research to Results*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Merriam, S. B. (2009). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Morse, J. M., & Richards, L. (2002). *Read me first for a user's guide to qualitative methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Moustakas, C. E. (1994). *Phenomenological research methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Mulford, B. (2008). The leadership challenge: Improving learning in schools. *Australian Education Review, 53*. Camberwell: Australian Council for Educational Research. .
- Newman, L., Wagner, M., Huang, T., Shaver, D., Knokey, A.-M., Yu, J., Contreras, E., Ferguson, K., Greene, S., Nagle, K., and Cameto, R. (2011). *Secondary school programs and performance of students with disabilities: A special topic report of findings from the National Longitudinal Transition Study-2 (NLTS2)* (NCSE 2012 - 3000). U.S. Department of Education. Washington, DC: National Center for Special Education Research.
- No Child Left Behind Act, Pub. L. No. 107-110, 115 Stat. 1425, 20 U.S.C.A. § § 6301 et seq. (2002 Supp.).

- Noguera, P. A. (2011). A broader and bolder approach uses education to break the cycle of poverty. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 93(3), 8-14.
- Noguera, P. (2014). Schools That Work. *Progressive*, 78/79(12/1), 55-58.
- Payne, R. K. (2005). *A framework for understanding poverty*. Highlands, TX: aha! Process.
- Putnam, R. D., & Feldstein, L. (2003). *Better together*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Ramalho, E. M., Garza, E., & Merchant, B. (2010). Successful school leadership in socioeconomically challenging contexts: School principals creating and sustaining successful school improvement. *International Studies in Educational Administration*, 38(3), 35-56.
- Reardon, S. F. (2011). The widening achievement gap between the rich and the poor: New evidence and possible explanations. In G. J. Duncan & R. J. Murnane (Eds.), *Whither opportunity? Rising inequality, schools, and children's life chances* (pp. 91-116). New York, NY: Russel Sage.
- Reis, S. M., Colbert, R. D., & Hébert, T. P. (2005). Understanding resilience in diverse, talented students in an urban high school. *Roeper Review*, 27(2), 110-120. doi: 10.1080/02783190509554299
- Romero, M., & Lee, Y.-S. (2008). *How maternal, family and cumulative risk affect absenteeism in early schooling: Facts for policymakers*. New York, NY: National Center for Children in Poverty, Columbia Univeristy Mailman School of Public Health.
- Ross, D. D., Bondy, E., Gallingane, C., & Hambacher, E. (2008). Promoting academic engagement through insistence: being a warm demander. *Childhood Education* 84 (3), 142 - 146.
- Russell, R. F., & Stone, A. G. (2002). A review of servant leadership attributes: developing a practical model. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, 145.
- Sadovnik, A. R., & Davidson, T. B. (2012). The Sociology of Urban Education. In K. S. Gallagher, R. Goodyear, D. Brewer & R. Rueda (Eds.), *Urban education: A model for leadership and policy* (pp. 29-47). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Seidman, E., & Pedersen, S. (2003). Holistic contextual perspectives in risk, protection, and competence among low-income urban adolescents. In S. S. Luthar (Ed.), *Resilience and vulnerability: Adaptation in the context of childhood adversities*. (pp. 318-342). New York, NY US: Cambridge University Press.
- Sirin, S. R. (2005). Socioeconomic status and academic achievement: A meta-analytic review of research. *Review Of Educational Research*, 75(3), 417-453.

- Slavin, R. E. (2007). *Educational research in an age of accountability*. Boston, MA: Pearson.
- Smith, P., and Bell, L. (2011). Transactional and transformational leadership in schools in challenging circumstances: a policy paradox. *Management in Education*, 25(2), 58-61.
- Spillane, J. P. (2006). *Distributed leadership*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Swanson, D. P., & Spencer, M. B. (2012). Competence formation: Resilience in educational contexts. In K. S. Gallagher, R. Goodyear, D. Brewer & R. Rueda (Eds.), *Urban education: A model for leadership and policy* (pp. 283-296). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Tate, T. F. (2003). Servant Leadership for Schools and Youth Programs. *Reclaiming Children & Youth*, 12(1), 33-39.
- Ungar, M. (2011). Community resilience for youth and families: Facilitative physical and social capital in contexts of adversity. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 33(9), 1742-1748. doi:10.1016/j.chilgyouth.2011.04.027
- U.S. Department of Commerce (2008). *Survey of income and program participation questionnaire items booklet*. Economics and Statistics Administration, U.S. Census Bureau. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office. Retrieved May 3, 2014, from <https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/programs-surveys/sipp/questionnaires/2008/SIPP%202008%20Panel%20Wave%2001%20-%20Core%20Questionnaire.pdf>.
- U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food, and Nutrition Service. (2013). *Child nutrition programs; Income eligibility guidelines*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Agriculture. Retrieved from <http://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/eligibility>
- van Manen, M. (1990). *Researching lived experience: Human science for and action sensitive pedagogy*. London, ON: The University of Western Ontario.
- Wang, M. C., & Gordon, E. W. (1994). *Educational resilience in inner-city America: Challenges and prospects*. Hillsdale, NJ: L. Erlbaum Associates.
- Wang, M. C., Haertel, G. D., & Walberg, H. J. (1997). Fostering educational resilience in inner-city schools. Philadelphia PA: Mid-Atlantic Lab for Student Success.
- Wang, M. C., Haertel, G. D., & Walberg, H. J. (1998). Models of reform: A comparative guide. *Educational Leadership*, 55(7), 66-71.
- Wang, M. C., Walberg, H. J., & Haertel, G. D. (1998). *Building educational resilience*. Bloomington, IN: Phi Delta Kappa Educational Foundation.
- Werner, E. E., Bierman, J. M., & French, F. E. (1971). *The children of Kauai; A longitudinal study from the prenatal period to age ten*. Honolulu, HI: University of Hawaii Press.

- Werner, E. E., & Smith, R. S. (1992). *Overcoming the odds: High risk children from birth to adulthood*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Werner, E. E., & Smith, R. S. (2001). *Journeys from childhood to midlife: Risk, resilience, and recovery*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Whiting, G. (2009). Gifted black males: Understanding and decreasing barriers to achievement and identity. *Roeper Review*, 31, 224-233.
- Whitney, S., Splett, J. W., & Weston, K. J. (2008). An empirical examination of the resiliency wheel. *Advances in School Mental Health Promotion*, 1(2), 41-48.
- Williams, B. (2003). Closing the achievement gap. In D. L. Stapleton & M. Pierce (Eds.), *The 21st-century principal: Current issues in leadership and policy* (pp. 57-67). Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.
- Wine, J., Bryan, M., and Siegel, P. (2014). *2011–12 National postsecondary student aid study (NPSAS:12) data file documentation* (NCES 2014-182). National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. Washington, DC. Retrieved March 11, 2015 from <http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch>.
- Wolkow, K. E., & Ferguson, H. B. (2001). Community factors in the development of resiliency: considerations and future directions. *Community Mental Health Journal*, 37(6), 489-498.
- Ylimaki, R. M. (2007). Instructional leadership in challenging US schools. *International Studies in Educational Administration*, 35(3), 11-19.