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Action Research and Teacher Voice: A Pathway for Transforming our Schools Into Learning Organizations

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Action Research and Teacher Voice: A Pathway for Transforming our Schools Into Learning Organizations
Research Problem

- Increasing complexities of Pre K-12 Schools

Research Purpose

- Response to complexities ~ This study examined how action research impacted teachers’ practices and voice.

Research Questions

- What are the experiences teachers have as they utilize the action research process?
- How do teachers find that their experiences with action research impact their practice?
- What connections are there with the action research process and teacher voice?
Grounded in Adult Developmental Theories

- Robert Kegan (1982) - Constructive Developmental Theory
  
  And

- Drago-Severson’s (2009) - Learning-Oriented Model of Leadership
- Action Research and its Traditions - Teacher Research
Research Design and Methodology

Design - Narrative Inquiry Stance
➤ teachers and researchers as storytellers (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, p. 2)

Methodology - used to support the Narrative Inquiry Stance

➤ Voice-Centered Relational Method (Gilligan, Spencer, Weinberg and Bertsch, 2003)
➤ the Listening Guide

➤ Drago-Severson's (2009) Learning-Oriented Model of Leadership

➤ Analytic Memo Method (Center for Evaluation and Research, 2012)
Data collection -

- Two-semistructured interviews
- Field Notes
- Final Reports
- Profiles (table)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher Researcher</th>
<th>School Information</th>
<th>Primary Role</th>
<th>Other Roles</th>
<th>Degree</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Number of Years Teaching</th>
<th>Number of Years at Current School</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GV</td>
<td>Rural Maine</td>
<td>Teaches 1 wellness class and 2 Early childhood classes</td>
<td>Class advisor</td>
<td>Masters in Literacy + 30</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>23</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stella</td>
<td>Rural Maine</td>
<td>RTI (Response to Intervention) Coordinator/ Instructional Strategist&lt;br&gt;Senior English Teacher&lt;br&gt;Coordinator, Learning Center</td>
<td>Member of Staff PD committee&lt;br&gt;Teaching online special education law class, Spring 2016</td>
<td>Masters in Education Certificate in Advanced Graduate Study (CAGS) in Leadership</td>
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<tr>
<td>MLK</td>
<td>Rural Maine</td>
<td>5th grade teacher</td>
<td>Science Resource Partner</td>
<td>Working towards Masters - Technology Integration</td>
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<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>School</td>
<td>Primary Role</td>
<td>Other Roles</td>
<td>Degree</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>No. of years Teaching</td>
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<tr>
<td>JR</td>
<td>Urban Ohio</td>
<td>Kindergarten teacher</td>
<td>Building Leadership Team, Grade Level Teacher Leader, Quaglia Institute for Student Aspirations Coach, Student Teacher Mentor, TEC Mentor, Resident Educator Mentor, Building Technology SYSOP, Web Publisher, GradeBook/Progress Book Point of Contact, School</td>
<td>Masters of Arts: School Leadership Fourth and Fifth Grade Endorsement Bachelor of Science: Business Administration</td>
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<td>Casey</td>
<td>Urban Maine</td>
<td>Instructional Coach</td>
<td>Leadership Team member Recertification Team member</td>
<td>Masters in Literacy CAS in Educational Leadership</td>
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<td>Instrumental Knower</td>
<td>Socializing Knower</td>
<td>Self-Authoring Knower</td>
<td>Self-Transforming Knower</td>
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<td>view the world through a concrete lens and is unable to completely understand another person's viewpoint</td>
<td>make meaning in a social context, has a capacity to reflect and consider other perspectives</td>
<td>develop the capability to generate an inner value system and take ownership of this internal system</td>
<td>understand that the interaction with diverse groups and organizations within society provide opportunities for them to learn, develop and self-explore</td>
<td>acknowledge a sense of loneliness and dissatisfaction with their self-systems which can prove to be a challenging developmental shift</td>
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Findings and Implications

Three Major Findings -

- **Knowledge Generation**
  - Science Content and Writing
  - Improving Relationships Between Teachers and Parents
  - Increasing Student Engagement
- Providing Coaching Strategies to Improve Teacher Practice
- Making Connections Between High School and College

- **Implications**
Findings and Implications, continued

- Teacher Voice
- Teacher Expertise
- Top-Down Decision Making
- Implications
Awareness of Contextual Factors and School Structures

Implications -

- Time
- Culture for Learning
Findings and Implications, continued

Application of the pillar practices to the teachers’ ways of knowing (Drago-Severson, 2009)

➢ Teaming
  ➢ Implications -

➢ Leadership Roles
  ➢ Implications -

➢ Collegial Inquiry
  ➢ Implications -

➢ Mentoring
  ➢ Implications -
## Pillar Practices and Ways of Knowing

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<th>Pillars of Practice</th>
<th>Ways of Knowing – Support and Challenges for Growth</th>
<th>Teacher Researchers</th>
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<td><em>Socializing</em></td>
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<td>Challenges</td>
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<td>Leadership Roles</td>
<td><em>Self-Authoring</em></td>
<td>JR, Casey</td>
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Limitations of the Study

- Sample Elements
- Size
- Gender
- Cultural Diversity
- Time
Further Research

Creating opportunities for educators to conduct action research.

- Communities of Practice (Wenger & Trayner, 2011)
- Collaborative research - educators and students

In order to have a school climate that focuses on learning, we must look at all domains as belonging to stakeholders and not just certain individuals (DeWitt, 2017).