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

Susan Inman
susaninman77@gmail.com
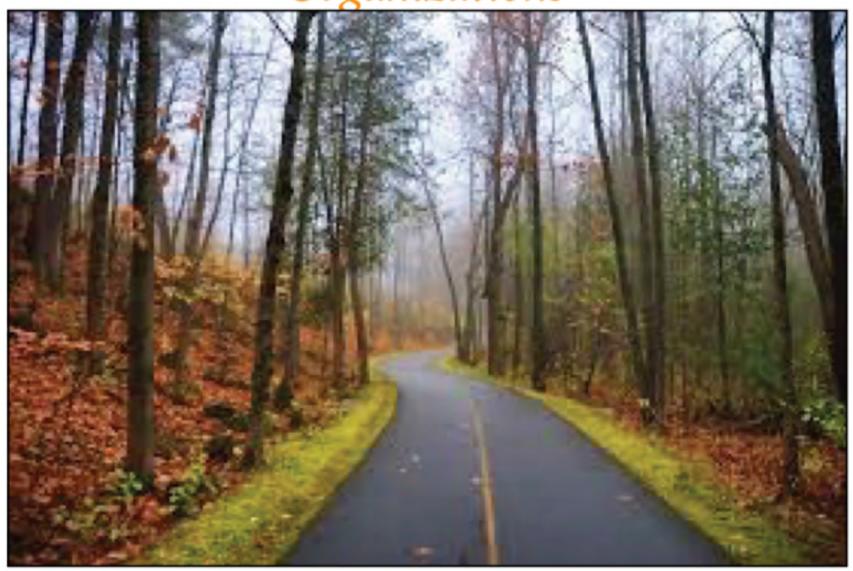
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Action Research and Teacher Voice: A Pathway for Transforming our Schools Into Learning Organizations

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*
➤ *David Kolb (1984)- Experiential Learning 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)

Sample (table)

Data collection -

➤ **Two-semistructured interviews**

➤ **Field Notes**

➤ **Final Reports**

➤ **Profiles (table)**

Sample

Teacher Researcher	School Information	Primary Role	Other Roles	Degree	Age	Number of Years Teaching	Number of Years at Current School
GV	Rural Maine Population: Staff – 85 Students – 500	Teaches 1 wellness class and 2 Early childhood classes	Class advisor	Masters in Literacy + 30	48	23	9
Stella	Rural Maine Population: Staff – 100 Students – 500	RTI (Response to Intervention) Coordinator/ Instructional Strategist Senior English Teacher Coordinator, Learning Center	Member of Staff PD committee Teaching online special education law class, Spring 2016	Masters in Education Certificate in Advanced Graduate Study (CAGS) in Leadership	45	23	15
MLK	Rural Maine Population: Staff – 40 Students – 300	5th grade teacher	Science Resource Partner	Working towards Masters - Technology Integration	30	8	7

Sample, continued

Teacher Researcher	School Information	Primary Role	Other Roles	Degree	Age	No. of years Teaching	No. of years Current School
JR	Urban Ohio Population: Staff – 40 Students – 300	Kindergarten teacher	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	Masters of Arts: School Leadership Fourth and Fifth Grade Endorsement Bachelor of Science: Business Administration	40	14	1.5
Casey	Urban Maine Population: Staff – 75 Students – 425	Instructional Coach	Leadership Team member Recertification Team member	Masters in Literacy CAS in Educational Leadership	48	26	2

Profiles

Instrumental Knower	Socializing Knower	Socializing Knower	Self-Authoring Knower	Self-Authoring Knower	Self-Transforming Knower	Self-Transforming Knower	Self-Transforming Knower	Self-Transforming Knower
view the world through a concrete lens and is unable to completely understand another person's viewpoint	*make meaning in a social context, has a capacity to reflect and consider other perspectives*	*self-concept is shaped by other perspectives and their approval*	*develop the capability to generate an inner value system and take ownership of this internal system*	*unable to recognize that individuals who hold opposite viewpoints can actually inform their way of knowing*	*less invested in their identity and realizes their viewpoints are limited*	*understand that the interaction with diverse groups and organizations within society provide opportunities for them to learn, develop and self-explore*	*use their self-systems as a way of seeing*	*acknowledge a sense of loneliness and dissatisfaction with their self-systems which can prove to be a challenging developmental shift*
					MLK	MLK	MLK	MLK
			JR		JR	JR	JR	
Stella	Stella	Stella	Stella	Stella				
		GV	GV					
			Casey			Casey	Casey	

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*

➤ *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

Pillars of Practice	Ways of Knowing – Support and Challenges for Growth	Teacher Researchers
Teaming	*Socializing*	Stella and GV
Leadership Roles	Support	
	Challenges	
Collegial Inquiry	*Self-Authoring*	JR, Casey
Mentoring	Support	
	Challenges	
	Self-Transforming	MLK
	Support	
	Challenges	

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).