

UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA

GRADUATE COLLEGE

DESIGNING PRINCIPAL INTERNSHIPS

A DISSERTATION

SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE FACULTY

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

By

JANE BARNES  
Norman, Oklahoma  
2008

DESIGNING PRINCIPAL INTERNSHIPS  
A DISSERTATION APPROVED FOR THE  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND POLICY STUDIES

BY

---

Dr. Courtney Vaughn, Chair

---

Dr. Joan Smith, Dean

---

Dr. Keith Ballard

---

Dr. Gregg Garn

---

Dr. Frank McQuarrie

© Copyright by JANE BARNES 2008  
All Rights Reserved.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A special thank you for the support from friends and colleagues in reminding me “there is more to life than work”...while they checked my rough drafts for syntax and clarity and ran to the library to pick up books.

Thanks to Dr. Vaughn and my Committee in helping me to connect my passion as a practitioner to philosophical reflection. You have helped me to see when a joint interaction occurs between theory and practice, an improved experience occurs for all stakeholders.

Finally, a special thanks to my family, my personal cheerleaders, who provided me with lessons in efficacy and effort; to complete every job with heart and my best endeavor.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements.....	iv
Abstract.....	viii
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION.....	1
Introduction.....	1
Purpose of the Study.....	2
Significance of the Study.....	3
Overview of the Methodology.....	4
City Leadership Grant.....	4
Historical Framework.....	5
Effective School Research.....	6
Federal Money for School Improvement.....	8
Transitional and Transformational Leadership.....	9
Principals Become the Pivotal Changing Force.....	11
Building Capacity to Restructure Schools.....	13
Leadership that Sustains Change.....	15
Making Sense of Complexity.....	16
Professional Learning Community: Theory into Practice.....	17
The Need for Principal Internships.....	20
CHAPTER TWO: ALLIGNING TO THEORY.....	25
Theory.....	27
The Answer to Complexity.....	43
Learning Leaders.....	44

Reflective Leadership Practice .....	45
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY .....	53
Voices in the Study .....	54
Heuristic Research Methodology.....	57
Participants.....	58
Application of the Methodology to the Internship.....	60
Grounded Theory .....	66
CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTING THE DATA .....	67
Illumination from Dialogue .....	68
Intern Structured .....	69
Intern Enthusiastic .....	71
Intern Engaged .....	73
Intern Challenged.....	76
CHAPTER FIVE: ANALYZING THE DATA.....	81
Learning in Context .....	82
Intern Cohort.....	83
Portfolio and Competencies.....	84
Problem Solving Skills .....	85
Mentor Relationships .....	86
Professional Learning Communities.....	89
Organization and Management .....	90
CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION .....	92
Components in Need of Improvement.....	92

Andragogy.....	97
Self-Directed Learning.....	97
Transformational Learning .....	99
Recommendations for Future Study.....	100
Conclusion .....	101
REFERENCES .....	103
APPENDICES .....	114

## ABSTRACT

My dissertation is based on the process I used to design a Principal Internship Program for aspiring school leaders. I used heuristic methodology to describe a principal internship from the perspective of intern and my role as Director of Leadership Development. It was important for me to embrace my own experience and insight into this occurrence as the director of a new program; hours were spent analyzing my own decision making and choices in this new leadership position. I purposely incorporated other educators voices in this dialogue that have participated in the internship and included them as participants in my research project; their voices, as interns chosen to implement a new district initiative to replenish departing principal leadership, gave credence to my research.

The initial step in designing the program was a literature review of the historical development of the principalship and the need for internships. This review identified for me the necessity to create an internship design founded on collaborative distributive leadership practices based on Adult Learning Theory. The second step of my journey was to identify the adult learning theory models that would have a positive impact on this internship.

This study generated grounded theory and a lens to scrutinize my curriculum design. It identifies program practices interns associate as positive; and program practices interns associate as negative; to further develop and improve future principal internship programs. Program success is identified as internship practices that support participant experiences to improve leadership knowledge, skills, attitudes, and beliefs in the areas of



instructional leadership, community leadership, and management and leadership structures that promote student achievement.

My findings speak to the importance of principal internships; internships that consist of an inclusive mentor, a collaborative cohort learning community, learning in context supported by reflective practice and opportunities to practice problem solving in context. As part of this research and my dissertation process, I have identified an additional component that needs to be a part of the internship model. This component is the conscious training and application of adult learning theory as part of the preparation for aspiring leaders and mentors. Adult learning theory lays the foundation of forming school culture and building collaborative relationships used to create and advance professional learning communities that improve student achievement. We must leave nothing to chance in the intern's understanding of working with adults in their new leadership position.

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

Until recently, I associated leadership recruitment and “head hunters” with the world of business, but it has now become necessary for the nation’s education community to turn its attention to attracting and keeping highly qualified administrators: “A primary reason is the alarming shortage of qualified administrators available to fill current and foreseeable school principal openings” (Crow & Ponder, 2005, p. 56). Many potential candidates see the principalship as being too big a challenge and not worth the headaches financially; therefore, the nation’s school districts, especially urban districts, are working to establish programs and processes to attract, train, and support competent future school leaders. Many educators completing their administrative certification are not well prepared to lead in challenging school environments, and many potential, educational leaders are shying away from the test of leadership transformation.

In the spring of 2005, City Public Schools (pseudonym) was facing a serious, two-fold, leadership challenge: the District was on the verge of losing more than half of its administrative school leaders, primarily due to retirement. Many of these administrative positions were located in schools with major challenges and difficult issues found in high poverty communities. To meet this challenge, the District applied for a United States Department of Education School Leadership Grant. The goal of the *City Leadership Challenge* grant was

to increase student achievement and learning by creating a leadership learning community culture designed to: (1) attract, train, place and evaluate a broader pool of capable candidates into the principalship,

especially for service in high-need schools; and (2) strengthen the abilities, skills and knowledge base of potential school leaders to improve student learning. (City Public Schools Leadership Challenge Grant, 2005, p. 5)

City Public Schools is a mid-size, urban district with 88 school facilities: nine high schools, 15 middle schools, 59 elementary schools, and seven alternative schools. Its diverse population of 42,000 students consists of 39% Caucasian, 36% African American, 9% Native American, 15% Hispanic, and 1% Asian. Over 12% are English Language Learners (ELL), 15% have special needs, and 69% are eligible for free/reduced lunch benefits. The district is challenged with the middle-class flight to suburbia, a recent wave of immigration, and financial disenfranchisement. The recent influx of poor and linguistically challenged students has added to the need for school leadership who can work with teachers, students, and families to create school learning communities that can provide programs to meet student learning gaps. The need was urgent to build a robust process for developing the capacity of future school leaders.

### *Purpose of the Study*

This study follows my process as the program director to develop a principal intern leadership program. The purpose of this study is to generate grounded theory and subsequently to develop a curriculum design that identifies program practices interns associate as positive; program practices interns associate as negative; to further develop and improve future internship program design. Program success is identified as internship practices that support participant experiences to improve leadership knowledge, skills, attitudes, and beliefs in the areas of instructional leadership, community leadership, and management and leadership structures that promote student

achievement. This research answers the following questions: How do districts design effective principal internship programs for aspiring school leaders and what are the components of this model?

### *Significance of the Study*

Extended, aspirant, principal internships have been a recent and limited phenomenon and are in the early stages of implementation; a longitudinal study is needed to determine their impact on student achievement. The significance of this research will add to the body of information on designing and implementing internships that develop leadership skills necessary to create a learning culture for both students and adults with a focus on improving student achievement. A new kind of school culture is needed one that no longer neglects or “turns its’ back” on educational inequity or ignores minority sub group achievement. This research may also be significant to university programs that are in transition to meet state legislative mandates to support school leadership development matched to the intensity of high stakes testing and the “No Child Left Behind” mandates legislated by the Federal government.

The nature of the internship and its connection to coursework proved critically important to helping principals learn to implement sophisticated practices. While the graduates of all programs reported relatively strong internships, those who had full-time, funded learning experiences rated their programs most positively (Stanford Educational Leadership Institute, 2007, p. 7).

### *Overview of the Methodology*

I used heuristic research to describe an internship from the perspective of intern and Director of Leadership Development. It was important for me to embrace my own experience and insight into this experience as the director of a new program; I spent many hours analyzing my own decision making and choices in this new leadership position. I incorporated other voices in this dialogue that have participated in the internship and included them as part of the research project; these voices came from interns chosen to implement a new district initiative to replenish departing principal leadership. Participants were selected through a process of determined variety (See Chapter 3 and Appendix A for details). In doing so, I hoped to find a greater personal understanding and perhaps offer insights that might add to the conversations with reference to future principal internships that focus on student achievement.

### *City Leadership Grant*

The *City Leadership Challenge* grant learning community structure contains four major components designed as a multiple year, “grow your own,” aspiring principal candidate process. Tier 1 is a preparatory stage focused on mentoring and recruiting internal, administrative candidates. Tier 2 is a formal, academic practicum, *Aspirant Academy* for internal candidates with administrative certification. Tier 3 is a salaried, principal internship in the schools, a critical transition step to meet the needs of leaders in challenging schools. Tier 4 is a continuation of professional development for current assistant principals to increase their preparation for the principalship.

The leadership grant became available in October of 2005, and after a slow start due to multiple changes of leadership, I was appointed as the director of the grant nine

months later. My 32 year work history had all been spent in high-need schools, 15 of those years as a principal. Not having been a part of writing the grant, I was now forced into the “fast lane” to put into operation a program that was months behind in the implementation process. One of the fortunate resources that I encountered in my career is a mentor that has supported my professional growth.

My capacity-building mentor, one of the short-term grant directors, connected me to a list of leadership reading materials and a leadership-training network, Southern Regional Education Board. During my initial months on the job, I was frantically trying to make sense of my past experiences and determining how to connect those experiences with the needs of future administrative leaders and the expectations of the grant. What I would ascertain later was that this frenzied search and research was my personal process to connect theory to practice.

My search began by mapping the principalship in its historical and political framework in order to identify the transition of leadership styles necessary to meet the challenges and changes occurring in our current, urban, school population. This initial, historical, literature framework revealed the need for a formal, extended, principal internship to interface with the complexity of the job and to participate in experiences to improve leadership knowledge, skills, attitudes, and beliefs in the areas of instructional leadership, community leadership, and systems management that promotes student achievement.

### *Historical Framework*

It was Johnson’s Civil Rights Act of 1964 that called for the Equality of Educational Opportunity Survey. In 1966, the Coleman Report, a study of Equality of

Educational Opportunity led by James Coleman, was released to the public. Coleman's research was initiated to prove that schools should be desegregated to improve achievement for minority students. Instead, the Coleman Report concluded that family background, not school, was the major determinant of student academic success. As a prominent social scientist in the 1960s and 1970s, Coleman's research identified poverty and the lack of parent education as the influential factor that prevented children from achieving academically no matter what method of instruction. In essence, this report and the Rand Report that followed concluded that schools really did not make a difference on student achievement. (Fritzberg, 2003, Spring, pp. 1-3; Kiviat '01, 2000, pp. 1-4). The Colman and the Rand reports created a flurry of educational research — research based on schools that were obviously successful even though they defied the Coleman criteria of low socioeconomic status. Researchers began to look beyond what was invested into schools and began to look at the processes that influence student achievement. This body of research eventually became identified with the Effective Schools Movement (Lezotte, 2001, p. 1).

### *Effective School Research*

After identifying existing effective schools where students achieved in spite of low socio-economic status, Ron Edmonds identified characteristics that effective schools had in common. These commonalities became known as the “Correlates of Effective Schools” and were first published in 1982. The Correlates cited that in all effective schools

the leadership of the principal was notable for substantial attention to the quality of instruction; a pervasive and broadly understood instruction for

an orderly, safe climate conducive to teaching and learning; teacher behaviors that convey the expectation that all students are expected to obtain at least minimum competency; the use of measures of pupil achievement as the measurement for program evaluation. (Lezotte, 2001, p. 2)

Edmond's initial recognition of "instructional leadership" as a key component of an effective school was only the beginning of the focus on the kind of leadership that has a positive impact on student learning. What did leadership use to improve learning, and could all principals exercise these traits to bring about student achievement?

In 1983, the United States Department's National Commission on Excellence in Education published the report "A Nation at Risk" (A Nation At Risk, 1983). This document was often cited as the beginning of current educational reforms. Following this reference to educational mediocrity in the United States, Ron Edmond's "effective schools" research became a guiding light for the plight of many urban schools and a manual for urban principals searching for answers.

As an embarrassed public education system began to look for the "magic bullet" to fix its broken and failing schools, educational researchers and policy analysts continued their attempt to bring clarity to a problem with no easy answer. Unfortunately during the initial, effective, school research, school administration training programs were designed and implemented without a structurally sound foundation, and principals seeking professional development walked away no wiser. "The majority of school administrators are organizational schizophrenics; they deserve help because we who do the research and who claim to train them have helped create that condition" (Burlingame,



1986, p. 72). It would be another 15 years before the empirical research would be available to help design leadership professional development to improve student instruction. In the meantime, the public's voice was growing stronger, and the political cry for accountability was increasing the pressure for schools and individual students to achieve.

### *Federal Money for School Improvement*

In 1965, one year prior to The Coleman Report, the largest source of federal support for kindergarten through twelfth grade education enacted the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). This legislation was part of Lyndon Johnson's War on Poverty, an 11 billion-a-year Act that has been sending federal assistance to poor schools, communities, and children for 40 plus years. The ESEA Act was reauthorized in 1994, and this time, there was a focus on reforming education — the delivery of education, systemic school reform, instruction upgrading, professional development alignment with high standards, accountability strengthening., and resource alignment for educational improvement for all children (Elementary and Secondary Education Act, 1965).

The Department of Education believed that focusing on the following four principles would advance the quality of teaching and learning for all students:

- high standards for all students
- teachers better trained to teach high standards
- flexibility to stimulate local initiative coupled with responsibility for results
- partnerships among families, communities, and schools (Elementary and Secondary Education Act, 1965).

The “No Child Left Behind Act” of 2001 most recently updated the ESEA legislation. Major provisions and changes in the Act mandated increased accountability based on assessments, graduation rates, and attendance. Equity was addressed; all minority sub-groups were required to achieve adequate yearly progress, and all students must demonstrate proficiency by the year 2014. All teachers must be “highly qualified” or parents must be notified. Schools are required to use “scientifically based research” strategies in the classroom, and any schools identified as “needing improvement” are required to provide students with the opportunity to take advantage of public school transfers. Increased accountability efforts by the public and the enactment of this law continued to promote the search and research for the kind of leadership needed to help educational organizations find a way to provide the systemic change that the public was demanding.

### *Transactional and Transformational Leadership*

Education was not the only organization that was studying leadership during this time period: “One of the most universal cravings of our time is a hunger for compelling and creative leadership” (Burns, 1979, p. 1). Politics, business, and industry were also looking for leadership models to make a profitable difference and organizational improvement. In his prologue to *Leadership*, Pulitzer prize winner, James MacGregor Burns shared, “Leadership is the most observed and least understood phenomena on Earth” (1979, p. 2). Burns then went on to unite the roles of leader and follower in his study of leadership; he saw the interactions of most leaders and followers as transactional or transforming. The transactional leader should meet or exceed the material needs of a follower in return for cooperation; they should develop their needs together, transforming

both to a higher level. Burns saw the use of transactional leadership to meet short-term goals, whereas transformational leadership involves shared, higher order, long-term goals that provide greater satisfaction and often elevate followers into leaders. Burns also proposed a third concept that others have continued to research — moral leadership (Burns, 1979).

Burns was given credit for introducing the transformational and transactional theory of leadership, but it was Bernard Bass that was influential in giving this theory of leadership its dynamic focus. Since the 1980s, business, government, and military research had been completed that provided ways to use leadership to motivate personnel in service organizations. In Bernard Bass' book, Transformational Leadership, this theory is developed. Using the Full Range Scale of Leadership model, which incorporated transformational and transactional leadership as its observables, the empirical research supported that transformational leadership could move followers to exceed expected performance. The transformational leader that could motivate followers was often charismatic, stimulating, and individually considerate. Although the best leaders used both transactional and transformational leadership, developing transformational leadership enhances leadership satisfaction and effectiveness (Bass, 1998).

Gary Yukl has described current theories of transformational leadership in organizations. Leadership was used as a process to influence commitment to shared goals and empowered followers to accomplish them. Burns' theory saw transformational leadership influence to be used for moral purposes or social reform opportunities, whereas the newer use of transformational leadership had far more practical task

completion objectives (Yukl, 1981/2002). Yukl identified seven transformational leadership guidelines for leaders who were seeking to motivate followers:

- Articulate a clear and appealing vision.
- Explain how the vision can be implemented.
- Act confidently and optimistically.
- Express confidence in followers.
- Use dramatic, symbolic actions to emphasize key values.
- Lead by example.
- Empower people to achieve the vision. (Yukl, 2002, p. 263)

In 1951, another leadership theory, Total Quality Management, was being developed in Japan by the American statistician, William Edwards Deming. The key to this practice was continual improvement and identifying production as a system, not as small pieces. Deming offered 14 key principles for management and for transformation of an organization's effectiveness. "Deming's 14 points can be organized into five actions of an effective leader: change agency, teamwork, continuous improvement, trust building, and eradication of short-term goals" (Marzano, Waters & McNulty, 2005, pp. 15-16). All of these business theories and key principles filtered into schools in the latter part of the century and helped to make long-term school improvements.

#### *Principals Become the Pivotal Changing Force*

More than two decades after the Edmonds and Lazotte effective school research was implemented, empirical research was beginning to demonstrate an impact on whether improved student outcomes could be attained through strategic school organization and strong principal leadership. Because school leadership was being held accountable for a

school's performance, it was imperative to understand what the most important, instructional, leadership predictors were and how these predictors could be developed and reinforced to forecast student success.

In Marzano, Waters and McNulty's meta-analysis book, School Leadership that Works, these co-authors chose the description of instructional leadership that has attained the most visibility over the years. This description was an application of Wilma Smith's and Richard Andrew's four dimensions (four roles) of an instructional leader:

- providing the necessary resources so the school's academic goals can be achieved
- possessing knowledge and skill in curriculum and instructional matters so that teachers perceive that their interaction with the principal leads to improved instructional practice
- being a skilled communicator of goals in one-on-one, small group, and large group settings
- being a visionary who is out of the office and around the building creating a visible presence for the staff, students, and parents at both the physical and philosophical levels concerning the school's culture and philosophy.

(Andrews & Smith, 1989, p. 23)

Andrews and Smith (1989) examined two areas of chief importance: the value that principals place on the parts of their position, and how they allocate time to those areas. Each of the four identified areas of instructional leadership was matched to key descriptors, and then teachers rated their principals. On a day-to-day basis, principals that were perceived by staff members as instructional leaders spent more time in each of the

four roles identified by Andrews and Smith pertinent to being strong instructional leaders.

In an era that called for reform and restructuring, researchers and policy makers acknowledged leadership as the schoolhouse focus. The scrutinizing lens used by researchers identified new expectations for educational leadership in order to meet the rigor for student success. The principal had become the pivotal person in bringing about school reform. This focus, identified by researchers, shows that principals can no longer just be managers. Additionally, for sustainable change to occur, the principal cannot be the only instructional leader in the building. What is becoming more prominent from this focus on leadership in the twenty-first century is how school leaders can actualize the people potential in their schools — connecting people and creating a professional learning community (Leithwood & Jantzi, 1999; Fullan, 2002; Marzano et al., 2005).

### *Building Capacity to Restructure Schools*

Actualizing people potential in schools is a key to restructuring schools. Current school research maintains the need for collaborative decision making that can transform teaching and learning. The Leithwood model describes transformational leadership aligned to six leadership and four management dimensions. “The leadership dimensions include building school vision and goals; providing intellectual stimulation; offering individualized support; symbolizing professional practices and values; demonstrating high performance expectations; and developing structures to foster participation in school decisions” (Leithwood & Jantzi, 1999, p. 454).

Providing teachers the opportunity to plan and reflect together, to observe good teaching practices, and to observe and talk about refining student learning is key to this

model. Leaders find ways to empower faculty members and share leadership opportunities. Developing goals, school norms, and initiating grade-level site improvement plans provides opportunities for shared commitment.

The research by Leithwood and Jantzi suggested that leadership was a complexity of interactions between leadership and “school conditions” in the production of student achievement. School conditions that received the highest ratings involved faculty members knowing and being committed to school goals, a school culture that emphasized a positive atmosphere and the important work of student learning, opportunities for teachers to be a part of collaborative school planning, school structure and organization based on heterogeneous groupings, and data collection used to make informative instructional decisions (Leithwood & Jantzi, 1999). These types of practices lead to the development of commitment and sustainable leadership capacity from numerous staff leadership sources.

Transformational leadership was also an important element of Deming’s Total Quality Management philosophy. Schomaker and Wilson (1993) identified these elements in schools as a democratic collegial atmosphere; all decisions should be information driven, management should eliminate any kind of threat and encourage continuous improvement, expertise combined with research should drive practice, improvement must become an obsession, and improvement should be routinely recognized . With the urgency of the “No Child Left Behind Act”, this data-driven decision making and continuous improvement philosophy could help to accomplish school transformation.

### *Leadership that Sustains Change*

Webster's definition of transformation is as follows: An act, or process, or instance of change in structure, appearance or character ( 2002, p. 2427). Fortunately, from legislative pressure for school reform and the result of effective school research, realizations of how to cultivate and sustain improvements during a time of transformation and complexity are being made from studying the areas of business and education. These research findings continue to reinforce the knowledge that the key to improvement is through leadership, but the kind of leadership for sustained change, continuous improvement, and reform is also a different kind of leadership. In his book, Leading in A Culture of Change, Fullan (2001) reiterates that sustained reform depends on building leadership capacity — not a charismatic leader but the force of many focused on key dimensions. This mindset could provide more effective leadership for prolonged positive change. The principal of the future must be able to lead in a culture of complexity and change. “Cultural Change Principals display palpable energy, enthusiasm, and hope. In addition, five essential components characterize leaders in the knowledge society: moral purpose, an understanding of the change process, the ability to improve relationships, knowledge creation and sharing, and coherence making” (Fullan, 2002, p. 17).

The moral purpose principal is a defender of the “underdog”; someone constantly identifying the learning gaps in his/her school and seeking strategies to close the gap between high and low performing students. Not only do they seek to close the gaps within their school environment but also to improve all schools in the district; they help identify trends and orchestrate opportunities to ascertain solutions. School leaders must be comfortable with change and understand that they are not the solution but the



connector to possibilities and commitment. They have to be comfortable with chaos, learn from dissention, and continuously be open to learning and seeking ways of doing things better (Fullan, 2002).

School culture change leaders must be empathetic and realize that their greatest capacity to create change is through the people involved in the process. It is imperative that they continually work to build individual and team relationships responsible for creating a democratic school environment. Leaders for cultural change in schools realize they are models in their building for lifelong learning and that developing a learning community provides the opportunity for the learning to be shared, digested, questioned, modified, and retained. Learning opportunities of this kind are purposefully orchestrated to provide the prospect of continuous growth (p. 18).

#### *Making Sense of Complexity*

To be the leader in a culture of change, there is always the conundrum of trying to help others make sense of complexity and to know that stability can never be achieved. We never want the process of change to be achieved in an effort for continual growth. Helping others to live with the tension of complexity is not easy and repeats the necessity of building relationships. Helping others to recognize that their own and the system's greatest achievements and growth come from complex change dictates a delicate balance for principals (Fullan, 2001).

Segiovani (1999) also saw school leaders use their influence to orchestrate purposeful growth and create school learning communities. He identified school

leadership stages used to move from transactional to transformational that developed the commitment needed for sustained school improvement. These stages were “Leadership by Bartering; Leadership by Building; Leadership by Bonding; and Binding” (p. 74). Bartering directly related to what Burns first identifies as the transactional manager; the leader gained something they wanted in exchange for giving something to “the led.” Leadership by Building provided the followers with what they needed by developing an environment that fulfilled the need for esteem, responsibility, competence, and achievement.

The principal and the staff together developed the next two Sergiovanni leadership stages. Leadership by Bonding was created by developing together shared values and commitments, and Binding was created when the principal and staff committed themselves to a set of shared ideas that tied them together morally as “we” and that morally obliged them to be self-managing. Bonding leadership was the stage through commitment that changed subordinates into followers. Followers thought for themselves and did what was right for the school and did it well because they were committed to a shared set of beliefs about what made a successful school (Sergiovanni, 1999).

*Professional Learning Community: Theory into Practice*

In *Getting Started* (2002), Eaker and DuFour provide guidance for putting theory into practice for schools that wanted to know where to begin creating a Professional Learning Community. To make this culture change they identified key elements: “collaboration, developing mission, vision, values, and goals; focusing on learning; leadership; focused school improvement plans; celebration; and persistence” (p. 10).

Collaboration was embedded in every aspect of school decision making. Teachers were removed from isolation and learned to work together in high performing teams. Time for collaboration was provided, and teams made decisions based on relevant data and strategies based on research best practices to improve student achievement. The mission of the school was based on what students would learn, how teachers would know what they have learned, and what would be the response to students who were not learning. In a professional community, the vision statement was based on professional research on what constituted best practices, and these best practices were used to provide a pathway to improvement. This vision statement formed the basis for the school's site improvement plan. Values identified what the professional learning community would do to reach the vision; these statements are always prefaced by "we will..." (Eaker, DuFour, & DuFour, 2002).

The daunting shift for most schools in creating a professional learning community was changing the focus from teaching to how students learn. Collaborative discussions were focused on what students are expected to learn, learning outcomes and assessments, and the kinds of supports necessary for student success. When schools focused on learning, curriculum discussions would follow. In Professional Learning Communities, curriculum decisions were made collaboratively based on researched best practices; these practices were based on how these strategies would improve student learning. The collaborative team was focused on student achievement results (Eaker, DuFour, & DuFour, 2002).

One of the most fundamental cultural shifts when focusing on learning communities was how teachers are perceived. "In professional learning communities,

administrators are viewed as leaders of leaders. Teachers are viewed as transformational leaders” (Eaker, DuFour, & DuFour, 2002, p. 22). Since learning was the focus for professional learning communities, these collaborative communities developed a yearly school improvement plan to work on continuous student achievement. These plans were based on relevant data and were narrowly focused to make an impact on academic growth. Celebrations were used to recognize improvement and attainment of academic standards.

Professional learning communities are committed to being persistent. Changes occur based on collaborative decision making, but only if the change is valuable to the school’s vision, which is improving student learning. The school leader’s role is to protect and defend the vision and mission of the school; this leadership role is enhanced by the multitude of leaders that are developed by the learning community (Eaker, DuFour, & DuFour, 2002).

Thirty years ago, most school leadership could be more closely identified as transactional or managerial; however, in an era of effective school research and school restructuring, this style of leadership has been challenged. To meet the complexity of today’s schools, research has identified a need for instructional and transformational leadership. Educational theorists have identified that this leadership style is personified by creating leadership capacity in others and in creating a collaborative school learning community.

In an era of accountability that called for reform and restructuring schools, research and policy makers acknowledged leadership as the focus necessary in all schools. The scrutinizing lens used by researchers identified new expectations for

educational leadership in order to meet the rigor for student success. The principal was identified as the pivotal person in bringing about school reform. This focus by researchers tells us that principals can no longer be only managers, and for sustainable change to occur, the principal cannot be the only instructional leader in the building. What is becoming more prominent from this focus on leadership in the twenty-first century is how to actualize the people potential in their schools — connecting people and creating a community to increase student and adult learning capacity for continuous improvement (Leithwood & Jantzi, 1999; Fullan, 2002; Marzano et al., 2005).

### *The Need for Principal Internships*

In the beginning of school reform, professional development was focused on teachers—principal leadership development was neglected until the mid to late 1980s. This neglect and perceived lack of support has caused good candidates to be reluctant to take on the role of the principal under the current reform crisis conditions; therefore, it is imperative that high priority be given to current leaders and new principals entering the job. Identifying the best kind professional development that will grow and nurture transformational distributive leadership practices is a necessary challenge (Fenwick & Pierce, 2002).

Just as many states have mandated mentoring programs for new teachers; more than two-thirds of the states have put recent policies into place that call for assisting current and aspiring school administrators. There is an awareness of the importance of mentoring and formal internships for the successful socialization and transition from the teacher role to the administrative role. Daresh (2004) sees the role of the mentor as the person that not only answers managerial questions, but also the person that prods and

questions the protégée into identifying their own style of leadership based on their talents. School systems also benefit from mentoring programs by developing more leadership capacity, promoting continuous learning norms, building higher employee esteem, and creating enthusiasm and production.

Teresa Gray, in a reflection of her internship, shares the importance of an applied internship that prepared her for a future administrative job: “Although classroom learning through books and discussion was essential to the preparation for my internship, the hands-on experience over a period of one year would prove to be invaluable” (Gray, 2001, p. 663). Principal internships are relatively new and evolving. An internship is a structured mentoring program that supports the future of an organization.

Internships can be an improved opportunity to connect theory to practice in the university and accreditation programs. Too often, the administrative field experiences are disconnected and clinical hours are in too small of increments, happening during planning periods or after school, and do not make an impact on instructional leadership learning. The school-based setting is too complex to have such a limited approach to developing instructional leaders. Field experiences or internships can be designed in many different ways but “care should be taken to provide extended field experiences that closely replicate daily administrative life...a year-long full time placement is considered to be optimal...” (Hackmann, Schmitt-Oliver, & Tracy, 2002, pp. 12-13).

This type of professional development gives empowerment to the variability of educational contexts. Professional development that was based on the school effectiveness research did not take into account the uniqueness of school settings and the individuals who make up each learning team. “Recognizing the importance of contextual

differences compels professional developers to consider more seriously the dynamics of systematic change and the power of systems. Contexts involve organizations which must develop along with the individuals within them” (Guskey, 1995, p. 3).

After completing his first six months of the principalship, Theodore Creighton concluded that current college preparation programs for educational administration do not address real life situations which principals work with day-to-day. Creighton goes on to question why other professions provide a “practice field” that is lacking in school administration or is notoriously weak (Creighton, 2001). The optimum experience for aspiring principal leaders includes the day-to-day ebb and flow of occurrences as they transpire throughout the year. Nothing about this clinical experience should be left to chance (Hackmann, Schmitt-Oliver, & Tracy, 2002).

It is important now more than ever to have a systematic approach to cultivating administrators that can drive school change and that understand the complexity that comes with this process. Crow and Pounder, (2005) refer to the need to sustain the pipeline of highly qualified candidates and to support both novice and experienced administrators. This is necessary because of the distressing shortages of qualified candidates to fill current principal positions in the near future and an increasing trend for individuals with relatively limited experience to move into principal positions.

Armed with my new understanding of the kind of leadership necessary to bring about lasting change and improved student achievement, my next step was to decide how to best replicate this knowledge for interns and mentors in the City Leadership Challenge Principal Internship.

Over the last 17 years in my role as principal, district lead principal to currently, and the Director of Leadership Development, I have had the opportunity to watch the role of school administrator change dramatically. My initial administrative duties as an urban school district leader were the development and application of my understanding of district policy, maintenance of the school, supervision of students and teachers, and development of community relations. These aspects of school administration did not disappear, but new roles surfaced which added continual challenges and growth opportunities to my leadership development.

The new roles of a school administrator include site professional development leader, data collector and analyzer, change manager, instructional leader, organizational analyst, and democratic school visionary. These are roles that directly affect the opportunity for students to achieve. To meet the complexity of today's schools, research has identified a need for instructional and transformational leadership. Developing the skills set of an instructional and transformational leader is an intimidating challenge. This set of skills is obtained from acquiring a theory base, seeing that theory modeled in context, and having the opportunity to participate in a developmental continuum of practice utilizing the acquired theory. This process is manifested in a supportive environment and thrives on continuous reflection on the process to make the theory replication a part of practice. This type of environment is a formal embedded internship, which few aspiring administrators have encountered before placement in a principalship. This research will analyze how a principal internship, based on adult learning theory, prepares future administrators to influence student achievement from the perspective of an intern and my role as leadership director.



## CHAPTER TWO

### ALIGNING TO THEORY

#### *Introduction*

In my current role as Director of Leadership Development in an urban district, the quality and design of the principal internship program is critical. In the next two years, 60 percent of our leadership force can retire in City Public Schools. It is important that the principal internship program, which I am responsible for creating and implementing, can cultivate innovative, instructional, and transformational school leaders that can positively influence student achievement. I was now ready to understand the best approach for adult learners to acquire the skills of transformational leaders and how to distribute leadership while building the capacity of others. This critical need led me to study of the theory of adult learning. A better understanding of this theory and its application to principal internships can support new leaders and rid school districts of the lassie-fair approach that is historically so common in school leadership development.

Sixteen years ago, I was called from my classroom to my school office for an “over the counter” phone call. From that phantom telephone voice, I received my first assignment as a building principal. Not only was I clueless about where the assignment was located, but also I had little information about what to do next. This was, and unfortunately still is a common practice for a newly assigned principal. New principals have often received little or no supervised work experience and limited, practical, on-the-job training prior to their new principalship assignments.

To recognize and correct limitations to leadership training, a mentor training program in the City Leadership Challenge is used to reflect on these “baptism by fire”

experiences and to create expectations for developing interns in the appropriate leadership process stages (observation, participation, leading). These stages are based on standards and the practice of adult learning theory. These understandings are built in incremental stages to support instructional leadership opportunities and the goal of developing leaders that will improve student achievement.

Many districts and leadership preparation programs are working to create models to develop their own aspiring leaders. McGough (2003) supports the use of adult learning model to guide program development: “Much of the writing about the principalship has concentrated on creating a new vision for the role and devising the means of implementing that vision. The discipline of adult learning theory provides a substantive body of work that can be employed as a foundation for analyzing the formation and transformation of principal perspectives” (p. 451).

To date, there is no single, united, adult learning theory or model; instead, there exists a blend of models and theories that creates myriad pieces of knowledge about adult learning. Merriam (2001) points out that in all current models, adults are engaged in learning activities that are based on a need or interest; therefore, “the more we know about the identity of the learner, the context of this learning, and the learning process itself, the better able we are to design effective learning experiences” (p. 199). The adult learner needs, learning in context, and the design of the learning process will be the focus of this qualitative, heuristic, research study of an internship program to develop aspiring principals. McGough (2003) refers to these three areas as *attributive*, attributes of the adult learner; *representative*, process for adult learning; and *situational*, the context for

learning. It is my contention that all three approaches are necessary in creating an internship program that develops aspiring principals to improve student achievement.

### *Theory*

The second part of my journey in creating an internship to develop future school leaders is the search for and study of a theory that would support adults making a transformational change. I too, am going through a transformational change and the thought of engaging with philosophical theory is daunting. I consider myself to be an educational practitioner and proud of it. I confess to being a practitioner that believes that philosophy and theory are irrelevant to school challenges and daily operations. I will also confess, like most human beings, that what I do not understand... I often fear. Writing chapter 2 has been an opportunity to quell my fears and to develop an understanding of the relationship between theory and practice. By doing so, I can then apply my understanding to the development and improvement of a new program for aspiring principals.

The writing stage of a dissertation perhaps is not the best time in an educational practitioner's career to lament about the correlation between theory and practice; yet for me, very much the adult learner, it was the exact time and place for this learning to occur. I needed to reconcile philosophy, theory, and practice to be able to design and implement a new leadership program focused on developing the adult learner into a leader who could impact and improve student achievement.

Ellias and Merriam (1980) helped me to synthesize the necessity of both theory and practice to improve my own practice, "theory without practice leads to an empty idealism, and action without philosophical reflection leads to a mindless activism" (p. 4).

Thus, began my journey of philosophical inquiry to clarify inputs and issues so that I, the Director of Leadership Development, could make successful program decisions guided by theory that will support leaders to improve student achievement.

The meaning of the word philosophy comes from the Greek compound word *philo + sophia*. Etymologically, philosophy means a “love of wisdom.” As I am passionate about my role as an educational leader, this definition made sense. It is not the knowledge, or wisdom, but the process of life long learning that leads to comprehension. That is the important part of the journey. I would agree with Zunjic (2003), “It is not the possession of wisdom, but a passionate search for it” (p. 3). One must have a zealous outlook to know more and learn more, continuously question, and search for insight.

A philosopher tries to understand and make sense of everything that is happening in his/her world. “For the ancient Greeks, to theorize was to look at, to behold, to have a vision”(Ellias & Merriam, p. 2). The philosopher and the educational leader have much in common; they both are striving to make *things* sharp and clear for people in their learning community and to convince these same learners of their understanding of the process, principles, or experience. The goal of the principal practitioner is to develop a shared vision with the school stakeholders and to empower all stakeholders to reach for the vision.

This shared school vision can be the reality of what the theorist or philosopher envisions that could develop in a school setting. “The philosopher of education is interested in certain general principles that are involved in education: aims and objectives of education, curriculum or subject matter, general methodological principles, analysis of the teaching and learning process, and the relationship between education and the society

in which education takes place” (Ellias & Merrium, 1980, p. 3). When this kind of joint interaction occurs between theory and practice, an improved experience occurs for all school stakeholders.

Philosophy is divided into four sub-disciplines. Each of these disciplines pose questions for better understanding: how should a person live and what are his/her values and customs (*ethics*); what do we believe about the nature of reality (*ontology*); what is the nature of knowledge, how is it acquired, and what do people comprehend (*epistemology*); and what are the correct ways to reason (*logic*).

The internship is based on individuals seeking to learn a new set of skills. Because the “set of skills” is a matter of individual perception, including mine, the ontology of this project is perspective, not truth seeking. These skills are learned in context and modeled by a mentor trained in coaching and the use of reflective practice. The branch of philosophy that studies how people acquire new understandings and information is *epistemology*. *Epistemology* is the philosophical umbrella that guided the study of how the interns constructed new knowledge and the program design components that produce knowledge that positively impacts student achievement.

Axiologically, while the findings are based on my and my participants’ interpretations, the dissertation is caste in an interpretive framework with its own axiology. The participants could understand the events of the internship adequately only as they were seen in context. I became immersed in the setting and the interactive research process enabled the intern participants to teach me about their lived experience. This process enabled me to understand the experience and entail which components the participants valued in the internship.

Identifying patterns or themes that the interns identified as positive components that supported their leadership growth created the internship model. All the interns valued these themes consistently. All the interns did not experience negative components, but as a group they agreed that the identified negative components would have inhibited their growth as a leader.

I chose a theoretical perspective, phenomenology to guide my inquiry search for meaning of how groups of people, the interns interact with a phenomenon.

Phenomenology bonds with the cohort relationship to the internship experience and guided my search for connections in their individual experiences to expose positive themes or components to design future internships. A well-matched phenomenology method, hermeneutics also searches for the essence of how a group interacts with an experience, but allowed my voice as the director and researcher to be heard and guide the inquiry process. Each of the philosophical elements; epistemology, phenomenology, and hermeneutics informed the inquiry process and the principal internship design model.

I followed a similar process for justifying the choice of adult learning theory as a basis for designing the principal internship. Not everyone I researched agreed on how to study the philosophical sub-disciplines; therefore, competing ways of thinking have developed. I discovered that people become very passionate about how to best search for philosophical answers, and these ways of thinking have become known as schools of thought. Elias and Merriam (1980) see these competing schools of thought (behaviorism, psychological, sociocultural and integrative) emerge in their examination of philosophies of adult education, "it appears preferable to allow these differences to surface for they

often involve fundamental issues that cannot be submerged” (p. 4). These emerging schools of thought all had an impact on internship program design.

### *Adult Learning Theories*

Schools of thought illustrate a way of thinking about adult development and guide the practice of teaching adult education. I began to see my leadership practices reflected in specific theory, and I could see how our beliefs inspire our philosophical systems. Clark and Caffarella (1999) write, “Theories (serve) as lens through which we view the life course; that lens illuminates certain elements and tells a particular story about adult life” (p. 3). A teacher’s lessons are guided by whether or not they believe the learner is a passive receiver of knowledge from the environment or an active participant who interacts with the environment to construct knowledge. Baumgartner (2003) identifies these four adult development theories as “behavioral/mechanistic, cognitive/psychological, contextual/sociocultural, and integrative” (p. 1).

### *Adult Developmental Learning Theories.*

The first theory, behaviorism, treats the adult learner as a reactive machine. Therefore, if one changes the stimuli in the environment, the behavior is changed. These environmental stimuli can be either positive or negative. It is the teacher’s responsibility to find the best environmental consequence to shape the desired behavior or learning. Merriam and Caffarella (1999) identify three common assumptions in defining this learning look: the learning is observable, the environment determines what is learned, and the aptitude to understand and repeat a process demonstrates that learning has been accomplished. Instructors that identify with this theory use repeated practice and drill for students and provide both positive and negative feedback to enforce desired results. A

good example of this kind of learning would be computer games that reinforce mathematical skills.

In the City Leadership Challenge internship, there is no direct match to the behaviorism theory. The internship experience involves people and a changing context, so no two internship experiences are exactly alike. The intern's experiences with interpreting the culture, understanding the data, managing a fire drill, or observing classroom procedures are applicable, but due to addition of people and relationships to the internship process, each experience evolves into its own unique, experiential opportunity to be interpreted.

The second adult development theory is the psychological/cognitive approach. This theory sees people as active participants that construct learning from knowledge gleaned from their environment. Baumgartner (2001) asserts, "people reach more complex, integrated levels of development through active participation with their environment" (p. 4). This continuous learning process developed by Mezirow (1991) is based on the learner constructing their personal knowledge through critical reflection and dialogue. "Instructors who champion the psychological/cognitive view provide discussion guidelines (Cranton, 1994) that ensure an atmosphere of trust, safety, and respect in which learners felt comfortable expressing their ideas" (Baumgartner, 2001, p. 4).

This developmental theory is the foundation for the City Leadership Challenge internship. Mentors and interns receive training that focuses on the process of creating leadership learning opportunities that are developed through three stages: observation, participation, and implementation of experiences that impact student achievement. The



internship is based on 13 leadership competencies that impact student achievement. Mentors and interns collaborate to design projects together in each developmental category to support the leadership growth of the intern and increase the probability of improved student achievement.

During this process, the intern and mentor engage in many opportunities for reflective practice. Weekly meetings are held to reflect on the progress of student achievement projects and to reflect on the actions necessary for reaching the next stage of leadership development. This practice helps interns to reflect *in action* in the future. Interns complete a quarterly reflection rubric to be discussed and signed by the mentor before submitting it to the internship director. This reflection rubric is aligned with the portfolio competencies and helps the intern and mentor focus on developmental opportunities that address leadership goals for supporting student achievement.

The third adult development theory, contextual/sociocultural theory, is based on the idea that adult learning cannot happen in isolation but is dependent on the circumstance where it takes place. Early theorist, Vygotsky (1978) refers to this relationship with the environment as child-in-activity-in-context. Another major influence identified in this development theory is the impact of a person's culture on his/her growth and development. In other words, what does the person's culture value and respect? Miller (1993) expresses that different cultures value and influence personal development, "Different cultures emphasize different tools (for example verbal or nonverbal), skills (reading, mathematics, or spatial memory), and social interaction (formal school or informal apprenticeships) because of different cultural needs and

values” (p. 390). Thus, cultural differences create the uniqueness of each individual and a unique interaction with their social context.

Based on this theory, City Leadership Challenge mentors are encouraged to identify the intern’s strengths and to use those strengths to build and develop the intern’s leadership skills. It never ceases to amaze me how each internship relationship takes on a unique personality all its own. This relationship reflects a balance of character, skills, and uniqueness from both adults that produce a dynamic team. During my own opportunities working in tandem with school site assistant principals, I often felt that I grew more from the encounter than the assistant principal. Recognizing traits in the other person that I lacked plus the opportunity to see these traits in action in a leadership role where I had become tacit provided me with an opportunity for reflection.

Teachers of adult learners that value the contextual/sociocultural theory become collaborative partners in the learning process. These teachers become familiar with the needs of their students and adjust or scaffold their instruction to meet those needs (Vygotsky, 1978). Baumgartner (2007) writes, “Teachers who adopt a contextual/sociocultural approach to adult development also focus on how social inequities based on various attributes including race, class, and gender affect adult development and learning” (p. 6). Teachers who support this theory adhere to the use of critical reflection and dialogue to construct a higher order of understanding and often question social injustice to increase sociocultural awareness (p. 6).

The final, adult, development theory is the most recent perspective. This integrated theory espouses the interaction between the mind, body, and sociocultural influences and how they affect adult development (Clark & Caffarella, 1999). In his

work, Dirkx (1997) points out the need for “nurturing the soul” in adult learning (p.79). Dirkx’s work is based on Robert Boyd’s (1991) original work focused on the spiritual and emotional dimensions of transformative learning. Dirkx (2001) writes, “Many learning situations are capable of evoking potentially powerful emotions and images among adults” (p. 3).

The integrated-theory teacher will use strategies that allow the adult learner to connect the learning with their imagination process. Dirkx (2001) states,

Educators working from this perspective will make substantial use, regardless of the subject matter, of story, myths, poetry, music, drawing, art, journaling, dance, rituals, or performance. Such approaches allow learners to become aware of and give voice to the images and unconscious dynamics that may be animating their psychic lives within the context of the subject matter and the learning process. (p. 3)

Helping learners to engage in this format encourages the use of multiple intelligences (Gardner, 1993) and is developed by a teacher sensitive to a holistic learner approach.

#### Adult Learning Theory

I also identified the new developments in adult learning theory. The study of adult learning theory has only occurred since the late 1920s; with such a new, theoretical framework, much research is still needed to learn about these theories in practice. This section focuses on the beginnings, the beliefs, and the criticisms of these theories. The foundation and major contributions to adult learning theory models are *andragogy*, *self-directed learning*, and *transformational learning*.

## *Andragogy*

The best known of these theories is *andragogy* authored by Malcolm Knowles after his extensive research and practice in the field of adult education. Knowles (2005) summarized and built on five key assumptions or attributes of adult learners made by the visionary Linderman. Adult learners are

- motivated to learn as they experience needs and interests that learning will satisfy
- oriented to learning that is life-centered
- focused on experience as the richest source for adult's learning
- instilled with a deep need to be self-directing; and individual differences among people increase with age (p. 40).

These key assumptions have directed facilitators of adult learning to implement certain tactics for learning to be successful. The facilitator must help adult participants identify what they need to know or discover the gaps to address in their learning needs. Facilitators create experiences to help adult learners transition from being dependent learners to becoming self-directing learners seeking to meet a psychological need. Due to the diverse experiential background of the adult learner, the facilitator needs to acknowledge this factor by designing programs that activate prior knowledge in group discussions, peer problem solving, and simulation exercises. To ignore this resource is to ignore or diminish the adult learner as an individual because experience is who they are (Knowles, 2005, pp. 66-67).

The 22 interns in the City Leadership Challenge internship program have come from a diverse, rich, educational practitioner background. They have served as teacher

leaders, team leaders, instructional facilitators, department chairs, and educational deans at their school sites. Recognizing their prior knowledge and professional experiences was a key factor in their continued, professional growth.

Our superintendent mandate for every administrator was to complete 145 classroom “walk-throughs” per school year; this created an opportunity to tap into the prior knowledge and professional experiences. Using their extensive experience with the Cognitive Coaching walk-through format, two interns created a training session for the other ten interns. Their experience was acknowledged for the whole group to benefit. This experience was created then shared at an intern site, complete with direct instruction, classroom walk-through application, group reflective dialogue, and peer coaching. Due to such positive feedback and peer recommendation, these same two interns were asked to give the same demonstration at the Aspirant Leadership Academy. Current principals had also requested an opportunity to see the same demonstration. To ignore the prior knowledge and experiences of these interns would have been a missed opportunity to honor them as individuals, and the cohort internship would have missed a rich, experiential opportunity.

Adults are motivated to learn because they perceive that learning will help them perform jobs in their life tasks. Facilitators of adult learning understand that learning in adults is activated by the need to know and to be able to cope effectively in their daily life. Exposure to effective peer modeling, career counseling, and experiential opportunities can encourage readiness; therefore, it is imperative that new knowledge, skills, or attitudes be presented in the context of the real-life setting. “...Knowles proposed a program-planning model for designing, implementing, and evaluating

educational experiences with adults” (Merriam, 2001, p. 5). Programs that violate the principles of adult learning can reduce motivation and negate the internal need to continue to learn (pp. 67-68).

Having the opportunity to “try-on” leadership in the setting in which one is going to be expected to lead is an opportunity that too few aspiring principals have had. The practice of “baptism by fire” has been exacerbated by the “boomer” generation of retiring principals and the changing demands and increased expectations for accountability. Bloom, Castagna, Moir and Warren (2003) in their recent book, *Blended Coaching: Skills and Strategies to Support Principal Development* sited several critical needs to comply with current demands:

- The importance of sustained, stable, and effective leadership for school improvement
- The increasing shortage of qualified candidates for the principalship
- The inadequacy of traditional preservice and inservice programs
- The need for quality induction and professional development programs for principals that include a mentoring or coaching component (pg. XII)

Not all of these needs can be met by Knowles’ program design and initial label for adult learning, andragogy. Many critiques felt that his five assumptions describing the adult learner and his program design were not complete or responsive to the adult learner as a whole. Other critics say andragogy has contributed little to the understanding of the adult learning process. Under criticism, Knowles conceded that his adult learning assumptions were also true of some children and that not all adults display self-direction. Merriam (2001) observed that the most severe criticism has been Knowles lack of

acknowledgement of how the adult personal (history, culture) and institutional context can be a contributing factor to success or failure.

Andragogy has been and will continue to be a major influence in Adult Learning Theory. It has contributed to my understanding of adult learners and is a humanistic, student-centered approach to learning. “Knowles’ writing resulted in many people from different areas of work becoming much more aware of this humanistic approach to adult teaching and learning...” (Jarvis, 2001, p. 157). Knowles writing has become the initial handbook or “how to” for guiding adult learning.

The western father of Andragogy, Malcolm Knowles has felt the pressure to provide a coherent, philosophical framework for adult education, yet, he asserts that each theoretical educational approach provides adult learning the opportunity to strengthen this field of work. “It makes it legitimate for me to take ideas from each approach that make sense to me and incorporate them into a personal philosophical position” (Knowles, 1980, p. ii). This open-ended approach to theories and models that effect the development of internships for principals is relevant to remember to increase the likelihood of successful programs that will positively affect student achievement.

### *Self Directed Learning*

A second contribution to adult learning is the understanding of self-directed learning. Living in the age of information has required adult learners to spend a considerable amount of time acquiring new knowledge and skills. The acquisition of this new knowledge frequently requires learner initiative; hence, it is often referred to as self-directed learning. Hiemstra (1994), a leading researcher on adult theory and practice

writes, “self-directed learning is seen as any study form in which individuals have primary responsibility for planning, implementing, and even evaluating the effort” (p. 1).

New curriculum, trainings, and resources for facilitating self-directed learning are being marketed based on research and scholarly attention given to this model. Brockett and Hiemstra (1991) synthesized many aspects and knowledge about this adult learning theory in their conceptual model, Personal Responsibility Orientation. Gleaned from their research about self-directed learning are the following observations:

- individual learners can become empowered to take increasing responsibility for various decisions associated with the learning endeavor
- self-direction is best viewed as a continuum or characteristic that exists to some degree in every person and learning situation
- self direction does not mean that all learning will necessarily take place in isolation from others
- self directed learners appear to transfer learning, in terms of knowledge and study skill, from one situation to another
- self-directed study can involve various activities and resources such as self guided reading, participation in study groups, internships, electronic dialogues, and reflective writing activities
- effective roles for teachers in self-directed learning are possible such as dialogue with learners, securing resources, evaluating outcomes, and supporting self-directed study through open learning programs, individualized study options, and other innovative programs. (p. 1)



Thirty years of research and writing followed this high interest area of adult learning, and new goals for continued research and refinement continue to challenge the self-directed learning model to move to the next level. Merriam and Caffarella (1999) have identified areas for future areas of investigations to expand the understanding of self-directed learning. Future areas of study include “how adults remain self-directed over long periods; how the learning process changes from novice to expert learners; the implication for planning and instruction of the self-directed learner; and further study of the interaction of contextual factors on the identified personal characteristics of self-directed learners” (Quoted in *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education*, no. 89, spring 2001, pp. 10-11).

### *Transformational Learning*

In the early 1990s, the third major contribution to adult learning theory has been transformational learning. Transformational learning is about the cognitive process of learning. Merriam (2001) sees this as a process: “The mental construction of experience, inner meaning, and reflection are common elements of this approach” (p. 206).

Transformative learning, as introduced by Mezirow in 1997, identified an adult learning model that develops autonomous thinkers. Imel (1998) interprets the importance of this process in contemporary societies,

we must learn to make our own interpretations rather than act on the purposes, beliefs, judgments, and feelings of others (and) facilitating such understandings is the cardinal goal of adult education.(p. 1)

Mezirow references these interpretations in two dimensions known as

...habits of mind and a point of view. Habits of mind are broad, abstract, orienting, habitual ways of thinking, feeling, and acting influenced by assumptions that constitute a set of codes. Habits of mind become articulated in a particular point of view- the constellation of belief, value judgment, attitude, and feeling that shape a particular interpretation. (Mezirow, 1997, pp. 5-6)

Incited by a problem or dilemma, Mezirow's transformational process exposes a person to an incongruity or an atypical experience or assumption. This experience or series of experiences triggers a readiness for change. The transformational process can occur from a single event or can accrue from a number of events over time (Schroeder, p. 1).

Constructivist in its approach, this adult learning theory uses prior learning experiences or interpretations as a filter for approaching new learning experiences. "Rather than meaning residing outside of the learner's experience, within the interaction of the learner with the text. Thus, the learner's experiences and contexts are central to the learning process and an integral aspect what they come to know" (Dirkx, 1997, p. 3). In 1991, Mezirow wrote about "meaning perspectives or schemes" as the psycho-cultural experiences within which new experiences are assimilated and transformed by past experiences (Di Biase, 1998, p. 2).

This formative learning occurs in childhood both through socialization (informal or tacit learning of norms from parents, friends, and mentors that allows us to fit into society) and through our schooling. Approved ways of seeing and understanding, shaped by our language, culture, and personal experience, collaborate to set limits to our future learning. (Mezirow, 1991, p. 1)

Mezirow's transformational learning theory recognizes that adults live in a rapidly changing world. For early formative meaning, perspectives, or schemes to change, a process of critical reflection and meaningful dialogue must occur to appropriate a new perspective or transformation. Mezirow refers to this as an autonomous learner, "...understanding, skills, and a disposition necessary to become critically reflective of one's own assumptions and to engage effectively in discourse to validate one's beliefs through the experiences of others who share universal values" (Mezirow, 1997, p. 9). Mezirow left me with the sense that the ideal adult learning condition is a synthesis of different points of view based on an empathetic social process. "Transformative learning is not an add-on. It is the essence of adult education" (pp. 10-11).

The internship should mirror the complexity of the principalship and also the need for interns to see their mentor working together with other principals to critically reflect on issues and their practice in context. Many mentor principals take their interns or assistants to local and state leadership conferences to share the experience networking with peers and growing through reflection. One mentor included his intern on a trip to a national school improvement conference despite knowing the intern would be placed at another school setting upon completion of the internship. This kind of foresight speaks to impacting the future through professional growth, social inclusion, scaffolding, and creating new, formative, learning opportunities which is transformational theory in action.

Each adult learning model impacted the design of the City Leadership Challenge internship program. Using characteristics from each model to make a developmentally supportive, learner-centered, individualized internship was the goal. Creating

individualized internships that respect what each intern brings to the program and providing developmentally appropriate experiences to connect each intern to standards that positively impact student achievement was paramount.

Each internship is its own unique opportunity to honor prior adult learning experiences and to develop new skills in the complexity of each context. “Learning to live with complexity and variety is not simple, but carefully designed programs can help” (Peterson, 2001, p. 3). Interns, as future principals, will be expected to make a quick analysis of problems and make a selection from multiple operatives to resolve pending problems. Allowing interns to practice developmentally appropriate skills in a supportive environment will enable them to be more successful when they assume full responsibility as future principals.

#### *The Answer to Complexity*

Kent Peterson (2001) refers to a principal’s day as a “roar of complexity” (p. 1). A day is incessant encounters and a multitude of decision-making opportunities. “Principals deal with literally hundreds of brief tasks each day, sometimes 50 to 60 separate interactions in an hour” (Peterson, 2001, Quoting Peterson 1982, p. 2). Because of this complexity in leading a school organization, the role of the principal has become more important than ever. The skills required of this person are more challenging because it is harder to build collaboration and capacity among colleagues than to direct them on what to do, and it is easier to supervise and evaluate than to share responsibility and hard work for student achievement.

Principals and teachers are being required to learn new skills in their role of reflective practitioners such as dialoging with peers, seeking feedback, and implementing

action plans. These skills require learning new communication, processing, and inquiry practices. The principal's leadership role is called upon to initiate urgency, support, and vision. It is the principal's job to establish collegial relationships which is an important break from the codependent teacher/principal supervisory role; more important, these new skills need to be refined while on the job (Lambert, 1998, pp. 24-25).

Our interns, as future principals, need to become artists at creating and developing a culture of collaboration and maximizing the potential of each person involved in the school organization. Ronald Barth proposes that since schools exist to promote learning, then it is the principal's primary responsibility to promote the learning of all school inhabitants including themselves. Barth identifies the principal's most important mission as to "create and provide a culture hospitable to human learning and to make it likely that students and educators will become and remain lifelong learners" (Barth, 2002, p. 11).

### *Learning Leaders*

To be successful in the school leadership experience, principals themselves must become voracious lifelong learners. DuFour identifies the principal as the lead learner in a professional community where the focus is on learning—a learning community. This kind of professional community has shifted the focus from principals concentrating on teaching to principals concentrating on learning—a shift from inputs to outputs (DuFour, 2002). DuFour's idea of a professional learning community is guided by "three big ideas: ensuring that students learn; a culture of collaboration; and a focus on results" (DuFour, 2004, pp. 8-10).

In the beginning of school reform, professional development was focused on teachers—principal leadership development was neglected until the late 1990s. This

neglect and perceived lack of support has caused good candidates to be reluctant to take on the role of the principalship under the current reform crisis conditions; therefore, it is imperative that high priority be given to current leaders and new principals entering the job. Identifying the best kind professional development that will grow and nurture transformational leadership and capacity building practices is a necessary challenge.

Learning to lead while leading is a difficult challenge for a principal. Current leadership professional development comes in multiple practices. One way to separate these practices is either to embed the leadership training or to send principals to external, training opportunities. External professional development, the traditional model, usually occurs by principals taking assorted university courses, attending periodic school district in-service activities, or reading professional literature. In this practice, the principal participant is often an inert recipient of knowledge. The topics are most often defined by the school district and usually not modified or reflective of a principal's school context (Fenwick & Pierce, 2002, pp. 2-4). This attempt at principal training was based on the Effective School Research and enticing principals to enroll to develop effective school traits for themselves and their schools. Though well meaning, this type of professional development model has not been successful. By nature, leaders resist others pointing out their leadership deficiencies and collecting them all in one place for a change. Though some principals may find this type of training successful, sustaining this type of professional development without feedback becomes detrimental (Barth, 1986, pp. 156-157).

Building ownership in the learning process is the success of the Harvard Principal Center. At the Center learning is by choice not mandated. The responsibility for

identifying needs, devising formats, and selecting resource personnel belongs to those who are going to use the service. Principals are asked by their colleagues and Harvard University to share their expertise. This experiential opportunity for discourse and dialogue is an empowering opportunity for principals; it is also a time for writing and personal reflection. This opportunity to dialogue has provided a shared sense of purpose for these leaders—an opportunity that many of these leaders would like to replicate in their own home districts (Barth, 1986).

### *Reflective Leadership Practice*

The Harvard conceptual model for the professional development of principals is “Reflect on Practice → Articulate Practice → Better Understand Practice → Improve Practice” (Barth, 1986, p. 160). Systematically applying this model will help principals better understand their work, and understanding their practice is a good beginning to making improvements. Dialoging and sharing solutions to complex school problems creates mutual support and builds relationships; this type of supportive environment keeps principals voluntarily engaged and open to improvement (Barth, 1986).

This type of professional development gives empowerment to the variability of educational contexts. Professional development based on the School Effectiveness Research did not take into account the uniqueness of school settings and the individuals who make up each learning team.

Recognizing the importance of contextual differences compels professional developers to consider more seriously the dynamics of systematic change and the power of systems. Contexts involve organizations which must develop along with the individuals within them. (Guskey, 1995, p. 3)

In contextual professional development, principals are active, reflective participants; they reflect on new learning, explore new skills and ideas, and apply what they learn in their own school contexts. This exploration must take place in an environment of support which includes mentoring, networking, dialoguing, and reflecting on the practices of reading and journaling. This form of professional networking must be systematic and deliberately planned by the principals themselves as a way to improve professional performance (Fenwick & Pierce, 2002, p. 3).

Embedded, professional, development practice helps principals to use reflective inquiry to change the school environment from being a reactive environment to one that is proactive and encourages principals to engage in thoughtful investigation of standards, teaching, and learning. This professional development environment needs to be a safe setting that encourages open discussions and dialogue that deepens each principal's depth of knowledge through collective inquiry and understanding. John Dewey engaged in reflective practice to improve student learning, in his work, *Democracy and Education* (Dewey, 1916).

Dewey wanted educators to act in a deliberate manner to address the complexity of teaching and learning and to avoid impulsive decision making. Donald Schön (1983) has helped educators to revisit and refine the importance of reflective practice for professionals. In this era of crisis in confidence and the challenge of making changes in a complex practice, he identified the limitations of the traditional model of separating those that create theory and those that are part of the practice.

Schön's work focused on the confines of the early practice of professionals in using the theory of Technical Rationality, a practice of solving problems by (randomly)



selecting from available solutions or theories to meet an established result. In this practice, the emphasis is on solving the problem and ignoring the setting of the context of the problem as well as focusing on the process of defining the problem, determining the end result, and identifying solutions to get to the result. Even when this model of problem solving was used, Schön found that often there was a gap between professional knowledge or theories and the demands of the real work practice. This gap is due to a lack of consensus on paradigms to be used to address specific problems and the uniqueness and complexity to every setting. Schön's contribution to this complexity of bridging the gap between research and practice was to identify how some practitioners are successful in divergent situations by developing their "intuitive" capabilities. Schön identifies these capabilities as "reflection-in-action" (Schön, 1983, pp. 39-49).

A practitioner can develop a repertoire of techniques based on many variations of similar types of incidents within the practice. The response becomes increasingly tacit or automatic and can benefit those receiving the service. At the same time, this type of automation can also lead to boredom, missed opportunities, or negative consequences for the recipient due to this narrowing of focus; this can be corrected by the use of reflective practice which can help the practitioner to question tacit responses and to recognize the uniqueness of each situation. (Schön, 1983).

Reflection-in-Action is central to the art through which practitioners sometimes cope with different or new situations within their practice. Reflection-in-action responses are varied; the practitioner may reflect on the understood norms that underlie a judgment, theories of behavior patterns, personal feelings, framing the problem, or his or her role within the larger context. Schön identifies someone that reflects-in-action "as a researcher

in the practice of context. He is not dependent on the categories of established theory and technique, but constructs a new theory of the unique case. His inquiry is not limited to a deliberation about means, which depends on a prior agreement about ends...thus, reflection-in-action can proceed, even in situations of uncertainty or uniqueness, because it is not bound by the dichotomies of Technical Reality” (Schön, 1983, pp. 68-69).

Schön’s goal was to develop an epistemology of practice which places technical problem solving as a part of reflective inquiry and connects this unique type of inquiry to the scientist’s art of research (Schön, 1983).

Most practicing principals relate to Schön’s idea that schools are unique settings and that principal practice, in reality, is often very problematic and chaotic; they also understand that predetermined solutions or theory apply to very few of their problems and most have resigned themselves to creating their knowledge as they practice.

Sergiovanni (1995) identifies the task of the principal as making sense of messy situations, of which few are alike, to increase understanding and to discover and share meaning. Because of the complexity of school problems being addressed, a “craft-like science, within professional practice is characterized by interacting reflection and action and episodes. Professional knowledge is created and used by principals and teachers, think, reflect, decide, and do” (Sergiovanni, 1995, p. 32). Principals become students of their own practice; they are continuously reflective as they use informed theoretical intuition while engaging within the context of their practice (Sergiovanni, 1995).

The role of the principal is centered on solving problems; therefore, the internship is centered on solving problems. Interns learn the process for identifying the root cause of a problem and working with teams of people to become process problem solvers. A

cohort training is used to develop the skills of following the *Plan, Do, Study, and Act* problem solving process. These skills are then applied to individual school site problems to improve student achievement. For many of the interns, this meant an opportunity to leave a legacy of improved student learning. To highlight a few projects, interns were responsible for creating data rooms, Site Improvement Plans, and tutoring programs; improving student attendance and writing grants to upgrade technology resources were also a practice.

Developing leadership capacity should be ongoing for both new and veteran principals. Being in a safe environment with supportive peers allows principals to reflect on their practice; thus, creating a cohort environment provides the opportunity to identify problems and explore solutions. Veteran principals, as well as beginning principals, can benefit from a cohort, and the outcome can become a successful, collaborative partnership (Browne-Ferrigno & Muth, 2004).

Just as many states have mandated mentoring programs for new teachers, more than two-thirds of the states have put policies into place that call for assisting school administrators. There is an awareness of the importance of mentoring and the successful socialization and transition from being a teacher to the administrative role. Daresh (2001) sees the role of the mentor as the person that not only answers managerial questions, but also the person that prods and questions the protégée into identifying their own style of leadership based on their talents. School systems also benefit from mentoring programs by developing more leadership capacity, promoting continuous learning norms, and increasing employee esteem, enthusiasm, and production.

I chose to use adult learning theory as my lens to view both my experience as the director and the intern's experience in the internship. This decision was due to the continuous mentor and intern interaction, the necessity of learning such a complex job in context, and the impact of reflective practice that is so important for incessant improvement. Knight, Sheets, and Young (2005) note, "Continuous learning and growth require reflection and an interconnected relationship among two or more people with an understanding of adult learner needs" (p. 2). Many school districts do not formalize this process and leave it to chance; this also leaves to chance the success of the novice principal and negates the support that is necessary for continuous leadership growth.

## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODOLOGY

This study is a reflection on the lived experience of individuals and the director of a yearlong embedded principal internship. To gain knowledge of this phenomenon, Constructivism a psychological theory of knowledge was identified from the philosophical branch, Epistemology. Constructivism supports the theory that humans construct knowledge and meaning from their experiences and identified with the participants developmental internship process.

Phenomenology, the chosen theoretical perspective best informed the philosophical stance for my methodology and provided the essential meaning of the internship experience, both individually and as a group practice. It answers the question; what is the essence of the lived experience for the individual and the group? The experience was described by the interns, explicated and interpreted by the researcher, the director and the interns as co-researchers.

In this research, I used heuristic methodology to reflect and develop the voice of the Leadership Development Director in the role and responsibility of developing interns to become principals that can improve student achievement. I interviewed interns with questions that correlate with adult learning theory used to create the City Leadership Challenge Internship. This internship was funded by the Department of Education to support strategic leadership development. In this chapter, I explain why I chose heuristic methodology and identify the process and phases of the Clark Moustakas research method. I also describe the participants and how I collected and evaluated the data.

### *Voices in the Study*

The focus of this chapter is to study the design, methodology, and application of heuristic research for the purpose of using this method to describe an internship from the perspective of the intern and Director of Leadership Development. It is important for me to embrace my own experience and insight into this experience as the director of a new program; I have spent many hours analyzing my own decision making and choices in this new leadership position. I want to incorporate the voices of others who have participated in the internship into this dialogue and include them as part of this research project; these voices will come from interns that were chosen to implement a new district initiative to replenish departing principal leadership. In doing so, I hope to find a greater personal understanding and perhaps offer insights that might add to the conversations related to the idea of principal internships that focus on student achievement.

The historical leadership framework was critical in identifying the significance of supporting and developing leadership capacity and its relationship to improving student achievement. In order for principals to be successful in autonomous school settings, it is important that they have a supportive framework to build their capacity by participating in a “hands-on,” full-time internship before acquiring a principalship. The literature reveals, “there are still large gaps in the research on the role of principals and support mechanisms in the relative success or failure to improve student outcomes” (Rodriguez & Hovde, 2002, p. 26).

The theory review on developing adult learners remains in the staging process. Adult developmental and learning theory is still in its initial format and provides a mosaic framework to choose from for learning facilitators. New research is only now beginning

to be initiated and collected from formal, principal internship programs. A preliminary collection of student achievement data based on principal leadership developed in formal internships has recently been initiated. As a new program director in August 2007, I completed a grant proposal extension. This proposal recommended a mixed methodology study to identify the positive impact of full-time internships on student achievement where interns had been placed in school leadership roles upon completion of the City Leadership Challenge internship model. It is my hope that the acceptance of that proposal and research results will lend credibility to the importance of formal internships in developing strong instructional transformational/distributive leaders.

The limitations of this study are the single setting and the duration of the study. The intern participants are part of only one program that takes place in a small, urban district of 42,000 students in attendance at 88 school sites. This study is based on twelve months of data and participants in the initial internship cohort. Due to my background in Elementary Education, the interns I chose as participants were interns with kindergarten through eighth grade experience. This eliminated using secondary interns but credits my experiential background. I limited the number of participants due to the extensive, heuristic, interview process. I chose both male and female intern participants, and the race and culture of the participants is reflective of our current district leadership.

My role of Director of Leadership Development is a part of the City Leadership Challenge grant of 2005. This position, as part of the United States Department of Education Leadership Grant, is responsible for initiating or revamping a four-tier “grow your own” principal leadership development program. The grant is a multi-year opportunity to develop teacher leaders, strengthen the instructional leadership of assistant

principals, expand the aspiring principals' academy, and develop a year-long, paid, principal internship.

The literature review was critical for identifying the changing and challenging role of today's principal and the current trends that support and build leadership competency. Michael Fullan identifies leadership development in this decade as important as learning Standards were in the 1990s. (Fullan, 2003) In his book, *The Moral Imperative to School Leadership*, Fullan identifies two barriers to the development of the principalship: "neglect of leadership succession and limited investment to leadership development" (2003, p. 17). Currently, as the Director of Leadership Development, the area that is of particular interest to me is Tier III of the City Leadership Challenge grant—a succession plan of learning in context in a principal internship lasting one year.

Listening to the voice of interns placed in school site leadership capacities to improve student learning is an opportunity to contribute to research and existing knowledge and to improve induction programs into educational administration. Allowing my own voice to be a part of this process is the reason that the heuristic design method is a good choice for my research; this method will honor my use of reflective practice for my continuous understanding and growth as a leader.

I identify with heuristic methodology as a practitioner's design technique.

It respects the practitioner's inner voice, reflective process, tacit knowledge, and learning in context. It also allows the researcher's voice and experiences to be expressed yet establishes the boundaries and format for collecting and evaluating data. Heuristic methodology parallels the



design of the City Leadership Challenge internship and values adult developmental and learning theory.

Serving in a new leadership position has heightened my awareness of my surroundings and interactions. As I reflected with a colleague about my initial steps in stretching to a new role, I shared that I too feel like an intern. Moustakas sees these new beginnings as opportunities to value one's own experience. "In heuristics, an unshakable connection exists between what is out there, in its appearance and reality, and what is within me in reflective thought, feeling, and awareness" (Moustakas, 1990, p. 12). By using this process, I will better understand the experiences in which I am charged to lead.

Self-reflection and dialogue with colleagues are important practices in creating an environment that sustains leadership and school improvement. The collective inquiry of reflective practice is an engaging piece of the internship program and enables the mentor, leadership director, and intern to think and rethink decisions and better ways to lead. Interns reflect through their portfolio journaling and dialoguing with coaches, mentors, and other cohort members. Lambert (2003) identifies this self and collective understanding as an important feature of her new framework for school improvement.

#### *Heuristic Research Methodology*

The heuristic research method respects the human experience of looking inward to discover meaning. The word heuristic originally came from the Greek word, *heuriskein* meaning "to discover." Moustakas (1990) refers to this methodology as an internal process that is designed to help a person derive meaning from an experience and then develop a process to further probe and evaluate the experience. This process often leads the researcher to new realizations and personal growth. "Emphasis on the

investigator's internal frame of reference, intuition, and indwelling lies at the heart of heuristic inquiry" (Moustakas, 1990, p. 12).

Using this methodology places my voice within the research context and provides me the opportunity to continually evaluate the inner workings of the internship and creates a deeper understanding of this experience. I do not think as a practitioner that any other methodology will provide this kind of holistic comprehension. "The self of the researcher is present throughout the process and, while understanding the phenomenon with increasing depth, the researcher also experiences growing self-awareness and self-knowledge" (Moustakas, 1990, p. 9).

Each mentor and intern relationship is its own, individual story in the making. By using the heuristic process and looking into these stories or data, I captured the meaning and commonality of this unique human experience. I understood the many human interactions that provided the backdrop of an internship and identified commonalities in these experiences that can be shared to ensure a successful experience for future internships. Douglas and Moustakas (1985, p. 42) described heuristics as being concerned with meanings instead of measurement, with the essence of the experience not the appearance, and with the quality of the experience not the quantity of a behavior. Because each mentor and intern is unique and each relationship is comprised of human diversity, the results of this exploration will not be captured in measurement or quantity, but rather for meaning and understanding.

### *Participants*

Ten interns were chosen by District leadership to have a yearlong paid internship. The four intern participants that were a part of my research interviews were recorded,

transcribed, validated, analyzed, and coded. Participants as co-researchers were interviewed for clarification during the process to consciously establish trends or patterns in the interviews to pursue effective program strategies and to understand which ones have the reverse effect. The ten interns started their internship by developing and leading the District's summer school programs. Eventually, they were placed in elementary and secondary "high needs" schools. A high need school is a school that has a high percentage (69% or above that meet the requirements for free lunch) of students from poverty and achievement scores in need of improvement (below the state mandated cut scores) based on secondary or elementary state End-of Instruction tests.

From the original ten interns, I chose four to interview. Those chosen were first to be placed in school leadership positions following their internship. Eighty-six percent of the total numbers of interns in the program were placed in District leadership positions at the end of the internship.

Three of the research intern participants were female and three had been placed in the principalship. The percentage of research intern participants that were minority and of male gender matched the percentages in the total internship. One intern was a minority (25 percent of the total internship program) and one intern is currently an assistant principal in the District's largest elementary site. The average age of the research participant interns was 43.

I chose only to highlight participants that were placed in elementary leadership positions upon the completion of their internship. From this point forward, (the Director of Leadership Development) I was the primary researcher, and the participants in the research were co-researchers, true to heuristic methodology.

All of the participant interns and myself, Director of Leadership Development, are employed with City Public Schools (pseudonym). City Public Schools is a K-12 urban district with a 43,000-student population. There are 59 elementary sites and 21 secondary sites and fourteen schools are on the state's Schools in Need of Improvement list. The interviews were recorded, transcribed, validated, analyzed, and coded. Participants as co-researchers are interviewed for clarification during the process to consciously establish trends or patterns in the interviews to pursue effective program strategies and determine which ones have the reverse effect.

### *Application of the Methodology to the Internship*

When I was reassigned and in transition from a principalship to Director of Leadership Development, my initial response was to immerse myself into the City Leadership Grant proposal and to research other programs that are similar to the City Public Schools' grant. I also enrolled in a new workshop being given by the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), which was training to prepare mentors for guiding interns in a competency-based internship. This was the SREB's maiden training to introduce the module as a researched best practice for improving school leadership and ultimately, student achievement. It was during this initial training that I revisited my experiences as a mentor and looked inward to assess my previous opportunities to develop future leaders; this was a critical time of self-reflection. This is what Moustakas identifies as phase one of heuristic research—the *initial engagement*. It is during this phase that the researcher encounters her own story and relationship to a pending quest. It is during this phase that a need for knowing or question is formed (Moustakas, 1990, p. 27).

The questions that developed and continued to persist were how do districts design effective, principal, internship programs for aspiring school leaders and what are the components of this model? This unique experience must create leaders that can create a professional, learning community that works together to improve student achievement.

These initial experiences only increased my appetite to better understand this human experience and the development of the internship process. My search for information and my dialogue with those experiencing a mentor relationship in other fields were examined in search of insight. I created an experience for the District's Leadership initial meeting, "Charge" session to begin a new school year, which would provide all principals with insight into being an intern or assistant principal. I became obsessed with finding the right delivery to make a positive, initial impact on leaders so they would realize that they have a huge responsibility for the future of the district's leadership. This evolved into a concrete example of mentoring by principals: learning the "Electric Slide" dance moves to be performed in front of peers. This entertaining experience has also created a point of conversation to engage all administrators in the responsibility of building leadership capacity in the district. This engaging full concentration phase of Moustakas research is properly named Immersion and is a great description of my captivation of the topic during the beginning of my new job.

During a weekend training to teach interns and aspirants (Tier II, aspiring principal program) the intricacies of developing a positive school culture, I reflected on my past experiences as a principal. At the same time, I was reflecting on the culture of developing this group of future leaders by helping them reflect and connect to their tacit

knowledge and build the bridge to intuition. How do I help interns excavate what they “think they see or know” and continue their search for patterns or clues that help them to construct understanding? “The power of heuristic inquiry lies in its potential for disclosing the truth. Through exhaustive self search, dialogues with others, and creative depictions of experiences, a comprehensive knowledge is created...” (Douglass & Moustakas, 1985, p. 40).

During this period of time, professionally I was experiencing a huge learning curve. Fortunately, my supervisor was mentoring me in my new position. He was proficient at scaffolding my knowledge and modeling necessary leadership skills. Modeling a collaborative approach with other District leadership and using current District principals to support training and provide ownership of the model itself. His skill in working with federal grants was important to maintain a positive relationship and manage government regulations. All of these dynamics seemed to be a part of my total captivation with this research methodology and its parallelism with creating an internship in the initial immersion step in the heuristic process.

The next phase of heuristic research, *Incubation*, is an opportunity for tacit knowledge and intuition to develop. It is the time for the researcher to step away from the intensity of immersion and let the mind reflect and connect to tacit understanding. It is during this time that knowledge becomes clear. “...the heuristic researcher through the incubation process gives birth to new understanding or prospectively reveals additional qualities of the phenomenon...” (Moustakas, 1990, p. 29). This new knowledge or connection evolves into the illumination process. Because the researcher has been open

to tacit knowledge and intuition new knowledge can occur; misunderstandings are corrected; the synthesis of pieces of knowledge can come together (1990, pp. 29-30).

It was during this *Incubation* phase that I started to be more comfortable in my new leadership role. I saw the cycle I was experiencing and could laugh about being both an “intern and a mentor,” and I began to enjoy the process. I also was able to reflect on my leadership growth over many years and identify many different people and experiences that had helped me in my growth and development as a leader. There would be many *Incubation* phases to come as I would study and look for themes in intern interviews, portfolios, and my field notes.

The themes or new layers my co-researchers and I discovered and illuminated in the prior phases are clarified in the *Explication* phase. This is the refinement stage of this research process. The researcher, using their own frames of reference and specifically the concepts of focusing and indwelling, now polishes the themes that come out of *Illumination*. “... concentrated attention is given to creating an inward space and discovering nuances, textures, and constituents of the phenomenon...” (Moustakas, 1990, p. 31). Through this internal focusing and self-dialogue, finite details are clarified and explained, and the researcher has gained an insight to the truth based on their tacit dimension and inner alertness. “Tacit knowing operates behind the scenes, giving birth to the hunches and vague, formless insight that characterize heuristic discovery” (Douglass & Moustakas, 1985, p. 49). When all the details are mined and the researcher is thoroughly familiar with all of the data, it is time to fuse all this information into a creative *Synthesis*. “This usually takes the form of a narrative depiction utilizing verbatim material and examples, but it may be expressed as a poem, story, drawing,

painting or by other creative forum” (Moustakas, 1990, p. 32). Very often, this creative synthesis comes after a meditative period, a time for reflection on the question and the topic, a time for reaching into the tacit dimension and intuition (1990, p. 32). “*Synthesis* goes beyond distillation of themes and patterns. In *synthesis*, the searcher is challenged to generate a new reality, a new monolithic significance that embodies the essence of the heuristic truth” (Douglass & Moustakas, 1985, p. 52).

The heuristic researcher is constantly reflecting and appraising the data to verify that the explanation of the experience is a valid portrayal of the experience being examined. This active shaping of an experience is what the researcher performs in the pursuit of knowledge. “This shaping or integrating I hold to be the great and indispensable tacit power by which all knowledge is discovered” (Polanyi, 1966, p. 6). This knowledge is ultimately based on the researcher’s pursuit of analyzing data based on their personal judgment. This knowledge or truth is verified by analyzing the meanings resulting from continuous reflection with the research participants. The primary researcher shares the artifacts and interviews with the co-research participants to make sure that the data is accurate and expresses essential qualities and meaning of the experience and creates participant validation (Moustakas, 1990, p. 34).

In my current leadership assignment, I have been on a learning curve to design and implement a new program and work with a federal grant for the first time. This initial experience has been a humbling one and one of heightened intensity. The experience refreshes my awareness of what it feels like to learn something new and to analyze personal growth. This intense reflective period of my life is the reason why I have been compelled to use the qualities of heuristic inquiry for my methodology design.



Both the intern and the mentor go through this new encounter in relationship development allowing both individuals to learn and grow. In any other qualitative research, it would have required me to detach from this experience to study the phenomenon. In heuristic design, I can be a part of the design, emphasize my connection to the phenomenon, and search for the personal meanings and the significance of the people involved in the lived experience. “In heuristics the research participants remain visible in the examination of the data and continue to be portrayed as the whole person” (Moustakas, 1990, p. 39).

My goal as the primary researcher was to reconstruct the experience from those who are experiencing the phenomenon. The usual way of collecting data was through interview or dialogue with the contributors. This dialogue was based on a quest by the researcher to discover or clarify an intriguing topic, problem, or curiosity that all contributors have a commitment to know and understand. This methodology respects learning in context, reflective practice, and tacit knowing, and it best represented my voice as a researcher and a leader committed to creating a quality opportunity for educating future school leaders.

### *Grounded Theory*

I used the techniques of grounded theory as a method that works well with the heuristic design. The basis of this theory advocates the development of new theories from research grounded in data instead of inferring testable hypotheses from existing theories. This qualitative theory is based on Glaser and Strauss’s systematic methods and book, *The Discovery of Grounded Theory* (1967). These systematic strategies provided qualitative researchers with practical guidelines and analysis that could produce theory.

“A well-constructed grounded theory will meet its four most central criteria: fit, work, relevance, and modifiability” (Glaser, 1992, p. 15). It is a study of how people interact with an experience. The researcher collects data, primarily from multiple interviews and field notes. This theory is based on a social process that is occurring between people. . My goal was not to create a new theory, but the grounded theory process helped to answer the questions of “How do districts design effective principal internship programs for aspiring school leaders” and “What are the components of this model?”

## CHAPTER FOUR

### PRESENTING THE DATA

I was excited to start researching and interviewing my co-researcher interns; this excitement about reviewing the process and the product design model for City Public Schools internship was not unfounded. The structured method of inquiry and interpretation of their reflections and perceptions of the internship validated and challenged the internship program I designed. Creswell's (1998) definition of qualitative research identifies the multiple dimensions and complexity of an inquiry, "a process of understanding based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry, which explores a social or human problem. The researcher builds a complex, holistic picture, analyzes words, reports detailed views of informants, and conducts the study in a natural setting" (p. 15). The intern co-researchers, *Challenged, Enthusiastic, Engage, and Structured* also showed interest and excitement about building knowledge about a new District program and its design development.

The centerpiece of this research is the development of a design framework about how best to implement a successful internship. Interviews and analysis of the data collected was performed in accordance to the custom of grounded theory and heuristic methodology. Heuristic methodology was chosen by the Internship Director because of the personal inquiry approach and the methodology's respect for reflective practice as part of the process. Grounded theory was chosen because the grounded theory components work in unison with the heuristic phases. The components add structure and practical guidelines to how people interact with an experience; the principal internship (See Figure 4, Appendix A).

Interviews were informal and usually took on the form of a dialogue with the co-research participants and continual self-dialogue. An initial question turned into a natural disclosing and conversation with me, the primary researcher. After each interview and transcription, the researcher validated the findings with the intern co-researchers, and they studied the responses for open coding initial categories of information about the phenomenon by sectioning information categories. Questions and responses spontaneously shared in one dialogue were used to initiate feedback with other co-researchers to make sure all fields of information had been saturated. *Co-researcher, Enthusiastic* commented that, “I feel like a research partner...I can’t wait to get to visit with you each time.” A constant review of the collected data and reflection by the researcher provided insight in processing the data so that additional participant questioning would allow more comprehensive results.

#### *Illumination from Dialogue*

As I played and replayed the dialogue audiotapes from each participant, dialogue identifiable themes emerged. These themes were illuminated in the description of each intern’s contextual practice. Each participant’s internship experience took on a unique persona of its own. The relationship or lack of a relationship between the mentor and intern and the leadership model that was present in each context created an exclusive phenomenon. The individual participant portraits to follow depict the positive and negatives of the over-all internship program and have provided an additional opportunity for me, the director and researcher, to compare and contrast internships and identify themes. “The illumination process may be an awakening to new constituents of the experience, thus adding new dimensions of knowledge. Illumination may involve

corrections of distorted understandings or disclosure of hidden meanings” (1990, Moustakas, p. 29).

### *Intern Structured*

*Intern Structured* benefited from connecting with more than one mentor. As an initial grant intern, this internship began in the late spring then continued into the summer planning and overseeing summer school; it was followed by two more mentor and intern experiences during the following school year.

I think that the whole internship was a great experience for me. It was a wonderful growth opportunity and an exceptional chance to get to see and work with a number of leadership styles. I don't think reading a book, going to class, or attending any seminar can provide this kind of experience and/or depth of knowledge that this opportunity provided. The principals I worked with had similarities, but different personalities dealt differently with many situations, by the book, but with their own style.

*(Structured)*

Each intern in the program brought with them a myriad prior experiences. All of the interns were teacher leaders in their former school settings. *Structured* felt valued and appreciated for acquired prior knowledge,

I think everyone I worked with allowed me in but did not try to make me just like them; they respected what I was bringing to the table. I was allowed to contribute and felt good about my contributions in every one of my situations. No one put up any kind of guard, and all my mentors were inclusive.

Supportive and open mentors are key to the growth of interns. Mentors need to be comfortable with their own uniqueness and not feel threatened by talented leaders-to-be.

This kind of acceptance can bring continued growth for both mentor and intern.

*Structured* reminisced,

Even when I worked with you [director] at summer school and you were interviewing for a staff position for the next year, you allowed me to sit in and actively participate in the process. What a growth opportunity, and it made me feel good to be asked and asked for my opinion.

Acceptance allows the intern to identify and build on their strengths and develop an attitude of leaders valuing continuous improvement. *Structured* proudly shared,

I eventually got to contribute or run staff meetings. To me, that is a huge opportunity and a privilege; my mentor principal would allow me to contribute and facilitate in the development of the staff. It was a growth opportunity for me. Initially, I was not comfortable speaking in front of people, especially in a large group, but each time I did staff communication, I got better at it. I got more comfortable and more confident.

Initially, in most internships, as in this one, the physical proximity between mentor and intern is very close. This physical proximity is important for the intern to identify parameters and for the mentor to support the transition from teacher to administrator. This transition is evident in *Structured's* statement,

Each situation was a little different...though I did stick with and shadow my mentor closely in the beginning until I developed a relationship...I

didn't want to step on any toes or overstep my boundaries. It is strange; I am not a principal, yet I am not a teacher. I stuck close...it could have been a safety net. Then after a while, it was like I wanted to get out on my own, 'drive without my parents.' I started doing my walk-throughs by myself...dialoguing with teachers by myself...letting them know what I had to offer.

This intern was given an unusual opportunity the last quarter of the internship to cover for a principal out on medical leave. Moving into an interim principalship brought more development and confidence. Many phone calls and reflective conversations occurred with this next step toward leadership independence.

#### *Intern Enthusiastic*

Usually when one thinks of a mentor-intern relationship, the picture that comes to mind is an older, wiser mentor nurturing and supporting a young, fledgling intern. The wise and supportive existed in this relationship, but the older/younger dynamic was reversed. This mentor/intern relationship became a dynamic team that worked closely together to create a professional learning community in a high-need, high-risk school that was on the school improvement list. *Enthusiastic* relays gratitude for this opportunity, "Through the whole experience, I got to observe a great leadership style...to observe a building that was at risk...to see how it was turned around. I got to work together (with my mentor) to build a school culture...we worked together as a team to do that..." The very collaborative style of this mentor created a dual mentorship as each person in this relationship grew from the internship and their dynamic relationship.

A strong relationship was not only the key to this internship, but also it was the means to a systemic change in the school culture. *Enthusiastic* acknowledges the importance of this strong rapport,

I had such a great experience...my mentor gave me every opportunity. We went to conferences together...she introduced me to people and contacts...she made me a part of everything...planning, scheduling, curriculum, child study team, discipline, conferencing with teachers. When we developed a trust with one another, she gave me a lot more responsibilities. When we became more of a team, she could depend on me to follow through. We knew each other's strengths and weaknesses, and we built on that; we complemented each other.

The mentor in this internship was a leader that created and supported a school of leaders. Leading by example, opportunity, and inclusion created a culture of high expectations and professionalism. *Enthusiastic* was involved all aspects of leadership and management:

I also benefited from watching and practicing the importance of developing a relationship with the staff...parents and community. I got to sit in on employee conferences and learn how to supervise employees in a very professional way. They weren't doing what was expected, and she gave them tips for improvement, and I saw how she monitored to see that her expectations were carried out; I would not have had this opportunity to learn anywhere else. They don't teach you that in college you have to see it in action.



The creation of a school-wide, professional learning community sets the tone for not only this internship but also the growth of all students and adults that reside within the school. Interns were encouraged to analyze, participate in, and lead school professional learning communities. *Enthusiastic* shares the significance of this understanding, “I got to see the importance of the school culture and building a professional learning community; professional learning communities have to be on going so teachers are learning and everyone is developing their skills.” The center to this professional learning community was data driven instruction and assessment; this intern was immersed in this school’s improvement process:

Through the whole process, I learned a lot about research, and I learned the importance of using data for school improvement. I learned how to use the data effectively. I had heard about school improvement through administrative classes, but actually doing it...it has made a lasting impression...making spreadsheets and working with the data.

This dynamic internship proved to be not just a rewarding internship; this relationship also created significant gains for student learning. This professional learning community received district, state, and national acclaim. This school community was identified as a National Title I School of Distinction and received the State Academic Achievement Award.

#### *Intern Engaged*

There are many studies that are proponents of matching genders in mentoring relationships. This match rule was broken with a successful result as share by *Engaged*,

I continue to have my mentor as a resource...I talk to him...I call him several times a month...I feel very comfortable in picking up the phone and still connecting to him...I have connected with him on the way to work in the mornings...we both have a long drive and I can ask him anything and he is still there to help me.

This seasoned administrator encouraged an anxious intern to make the transition from teacher leader to a leader of leaders. *Engaged* felt supported and safe,

I also like being able to try new ideas. My mentor would allow me to come up with an idea or solution then he would say, 'lets try it' and then we would spend time talking about why it did or didn't work and then we would go back and do something a little differently...having that opportunity to have trial and error last year was great.

Being able to take risks in this type of supportive environment and reflect on the results is the kind of growth process that helps future school leaders to become change leaders and to eventually support teacher leaders and professional learning communities in their own buildings.

A good sign of a strong internship is when the mentor is learning as much if not more than the intern. Strong, reflective practices as part of the process impacts both participants. This mentor often shared with me (director) the value of having this reflective opportunity and shared how much he had learned from the experience. In this passage, *Engaged* identifies with the mutual respect created in this internship,

Of course, the key piece to my internship was having the mentor and the supervising administrator. My intern mentor was very wise and I am

comfortable about asking him anything. He had lots of experience and I feel that he became a friend, as well as an administrator. We shared a mutual respect...he always made me feel comfortable...there was no stupid question...it was a good match!

This internship was built on initiating developmental, learning opportunities and building on successes. This wise mentor provided incremental learning and leading projects that allowed *Engaged* to “try-on” leadership projects that impacted student achievement, “I think I brought some fresh ideas to my internship...everyone was so focused on testing and getting off the list they couldn’t see what was going on around them...I think I brought a fresh perspective.” *Engaged* is encouraged to try out leadership that improves student achievement,

I got to start a Professional Learning Community for new teachers as an intern. You had reinforced the importance of that concept. I started the new teacher/ mentor Professional Learning Community and that was great. We worked together on building support for the new teachers. I got the Harry Wong videos and we reviewed those together...that turned out good and everyone benefited, mentors and new teachers.

We have learned that doctors, teachers, lawyers, and other professionals are impacted by the chance to “practice” under the guidance of a mentor leader. It is important for districts and states to realize the importance of this process for school administrators. It is apparent in this quote that *Engaged* supports practice in context for future administrators:

The internship was like student teaching, applying the methodology of what you learned...learning the ropes, the opportunity to practice, learning the “lay of the land” putting what you learned in college into practice...applying what you learned in graduate school to real world application...trying out the things that I read about or the professor talked about to see if theory worked.

### *Intern Challenged*

At the outset, I was surprised when this co-researcher said that the portfolio was one of the most important pieces of the internship. How could an inert object rank as the high point of this experience? What this internship lacked that the others had was the dynamic, mentor-intern relationship experienced in the other settings. The importance of the portfolio or Competencies and Indicators is shared by *Challenged*:

Right off, the most beneficial for me was the portfolio. (Leadership) is vast, so vast and it covers so many different areas. Left to my own devices, I may not have put my brain on those particular areas...so, it forced me to think along those lines of the leadership competencies.

The portfolio was divided into 13 competencies of principal leadership identified to improve student achievement, and 32 indicators were used as descriptors. Due to the lack of mentor support, this became the guidebook for this intern to seek out his own experiences and create opportunities to turn this internship into a positive growth practice.

*Challenged* was lucky to experience a short-term leadership practice managing summer school in another setting and was able to become familiar with the observation,

participation, and lead process that is important for growth. A constructivist, summer experience is remembered by *Challenged*,

Luckily, I was paired with someone that was very strong with me at first and then really fully understood that at some point it was suppose to be me in the role. Eventually, she pulled back and just got out of the way. She had that kind of trust...it was a signal to me that it's all yours and when a person walked in asked for the principal...I was that person. I got a real valuable experience.

Fortunately, *Challenged* had many prior experiences as a teacher leader and manager plus an amiable personality and perseverance; *Challenged* created a plan using the internship's competencies, descriptors, and reflection as an opportunity to grow her own leadership potential. Instructional leadership became her focus, and teachers in the building were receptive to *Challenged's* interactions and support:

Because I had directions from the program competencies and indicators, I could say 'I need your help to fill in these blanks' [to the mentor] and when that didn't happen, I found ways to strike out and fill them in myself. I went out to the teaching teams and just asked if I could do professional development with them on say "vision or benchmark data"...they actually appreciated were appreciative.

This excerpt describes interactions with the faculty that I observed. This intern's initiative created an interactive, professional learning community; the staff began to seek her talents for instructional support. The internship cohort and the Principal Academy

(step one in training aspiring teacher leaders interested in the principalship) also used his talents in supervision to train other interns and aspirants in the use of cognitive coaching.

This internship was compromised due to the lack of a relationship being developed because this principal mentor was new at this school and also was absent due to health problems.

I did make an attempt one time to sit down and said...we really need to discuss my role here. Then that got all blurred because the principal was out on leave for awhile. It was a tough place to be, but I think I made the most of it. I became a self made leader...I went to all the teams and became the professional development leader.

This kind of tenacity has supported this intern as a first year principal. *Challenged* shares a payoff,

Everything we talked about in Professional Learning Community's starting with "school vision" I got to do this year in the first four days with my own teachers. The web site that I found to share with my teams last year about motivation; I am using this year and the *TeachFirst Walk-Throughs* I used last year; those stimulated conversations with the staff and I now use those same walk-throughs in my principalship with total confidence.

It is important as co-researchers that we identified the truth of our experience, so collected data was analyzed for themes and a synthesis of positive and negative topics that merged to set standards and values for future internships. In the explication phase using member checks, it is the job of the researcher to clarify and expound on the major

components of the experience in detail. As the primary researcher, I noted the positive components to replicate in future internships and the negative components to eliminate or refine.

CHAPTER FIVE  
ANALYZING THE DATA

Augmenting my ongoing relationship with the interns, I spent many hours listening to the intern interview tapes during the time that I was initially transcribing them. As I listened and copied each intern’s tapes, I begin to hear patterns emerging and overlapping themes making themselves known in my initial coding stage. To make sure I was not missing any data, the co-research participants and I concurred on the themes I heard across the four interviews. These themes came from informal questioning and dialoguing with each of the four interns about the positive and negative experiences from their internship.

Themes evolved with each intern during the initial interview or in subsequent interviews for clarity and saturation. To make sure that we were not missing any important data related to this phenomenon, we reviewed the final open-coding themes. The chart below shares the information that was collected in this process and also shows the important strands of each theme by using Axial Coding. The themes in blue are the negative components noted by the interns.

Figure 1: Explication from Dialogue

Open-Coding Themes	Axial Coding Themes
Cohort	Peer Relationships Support System Socialization Reflection Empowerment by sharing Lack of interaction with District leadership
Learning in Context	Making sense of theory in context Observing then participating in leadership actions



	<p>Learn by doing          Making mistakes, correction, reflection          Creates a depth of knowledge          Learn to be proactive instead of reactive          Constructivism – Graduated Leadership          Responsibilities</p>
Mentor	<p>Resource          Reflection          Inclusive – Socialization and transition          Supportive of risk taking          Relationship and trust          Respect of Intern Prior Knowledge          Experiencing multiple Leadership Styles          Non-inclusive mentor</p>
Competencies and Indicators	<p>Researched resource          Reflection          Standards for guidance and direction          Student Achievement focus          Personal Growth          Observe, Participate, Lead-Constructivism          Portfolio - Time Consuming</p>
Problem Solving Skills	<p>Student Achievement Projects          Reflection – “Plan, Do, Study, Act”          Competencies and Indicators          Risk taking          Proactive leadership          Developing Instructional leadership</p>
Professional Learning Community	<p>Professional Development          Staff Relationships          Setting high expectations          Building Capacity in others          Curriculum and Resources          Data Driven Instruction          Instructional leadership          Lack of Successful Program Observation</p>
Organization and Management	<p>Relationships          School Culture          Communication          Inclusion          Community Connections          Lack of opportunity to experience diversity</p>

\*Note: The themes in blue above are the negative components identified by the intern co-researchers.

## *Learning in Context*

My opening question about the positive and negative aspects of the internship quickly drew positive responses connected to learning in context with the focus on “learning by doing.” Most of the interns found this experience to be very rewarding and the centerpiece of their growth as shared in this quote about the balance of theory and learning in context from *Engaged*, “I don’t think reading a book, going to class, or attending any seminar can provide this kind of experience and or wealth of knowledge that this opportunity provided.” This part of the internship program provides participants a constructivist opportunity to observe, participate, lead, and reflect.

Each intern came into the program as an established teacher leader and making the shift to administration needed to be a supportive process as identified by *Challenged*,

The internship was like student teaching, applying the methodology of what you learned... applying what you learned in graduate school to real world application...trying out the things that you read about or the professor talked about to see if theory worked.

This leadership learning process supports success and allows interns to build from a constructivist experience and supports the transfer of knowledge learned into their next step as a principal leader. This supportive environment to “try-on” the process of learning to lead has *Enthusiastic* disclosing,

I also like being able to try new ideas; my mentor would allow me to come up with a student achievement project then he would say lets try it. Then we would spend time talking about why it did or didn’t work and then we would go back and do something a little differently.

### *Intern Cohort*

As the leader of the cohort internship, I was surprised to see how quickly this group of people became connected to one another. We met approximately three times a month for professional development modules and for cohort report-outs or sharing. This was not an easy schedule due to the fact that it was all after school hours, and most interns were experiencing an increased contract day due to their pseudo-administrative role. In spite of this strain on their time, it afforded them the opportunity to become very close and dependent on one another as shared in this statement from *Enthusiastic*,

I think that the networking by all of us doing the internship together has been very valuable. We are able to talk through decisions and ask questions that we might feel dumb in asking someone else. We can ask each other because we created this bond and trust in the internship. We are each other's support system...I think most of us feel very close.

When I, the Project Director, enter a District leadership meeting, I often saw the intern cohort huddled together; checking in with one another, and I think many of them are connected on speed-dial as a resource as *Engaged* references,

One of the most important opportunities was to meet and network with other people going through this same experience to share ideas and get their reflections and to be able to call them today for the same purpose...to get advice from them when I need it. I use my network I developed through the intern program...my cohort and my mentor and you. If I have a problem or a question I feel comfortable calling...it gives you that safety

net to help you out. I felt safe in my internship...there is someone out there experiencing something the same as you.

### *Portfolio and Competencies*

Knowing the interns' personalities much better today, I can testify that their response, or lack of response, when I handed out the 13 competencies and 32 indicators to be addressed in their internship and portfolio in our first cohort meeting was either due to shock or initial gratitude for being chosen to be in the program. They were very "polite" in accepting their responsibility to engage in an on-the-job practice, research, and reflection about each competency and how these competencies impact student achievement and their growth as an instructional leader.

Many discussions would follow about product expectations for their portfolio and the purpose of this part of the internship. To say the least, it was the dreaded aspect of the internship initially for each of them, but this dread turned into an appreciation as referenced by *Engaged*,

I will always have my portfolio as a resource...at this time last year we were probably cursing you, but, I know I can turn to it as a reference. It was Spring Break this time last year that I worked so hard on my portfolio and the reflections, but I have gone back and used all the artifacts, and research that we gathered for each competency and I have used them this year in my new assignment.

For one intern who was not having a supportive mentorship, this internship assignment was the guidance and support needed to create a productive experience. The competencies are the backbone of the internship program; the interns due to their initial

excitement about being in the context of a new role do not always foresee this. To *Challenged*, who was not supported by an inclusive mentor, the importance of the competencies was extremely significant from the first day of the internship,

Right off, the most beneficial [aspect of the internship] for me was the portfolio; leadership is so vast, and it covers so many different areas...left to my own devices, I may not have put my brain on those particular areas...so, it forced me to think along leadership competencies that improve student achievement. ...Luckily, because I had directions from the program...I could say I need your help to fill in these blanks...and when that didn't happen...I found ways to strike out and fill them in myself.

Having competencies and indicators was also beneficial for me, the Project Director, to help identify an individual intern's learning gaps and needs. The competencies helped interns and mentors to stay focused on a program designed to build leaders focused on improving student achievement. Interns and mentors collaborated on a quarterly reflection instrument based on the competencies. This reflective tool identified gradual stages of development: a cognitive tool that identified the importance of interns observing, participating, and leading school improvement projects focused on improving student achievement.

### *Problem Solving Skills*

An important dynamic of the internship is the requirement for mentors to attend training prior to working with an intern. I used the training to identify the importance of maintaining standards or competencies for interns and assistant principals developing

leadership skills. A framework was shared with mentor principals which supports a constructivist approach to leadership growth by providing interns the opportunity to observe, participate, then lead projects that focus on improving student achievement. Another important aspect of developing future leaders was helping principals see the importance of reflective practice to develop instructional leaders. Being a leader and a leader-in-training is fast-paced; identifying projects that focus on student achievement help both the intern and mentor to not get lost in leadership management minutia. These projects supported risk taking in a safe setting, as well as mentor and intern collaboration prospects for growth as *Engaged* identifies,

I also like being able to try new ideas. My mentor allowed me to come up with a project idea...then he would say, 'lets try it' and then we would spend time talking about why it did or didn't work. After this discussion, we would go back and do something a little different...having the opportunity to have trial and error last year was great.

I often referred to these projects as legacy projects. For mentors, one of the negative aspects of the internship was investing time in training an intern that would be leaving at the end of the year. It was imperative that principals did not identify the intern as an additional allocation and crucial for interns and mentors to focus on projects that would positively impact future student achievement with or without having an intern in the building.

### *Mentor Relationship*

Whether the mentor relationship was positive or negative, this dynamic relationship drew the most attention in the interview responses and was the centerpiece of

the internship. All internships were located in schools with “high need” student populations, and all were *Schools in Need of Improvement* as identified by the No Child Left Behind Act. Three of the schools were elementary sites and one was a middle school. Three of the mentor principals averaged eight years of administrative experience, and one mentor was beginning his second administrative year. One of the four principal mentors was transitioning from being an elementary administrator to being a secondary school administrator.

One of the initial opportunities for the mentor was to help the intern transition from teacher leader to administrative leader. This socialization occurs in an evolution of experiences that is consciously supported by the mentor principal and remembered by *Enthusiastic*,

My mentor gave me every opportunity. We went to conferences together, she introduced me to people and contacts; she made me a part of everything; planning, scheduling, curriculum, child study team, discipline, and conferencing with teachers. When we developed a trust with one another she gave me a lot more responsibilities...we became more of a team.

The internships that were most successful were the mentor-intern matches that developed a mutual respect. Most mentors respected the talents of the interns and valued what they learned from the interaction. *Structured* acknowledges this support by the mentor,

I was allowed to participate and contribute...what I had to say was important.

Even when I worked with you at summer school and you were interviewing for a

staff position for the next year, you allowed me to sit in and actively participate in the process. What a growth opportunity, and it made me feel good to be asked and asked for my opinion.

A constant and significant role of the mentor is to be an observable resource (see Appendix A). The intern's first step in leadership growth was to observe leadership in action; therefore, the mentor became a model. The mentor models interactions with all parts of the school culture: students, teachers, parents, community, and the Professional Learning Community. Most of the interns were very impressed with their mentor's skills as a leader, and *Enthusiastic* was delighted to communicate,

Through the whole experience, I got to observe a great leadership style...to observe a building that was at risk...to see how it was turned around. I got to work together to build a school culture. We worked together as a team to do that...I got to see the importance of the school culture and building a Professional Learning Community. A Professional Learning Community has to be on going where the teachers are learning and everyone is developing their skills.

Many of the mentor principals acknowledged learning as much as the intern. This is due to sharing a reflective practice with the intern and allowing this process to be a part of their own professional development. Forming connective mentor relationships is shared in *Structured's* proud expression, "I think everyone I worked with allowed me in.... But, they did not try to make me just like them; they respected what I was bringing to the table. I was allowed to contribute and



felt good about my contributions in every one of my situations.”

Coupled by *Engaged's* comment,

Of course the key was having the mentor and the supervising director. My intern mentor was very wise and I am comfortable about asking him anything. He had lots of experience and I feel that he became a friend, as well as an administrator. We shared a mutual respect and grew...he always made me feel comfortable...there was no stupid question...it was a good match.

### *Professional Learning Communities*

The internship blueprint was based on leadership competencies focused on improving student achievement. This over-arching design theme was developed around the concept of interns observing, then participating, and finally, working as the leader of a Professional Learning Community. Most of the interns had numerous opportunities to study school data, to help write school improvement plans, to monitor, and to lead supportive, professional development. They worked hard to build professional relationships and use data to drive instruction and create support for improved teacher instruction. *Engaged's* reflection supports the awareness of the importance of building professional learning communities: “I got to see the importance of the school culture and building a professional learning community...(a community) that has to be on going where the teachers are learning and everyone is developing their skills.” The internship’s main goal is building capacity and continuous improvement as a school community and teacher community while growing as a leader.

### *Organization and Management*

A statement that interns have often heard from me, the Project Director, is, “You will never get to lead if you are not organized.” Being organized engages new leaders in the practice of planning ahead and problem solving to be proactive. Being proactive “sets up” your school for success. All interns are enrolled in a professional development series that develops their skills to create a positive school culture, to use data to identify and resolve problems, to guide instruction, and to develop a problem-solving model for continuous improvement. Interns keep a watchful eye on how their mentors develop relationships, create leadership teams, and communicate intentionally. *Enthusiastic* identifies the significance of these skills and how they impact student achievement, “I learned the importance of using data for school improvement. I learned there are a lot of ways to do things to get a positive result...not just one there are lots of options and you work to pick the right one for your school.” This intern also learned the importance of relationships and intentional communication, “I really learned more about dealing with parents and how to develop a relationship that can help when there is a problem.” Developing a positive school culture and incorporating structures to build leadership capacity in others will create many leaders within a school to respond to the needs of the learner and the learning community.

### *Improvements to the Internship Experience*

When I asked intern participants to identify parts of the program that were negative or could be improved, their comments were axially coded in blue in the Open Coding Themes. These quotations were axially coded in categories of behaviors described as (a) [Lack of interaction with District leadership](#), (b) [Opportunity to see](#)

multiple Leadership Styles, (c) Non-inclusive mentor, (d) Lack of Successful Program Observation, (e) Lack of opportunity to experience diversity, and (f) Portfolio length.

Overall, the interns struggled trying to identify negative components of the internship.

Additional elements were added when I refined our conversation to ask for improvements that would have impacted their job as a new principal. The listed negative elements for internship program improvement will be discussed in the next chapter. This discussion will include their negative impact on the internship and their bearing and relevance to adult learning theory.

## CHAPTER SIX

### CONCLUSION

From the research findings and regular and recurrent dialogue with the intern participants using the investigation format of Strauss and Corbin (2003), the interns and I, the Program Director, identified both positive and negative practices in the internship. This interactive dialogue was important to be able to process and answer the questions how do districts design effective principal internship programs for aspiring school leaders, and what are the components of this model?

#### *Components in Need of Improvement*

The negative components of the internship or areas to improve identified by the interns were statements that were made by more than one intern or a statement made by one that all interns concurred would improve this component make a positive impact. All of the interns agreed that the element that had the biggest impact on their internship was their mentor. Being placed with a mentor that was not inclusive would have made their yearlong experience less productive and would add great stress during this time set aside for exploration, learning, and leadership growth. This is a delicate situation; for the interns and their opportunity for growth to become more *self-directed*, they have to rely more on program competencies and receiving guidance from other leadership sources, personal reflection, leader shadowing, and individually designed, professional development.

A second internship element identified for consideration for constructive review was the decision to have only one mentor during the internship. In the interview process, this topic created much conversation. The interns had mixed emotions, especially if their

mentor/intern relationship was strong. Components considered are the numerous prior opportunities to observe leadership styles during their career and the amount of time that it takes to build a trusting working relationship with their mentor and staff. A discussion also ensued about the constructive leadership process of observing, participating, then leading. Developing student achievement projects also takes time to complete the Plan, Do, Study, and Act method. An important, initial, internship factor is to choose inclusive, collaborative leaders that want to work to develop new principals and help them with the socialization and transition process.

Three of the program improvement areas are related to interns and their experience or lack of experience by interning in only one context. The negative factors identified by observing and participating in only one school setting included missing the opportunity to work with different sizes of school populations and working with different cultures as well as some interns not experiencing successful, student achievement programs. District leaders placed the interns in schools with student populations that were identified as high risk for student failure. An intern being placed in schools with high-risk populations was a component of the federal grant funding the internship.

A variety of school contexts had one commonality: student populations with a high concentration of students coming from poverty households. All of the schools with internships had a free lunch rate of above 80%. Developing leadership in an urban setting calls for principals that have experience in working with students that come from poverty. Fortunately, in City Public Schools, there are many schools at both elementary and secondary levels that have successful programs that support students from poverty to attain high academic achievement. It is important in the initial assignment that interns

are placed where they can observe and participate in a model Professional Learning Community (DuFour, 2004) in which educators work together to achieve their collective purpose of learning for all students. Our mentor leaders should have designed support for student success; an alternative is to have interns spend extensive time in shadowing opportunities in exemplary settings to observe leaders providing student achievement success for diverse, student populations. Adult learning theory supports learning in context, reflection, mentor models, and constructivist learning. It is important that these context-learning opportunities be positive, successful models to increase the probability of future leaders duplicating this context as principal leaders.

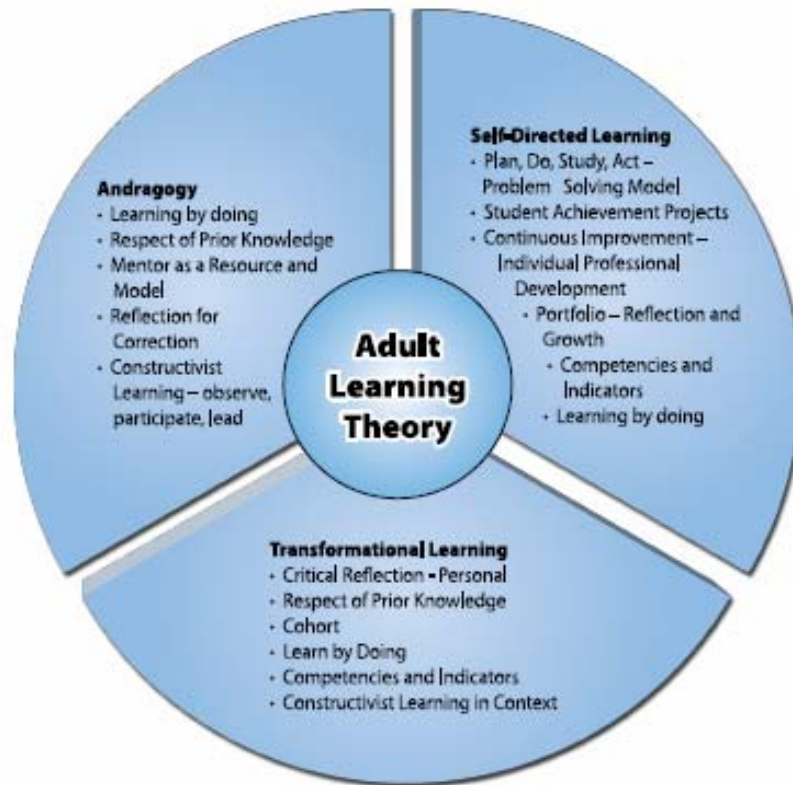
The next two components that are in need of improvement are increased interaction with “upper” District Administration, and interns anguishing over the final portfolio reflection assignment. Part of the role of the mentor is to help the intern to transition from teacher to administrator and to provide opportunities for administrative socialization with other administrators. This socialization provides future support and additional mentors. The socialization process happened sporadically among the interns. Some interns were included in District and State meetings and others never left the school setting. Two interns traveled to national professional development conventions with their mentor and were an intricate part of the school *Professional Learning Community*. This disparity between interns was noticeable within the intern cohort and was a dialogue topic shared by all of the interns as they reflected.

The reflective portfolio was also a topic that had received much apprehensive, negative attention from the intern cohort. Most of the interns kept artifact folders that matched the competencies on which they would be reflecting. The other commonality

was that they all waited on the reflection assignment until the last part of the internship. This was due to wanting to wait to reflect on projects that had not come to fruition. Whatever the reason for waiting to work on the project, the anxiety in late April and early May was high. The interns also stated that once the portfolio project was complete, they were glad they had made the reflective journey.

The negative components listed by the interns can significantly impact the success of an individual intern and have a harmful impact on the internship cohort as whole. It is important that the identified positive factors be continued and/or reinforced and the negative components be decreased and/or negated to create a successful internship design. Figure 2 below identifies the three, adult theory models that had the most significant impact on the internship design. This chart aligns the axial coding themes with the adult learning theories. Some axial coding themes may appear in more than one, adult learning theory quadrant. I also included the axial coding themes in blue that are the internship components that need to be eliminated or improved so all interns are supported and successful in the process.

Figure 2: Axial Coding Themes and Adult Learning Theory



As is evident, (See Figure 2 & Appendix B) the entire adult learning theories from the interns’ research dialogue impacted the design of their internship; therefore, I channel my comments in the order that I encountered these learning theories while keeping in mind that each theory adds to the mosaic that creates the internship. First, there are two axial coding themes that are found in three of the Adult Learning Theories: learning by doing and the use of reflective practice for personal growth. Each intern made a personal choice to pursue being a principal. All three of the theories imbue the importance of adults pursuing new knowledge by actively doing or performing the role or putting into practice what they want to learn. In order for personal growth or change to occur, all of the theories also support the use of reflective practice. Reflective practice involved the interns critically thinking about their actions in context in order to improve themselves



professionally. This reflection could happen with the mentor in journaling or in completing their portfolio in relationship to expected learner competencies.

### *Andragogy*

An important aspect of the theory of Andragogy is the respect of prior learning that each intern brings to his or her new learning context. It is important for their mentor to value this knowledge, not to be threatened by intern areas of expertise, and to use this expertise as a springboard to new knowledge to be acquired. In this learning theory, the mentor is an important part of the process, and Andragogy emphasizes that adults learn from their peers and want regular feedback about their progress. It is important that the mentor helps the intern to grow through critical reflection that scaffolds the intern to move to the next level of leadership. Mentor/intern dialogue is seen as part of the learning process, and this special environment for growth perceives mistakes as opportunities to improve and learn. Having the intern accept gradual, leadership skills by first observing, then sharing in the experience, and finally, leading the experience establishes this theory within the internship. Many of these experiences are project-based learning that teaches the importance of instructional leadership and internship structure of learning leadership skills to improve student achievement.

### *Self-Directed Learning*

Self-Directed Learning theory is the part of the internship that develops the intern's focus on building skills to direct their own learning experiences. The skills developed as part of the internship helps interns to identify problems, set goals, locate appropriate research and resources, and decide on methods to use and evaluate progress.

These skills are important to learn and practice within the internship and to take into a new context in their first principalship.

The City Leadership Internship is based on competencies and indicators that identify important leadership skills to learn that will support leaders focusing on improving student achievement. These competencies are the backbone or expectations for the internship. These competencies were designed to guide and support the internship process and to maintain the focus that our interns are being developed to become instructional leaders of professional learning communities.

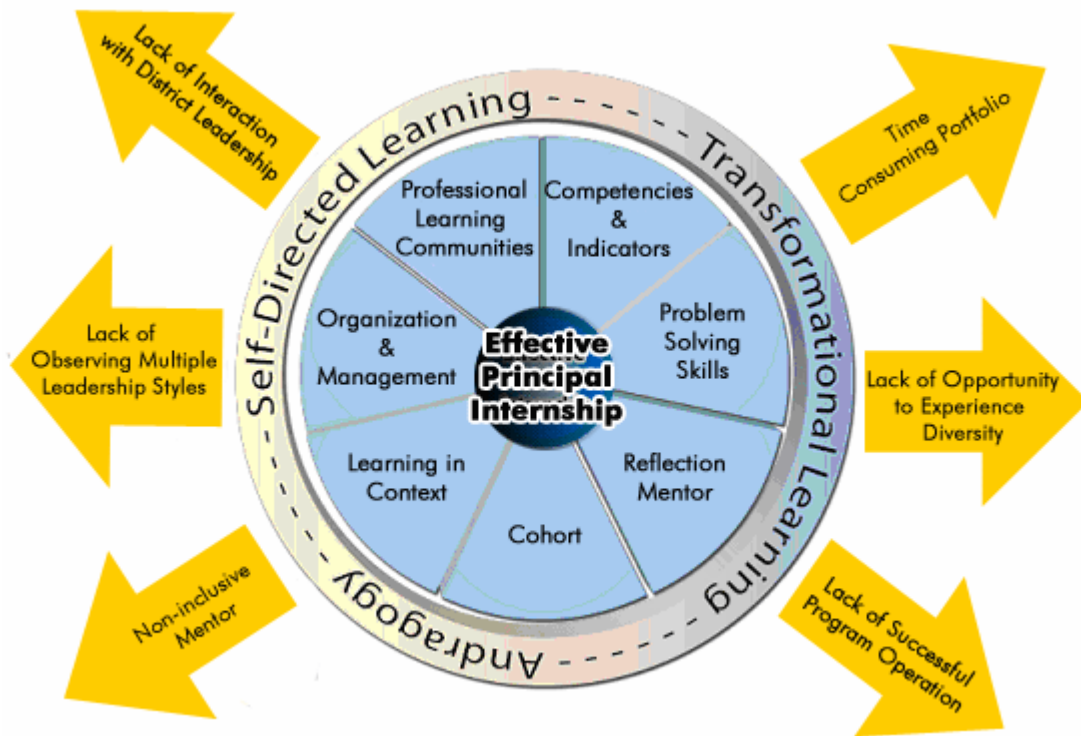
The interns are expected to develop a portfolio that demonstrates their learning experience based on these competencies. The interns and mentors received professional development on a problem-solving model. This model promotes continuous improvement and endorses the problem-solving cycle, *Plan, Do, Study and Act* or the Deming Cycle (Conyers, & Evy, 2004). Interns and mentors were encouraged to identify school student achievement issues and develop a plan for improvement. These projects were also referred to as “Legacy Projects;” projects that would make a difference for students after the internship was over, and interns were assigned to other schools as principals. Interns also identified professional development that they felt would fill gaps to meet their individual needs. Some interns requested more experience with school budgets, cognitive coaching, and problem-solving scenarios. All of these projects and problem-solving models were part of the internship design to construct the cognitive development of the intern. These models for problem solving and continuous improvement will also help these future principals to be able to develop proactive learning communities.

### *Transformational Learning*

Learning in context and critical reflection bring about a transformational change in the way an intern sees themselves and how they connect with their surroundings. This change is experienced through a cognitive process: becoming aware for the need to change, reflecting on options, connecting with others that are committed to change, creating a plan, incorporating the plan, and learning into context (Mezirow, 1991, p. 322). The purpose of the intern cohort and the competencies and indicators is to support the transformational change process.

As is evident from the initial coding and conversations with the intern participants, the cohort was an important source of reflection, dialogue, and support for change designed for the interns. One of the most important opportunities was to gather and network with other people going through this same phenomenon to share ideas and get their reflections. The internship portfolio of competencies and indicators was developed as a guide or process for the journey to support change. Most interns with the support of their mentors developed smaller plans of action to improve student achievement, and these plans also addressed the competencies and their growth as an instructional leader. These action plans are based on the Conyers (2004) problem-solving model, *Plan, Do, Study, and Act*. These action plans help the interns to try-out their new roles and build self-confidence. It is evident that individually, no one adult learning theory could have made a comprehensive internship design, but by using all three theories, the opportunity for success is more likely.

Figure 3. Formulated Model of Effective Principal Internships



The model generated in this study identifies the positive facets of the principal internship design (see Figure 3 & Appendix C). The surrounding adult learning theory casing supports the positive facets of the model internship design and repel components that negate a positive internship. Therefore, based on the data collected, this model identifies general internship themes that should be used as design components of a positive internship model:

- Inclusive Mentor
- Cohort
- Learning in Context
- Problem-Solving Skills
- Professional Learning Communities
- Competencies and Indicators

- Organization and Management
- Reflection

### *Recommendations for Future Study*

Beyond the capacity of this study, there are a number of questions to be answered. It would be valuable to explore with the intern participants mentor characteristics that support inclusiveness. The purpose might be to develop a better mentor training process or to have mentors apply for the position based on a self-assessment from identified characteristics determined from a study of this nature.

Another study might include the kind of school context and/or setting that is most conducive to developing future school leaders. Does the kind of school culture or teacher leadership experiences or lack of leadership experiences make a difference in participants in principal development programs? It would be beneficial to follow-up with the interns after an extended period in the principalship to see what other recommendations they would have for the design of principal internships.

An expansion of this model to the metro area, regional or state level, along with the other program tiers would provide this same research and theory-base model impact on a broader base for future instructional leaders. This opportunity should not be limited to urban principals, but provided for all leaders to have a positive impact on student achievement.

### *Conclusion*

It is important to me, as the director of the internship, that all interns have a positive and supportive year of development. The model's components in blue are the design model's opportunity to develop. These negative aspects in the model are not

components that need to be removed but are subcomponents that need to be improved:

(a) Lack of interaction with District leadership, (b) Lack of observing multiple Leadership Styles, (c) Non-inclusive Mentor, (d) Lack of Successful Program Observation, (e) Lack of opportunity to experience diversity, and (f) Time Consuming Portfolio.

Some of these components are management opportunities I can address as the program director by filling gaps for individual needs or creating cohort opportunities. The two components needing intensive attention are designing a process to ensure choosing an inclusive mentor and creating opportunities for interns to experience successful programs.

All of the mentors received mentor training. This training needs to be revisited and updated with the knowledge I gained from this study and my accumulated growth and experience as the program director. This training needs to be a required of all new mentors and updated with all principals responsible for building capacity building in teacher leaders and assistant principals.

This research identifies the importance of principal interns observing successful, school programs and having an inclusive mentor. Without both of these components, the experience can be less than optimal. If an intern is in a school context that is being successful but does not have an inclusive mentor, constructive, gradual, leadership experiences and mentor reflection will not occur. If you have an inclusive mentor but a leader that does not have a successful school model focused on improving student achievement, an intern is not able to observe a proactive, instructional leader, or the intern becomes the instructional leader with little or not mentor direction.

In reviewing my own pre-principal experiences, I was blessed with the chance to have so many collaborative, capacity-building, and inclusive mentors. Did these leaders understand adult learning theory and consciously support my growth as a leader or had someone in their early career modeled this comprehensive support?

As part of this research and my dissertation process, I have identified an additional component that needs to be a part of the internship model. This component is the conscious training and application of adult learning theory for aspiring leaders and their mentors. McQuarrie (1991) underscores this importance when he refers to being able to establish a culture of trust, ownership and commitment in our schools, "...is how effectively the unique characteristics of the adult learners are attended" (p.28). We must leave nothing to chance in the intern's understanding of working with adults in their new leadership position. Adult learning theory lays the foundation of forming school culture and building collaborative relationships used to create and advance professional learning communities that improve student achievement.

## REFERENCES

- Andrews, R. L., & Smith, W. F. (1989). *Instructional Leadership* [How Principals Make A Difference]. Alexandria, VA: Publications, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Barnett, B. G. (1995). Developing reflection and expertise: can mentors make the difference? *Journal of Educational Administration*, 33(5), 45-59.
- Barth, R. S. (1986). Principal Centered Professional Development. *Theory Into Practice*, 25(3), 156-160.
- Barth, Roland S. (2002). The Cultural Builder. *Educational Leadership*, 59(8), 6-11.
- Bass, Bernard M. (1998). *Transformational Leadership* [Industrial, Military, and Educational Impact]. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Baumgartner, L.M. (2001). Four Adult Development Theories and their Implications for Practice. *Focus on the Basics: Connecting Research and Practice*, 6(B), 3-6.
- Baumgartner, L. M. (2003). *Adult Learning Theory: A Primer*. (Information Series No. 392).Center on Education and Training for Employment, College of Education, The Ohio State University. Retrieved August 7 2007, from <http://www.cete.org/acve/docs/theory.pdf>.
- Bennett, B. G., McQuarrie, F. O., & Norris, C. J. (1991). *The Moral Imperatives of Leadership: A Focus On Human Decency*. Memphis, TN: National Network for Innovative Principal Preparation, Memphis State University.



- Bloom, G., Castagna , C., Moir, E., & Warren, B. (2005). *Blended Coaching* [Skills and Strategies to Support Principal Development]. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- Bloom, G., Castagna, C., & Warren, B. (2003). More Than Mentors: Principal Coaching. *Leadership*, 32(5), 20-23.
- Boyd, R.D. (1991). *Facilitating Personal Transformation in Small Groups: A Jungian Perspective*. London:Routledge.
- Brockett, R.G., & Hiemstra, P. (1991). *Self-Direction in Adult Learning: Perspectives on Theory, Research and Practice*. London and New York: Routledge, 1991.
- Retrieved July 6, 2007 from <http://home.twcny.rr.com/hiemstra/sdindex.html>
- Browne-Ferrigno, T., & Muth, R. (2004). Leadership Mentoring in Clinical Practice: Role Socialization, Professional Development and Capacity Building. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 40(4), 480-481.
- Brookfield, S. (1985). *Self-Directed Learning: From Theory to Practice*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Buckner, K., & Jones, L. (1990). In Search of Strong Administrators - A Worthy Investment. *Nassp Bulletin*, 74(529), 20-25.
- Burlingame, M. (1986). Three Images of Leadership in Effective Schools Literature. *Peabody Journal of Education*, 63(3), 65-74.
- Burns, J. M. (1979). *Leadership*. New York: Harper & Row.

- Caffarella, R.S., & Merriam, S.B. (1999). *Perspectives on Adult Learning: Framing Our Research* (pp.1-7). Retrieved July 28, 2007 from AERC Proceedings Web site:  
[http:// www.edst.educubc.ca/aerc/1999/99caffarella.htm](http://www.edst.educubc.ca/aerc/1999/99caffarella.htm)
- Clark, M., & Caffarella, R. (eds.) (2000). *An Update on Adult Development Theory: New Ways of Thinking about the Life Course*. (New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education, No. 84.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Conyers, J. & Ewy, R. (2004). *Charting Your Course: Lessons Learned During the Journey*. Milwaukee: ASQ Quality Press.
- Corbin, J. & Strauss, A. (1992). *Basics of Qualitative Research: Grounded Theory Procedures and Techniques*. Thousand Oaks, CA. SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Cotton, K. (2003). *Principals and Student Achievement*. Alexandria: VA. Association for Supervision of Curriculum Development.
- Cranton, P. (1994). *Understanding and Promoting Transformative Learning: A Guide for Educators of Adults*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Creighton, T. B. (2001, November). *Towards a Leadership Practice Field: An Antidote to an Ailing Internship Experience*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the University Council for Educational Administration, Cincinnati, OH.
- Creswell, J. W. (1998). *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Traditions*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

- Crotty, M. (2003). *The Foundations of Social Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, Publications, Inc.
- Crow, G. M., & Matthews, L. Joseph. (1998). *Finding one's Way* [How Mentoring Can Lead to Dynamic Leadership]. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, Inc.
- Crow, G., & Pounder, D. (2005). Sustaining the Pipeline of School Administrators [A systems approach cultivates leadership in schools and supports both novice and experienced administrators]. *Educational Leadership*, 62(8), 56-60.
- Daresh, John C. (2001). *Leaders Helping Leaders* (2nd ed.) [A Practical Guide To Administrative Mentoring]. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, Inc.
- Daresh, J. (2004). Mentoring School Leaders: Professional Promise or Predictable Problems? *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 40(4), 495-517.
- Dewey, J. (1916). Chapter 11: Experience and Thinking. In *Democracy and Education* (pp. 1-12). Retrieved Dec 28, 2006, from Columbia University Web site:[http://www.ilt.columbia.edu/publications/Projects/digitexts/dewey/d\\_e/chapter11.html](http://www.ilt.columbia.edu/publications/Projects/digitexts/dewey/d_e/chapter11.html)
- Dewey, J. (1938). *Experiences and Education*. New York: Touchstone.
- DiBiase, W. (1998). Mezirow's Theory of Transformative Learning with Implications for Science Teacher Educators. Retrieved Aug 3, 2007. from [http://www.ed.psu.edu/CI/Journals/1998AETS/s2\\_1\\_dibiase.rtf](http://www.ed.psu.edu/CI/Journals/1998AETS/s2_1_dibiase.rtf).

- Dirkx, J. (1997). "Nurturing soul in adult learning." In P. Cranton (ed.), *Transformative Learning in Action: Insights from Practice*. (New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education, No. 74). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Douglass, B. G., & Moustakas, C. (1985). Heuristic Inquiry: The Internal Search to Know. *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, 25(3), 39-55.
- Duffrin, E. (2001). Intern at Work. *Journal of Staff Development*, 22(1), 1-8.
- DuFour, R. (2002). The Learning-Centered Principal. *Educational Leadership*, 59(8), 12-15.
- DuFour, R. (2004). Schools as Learning Communities. *Educational Leadership*, 61(8), 6-11.
- Eaker, R., DuFour, R., & DuFour, R. (2002). *Getting Started: Reculturing Schools to Become Professional Learning Communities*. Bloomington, IN: Author.
- Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965*. (1965). Retrieved Jan 2, 2006, from Prentice Hall Web site:  
<http://cwx.prenhall.com/bookbind/pubbooks/burns3/medialib/doc/esea1965.htm>
- Elias, J.L., & Merriam, S. (1980). *Philosophical Foundations of Adult Education*. Malabar, FL: Krieger.
- Fenwick, L. T., & Pierce, M. C. (2002-12-00). *Professional Development of Principals*. Washington, DC: ERIC Clearinghouse. (ERIC Digest No. ED477731)
- Fenwick, T. (2003). *Learning Through Experience*. Malibar, FL: Krieger.

- Fritzberg, G. J. (2003 Spring). Schools Can't Do It Alone: A Broader Conception of Equality of Educational Opportunity. *New Horizons for Learning Online Journal*, IX(2), 1-10. Retrieved Aug 14, 2006, from New Horizons For Learning Web site: <http://www.newhorizons.org/strategies/multicultural/fritzberg.htm>
- Fullan, M. (2001). *Leading in a Culture of Change*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Fullan, M. (2002). The Change Leader. *Educational Leadership*, 59(8), 16-20.
- Fullan, M. (2003). *The Moral Imperative of School Leadership*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, Inc.
- Galbraith, M. (1998). *Adult Learning Methods: A guide for Effective Instruction*(3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Malabar, FL: Krieger Publishing
- Gardner, H. (1993). *Multiple Intelligences: The Theory in Practice*. New York: Basic Books.
- Glaser, B. G. (1992). *Basics of Grounded Theory Analysis*. Mill Valley, CA: Sociology Press.
- Gray, T. I. (2001). Principal Internships [Five Tips for a Successful and Rewarding Experience]. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 82(9), 663-665.
- Grogan, M., & Crow, G. (2004). Mentoring in the Context of Educational Leadership Preparation and Development [Old Wine in New Bottles? Introduction to a Special Issue]. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 40(4), 463-467.

- Guskey, T. R. (1995). *Results-Oriented Professional Development: In Search of an Optimal Mix of Effective Practices* (None, pp. 1-17). Naperville, IL: North Central Regional Educational Laboratory.
- Hackmann, D. G., Schmitt-Oliver, D. M., & Tracy, J. C. (2002). *The Standards-Based Administrative Internship* [Putting the ISLLC Standards into Practice]. Lanham, MD: The Scarecrow Press, Inc.
- Hallinger, P. (2003). Leading Educational Change: reflections on the practice of instructional and transformational leadership. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 33(3), 329-351.
- Imel, S. (1998). Transformative Learning in Adulthood. (*Eric Digest No. 200.*). Retrieved Aug 3, 2007, from <http://www.ericdigests.org/1999-2/adulthood.htm>
- Jarvis, P. (ed.). (2001). *Twentieth Century Thinkers in Adult & Continuing Education*. (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). London: Kogan Page.
- Kiviat '01, B. J. (2000, April). The Social Side of Schooling. *John Hopkins Magazine*, 52(2), 18. Retrieved Jan 22, 2006, from John Hopkins Magazine Web site: <http://www.jhu.edu/~jhumag/0400web/18.html>
- Knight, D. D., Sheets, J. M., & Young, P. G. (2005). *Mentoring Principals* [Frameworks, Agendas, Tips and Case Stories for Mentors and Mentees]. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, A SAGE Publications Company.

- Knowles, M. S. (1980). *The Modern Practice of Adult Education: From Pedagogy to Andragogy*. River Grove, IL: Follett.
- Knowles, M.S. (1990). *The Adult Learner: A Neglected Species*. (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). Houston: Gulf Publishing Company.
- Knowles, M.S. (2005). *The Adult Learner*. (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). Burlington, MA: Elsevier.
- Kotter, J. P. (1996). *Leading Change*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press.
- Lambert, Linda. (1998). *Building Leadership Capacity in Schools*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Lambert, L. (2003). *Leadership Capacity for Lasting School Improvement*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Leithwood, K., & Jantzi, D. (1999). Transformational School Leadership Effects: A Replication. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, 10(4), 451-479.
- Lezotte, L. W. (2001). *Revolutionary and Evolutionary: The Effective Schools Movement*. Retrieved Nov 12, 2006, from Effective Schools Products Ltd Web site: <http://www.effectiveschools.com/downloads/RevEv.pdf>
- McGough, D. (2003). Leaders as Learners: An Inquiry into the Formation and Transformation of Principal's Professional Perspectives. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, Vol. 25, No. 4, Special Issue on Educational Leadership. (Winter), 449-71.

- 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., & Caffarella, R. (1999). *Learning in Adulthood: A Comprehensive Guide* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Merriam, S., & Imel, S., (eds.) (2001). *The New Update on Adult Learning Theory*. ( New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education, No.89.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Mezirow, J. (1991). *Transformative Dimensions of Learning*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Moustakas, C. (1990). *Heuristic Research* [Design, Methodology, and Applications]. Newbury Park, California: Sage Publications.
- A Nation At Risk* [The Imperative For Educational Reform]. (1983). Retrieved Sep 16, 2006, from U.S. Department of Education Web site:  
<http://www.ed.gov/pubs/NatAtRisk/risk.html>
- National Association of Elementary Schools Principals (NAESP). (2003). *Making the Case for Principal Mentoring* (Program Guide, pp. 1-37). Alexandria, VA: The Education Alliance at Brown University (LAB), National Association of Elementary School Principals, Collaborative Communications Group.



No Child Left Behind Act 2001. (2001). In *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*. Retrieved Jan 2, 2006, from

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/No\\_Child\\_Left\\_Behind\\_Act&oldid=95417338](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/No_Child_Left_Behind_Act&oldid=95417338)

Peterson, K. D. (1986, Summer). Principal's Work, socialization, Training: Developing More Effective Leaders, 25 (3), 1551-155. Retrieved June 23, 2007, from Theory into Practice. Web site <http://links.jstor.org>

Playko, M. A. (1995). Mentoring for educational leaders: a practitioner's perspective. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 33(5), 84-92.

Polanyi, M. (1966). *The Tacit Dimension*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, Inc.

Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative Research & Evaluation Methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Rodriguez, A. & Hovde, K. (2002). The Challenge of School Autonomy: Supporting Principals. In *LCSHD Paper Series* (Human Development Department LCSHD Paper Series No 77, pp. 1-31). Washington, DC: World Bank.

Schmoker, M. J. & Wilson, Richard B. (1993). *Total Quality Education* [Profiles of Schools That Demonstrate The Power of Deming's Management Principles]. Bloomington, IN: Phi Delta Kappa Educational Foundation.

Schön, D. A. (1983). *The Reflective Practitioner* [How Professionals Think in Action]. New York: Basic Books, Inc.

- Sergiovanni, T. J. (1995). *The Principalship [A Reflective Practice Perspective]*.  
Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon, A Simon & Schuster Company.
- Sergiovanni, T. J. (1999). *Rethinking Leadership: A Collection of Articles*. Arlington Heights, IL: SkyLight Professional Development.
- Speck, M. & Knipe, C. (2001). *Why Can't We Get It Right: Professional Development in our Schools*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, Inc.
- Transformation. (2002). In *Webster's Third New International Dictionary of the English Language Unabridged* (3rd ed., p. 2427). Springfield, MA: Marriam-Webster, Inc.
- Yukl, G. (2002). *Leadership in Organizations* (5th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall. (Original work published 1981)
- Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in Society: The Development of Higher Psychological Processes*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.



## APPENDICES

### Appendix A

#### *Heuristic Research Methodology Phases*

Heuristic methodology was chosen by the researcher because of its personal inquiry approach. The heuristic researcher uses his/her own internal frame of reference and intuition to guide the inquiry. Through the use of a Clark Moustakas' (1990) design methodology and application, a deepened understanding of the phenomenon will occur. In the investigation of a question or issue, the researcher's "self-dialogue, self-search and self-awareness" are an important part of the process in seeking insight

#### *Phases*

There are six phases of the Moustakas' heuristic research methodology. The phases include the *initial engagement*, *immersion* into the chosen topic, *incubation*, the discovery of new knowledge in the *illumination* phase, the awakening of the researcher's consciousness in the *explication* phase, and the final phase *creative synthesis*.

In the *initial engagement* phase, the researcher identifies a concern that is of great interest or passion. During this phase, the researcher becomes immersed in the topic to expand personal knowledge. This researched knowledge is intertwined with the tacit knowing of the researcher and a significant question is formed. The researcher's passionate connection to the question is important due to the disciplined commitment that will be necessary to search for causal significance.

Once the question is revealed, the researcher's life becomes absorbed in a growing understanding of its meaning and significance. This captivation phase with the question is called *immersion*. Every part of the researcher's life is open to connections

with the question. All incidents and people encountered become possibilities for understanding the experience. The *immersion* process includes dialogue with self and co-researchers in pursuit of clues and following intuition to seek a solution to the question.

After an intense *immersion* with the question, the researcher retreats from this intensity and detaches. This detachment phase is still a development phase only in *incubation*. This phase provides the tacit knowing to contribute to the process and understanding. Beneath the surface, the researcher is still clarifying and searching, and it is during this phase that a new angle or feature of the phenomenon is revealed.

The revelations coming from the *incubation* phase very often provide a breakthrough or awakening to the question. These breakthroughs can come in the form of seeing themes, correcting initial misunderstandings, or identifying hidden significance. This phase is a period of *illumination* and revelation for the researcher and is the next step to clarity.

Clarity of themes or patterns leads the researcher through the process of *explication*. This phase is a conscious effort by the researcher to understand the new information coming from the *incubation* phase. Once again, the researcher will use self-dialogue, conversations with co-researchers, and reflecting inward to explicate the themes for detail and understanding. This phase prepares the researcher to organize the findings into the essence of the phenomenon.

This concluding phase of heuristic research is the process of *creative synthesis*. The researcher is fully aware of data themes and also how those themes relate to the whole understanding. The researcher is then challenged to find a creative format to share the knowledge. This *creative synthesis* comes from not only the identified themes, but

also the researcher's internal beliefs in relationship to the phenomenon. This format often uses verbatim quotes and/or can be expressed as a poem, story, drawing, or any other creative summation. In essence, the synthesis is a reflection of the researcher's journey for knowledge.

### *Grounded Theory*

I will be using the techniques of Grounded Theory as a method that works well with the Heuristic design. This theory will be used to guide my search for identifying patterns and themes in the interview process. The basis of this theory is advocating the development of new theories from research grounded in data instead of inferring testable hypotheses from existing theories. This qualitative theory is based on Glaser and Strauss's systematic methods and book, *The Discovery of Grounded Theory* (1967). These systematic strategies provided qualitative researchers with practical guidelines and analysis that could produce theory. "A well-constructed grounded theory will meet its four most central criteria: fit, work, relevance, and modifiability" (Glaser, 1992, p.15). It is a study of how people interact with an experience. The researcher collects data, primarily from multiple interviews and field notes. This theory is based on a social process that is occurring between people. I will not be creating a new theory, but the process will help answer the question how do districts design effective principal internship programs for aspiring school leaders, and what are the components of this model

### *Grounded Theory Components*

I conduct many interviews and "trips to the field" to collect data to "saturate (or find information that continues to add on until no more can be found) the categories"

(Creswall, 1998, p.57). **Categories** are pieces of information are made up of events, actions, or interactions. It is during this time that the researcher begins the initial analysis, reviewing the data from all participants or co-researchers (heuristic) in a constant process until no more new categories is uncovered. This process is called the **constant comparative** method of data analysis (p.57).

An important component of grounded theory for researchers is to maintain an objective stance. Strauss and Corbin (1990) refer to this component as theoretical sensitivity. It is important for the researcher to search for the subtleties and the meaning in collected data. This sensitivity can be enhanced by a review of the literature. This provides the researcher with background information (p.42).

Professional experience can also be a fortunate source of sensitivity. Years of practice in a research specific field can help the researcher understand events and interactions more readily. “On the other hand, this kind of experience can also block you from seeing things that have become routine or obvious” (p.42). It is important that the researcher remain open and willing to listen to the voices of the co-research participants and the collected data. The process of grounded theory data analysis is a systematic way of maintaining sensitivity and objectivity.

The systematic process of grounded theory standard format is:

- “In **open coding**, the researcher forms initial categories of information about the phenomenon being studied by segmenting information.
- In **axial coding**, the investigator assembles the data in new ways after **open coding**. This is presented using a **coding paradigm or logic diagram** in which the researcher identifies a **central phenomenon** conditions, specifies strategies,

identifies the context or intervening conditions, and delineates the **consequences** for this phenomenon.

- In selective coding, the researcher identifies a ‘story line’ and writes a story that integrates the categories in the axial coding model. In this phase, **conditional propositions** are typically presented.
- Finally, the researcher may develop and visually portray a **conditional matrix** that elucidates the social, historical, and economic conditions influencing the central phenomenon.
- The result of this process of data collection and analysis is a theory, a **substantive- level theory**, written by the researchers close to a specific problem or population of people” (Creswell,1998. p.57).

#### *Correlation*

In figure 4, I have created a chart to show the relationship between Heuristic Design and Grounded Theory. This visual representation shows the correlation of Moustakas’ phases identifying the quality of the experiences in the internship and the components of Grounded Theory of Strauss and Corbin used for analyzing this qualitative data. These correlations helped to guide my research process and strengthen my research finding.

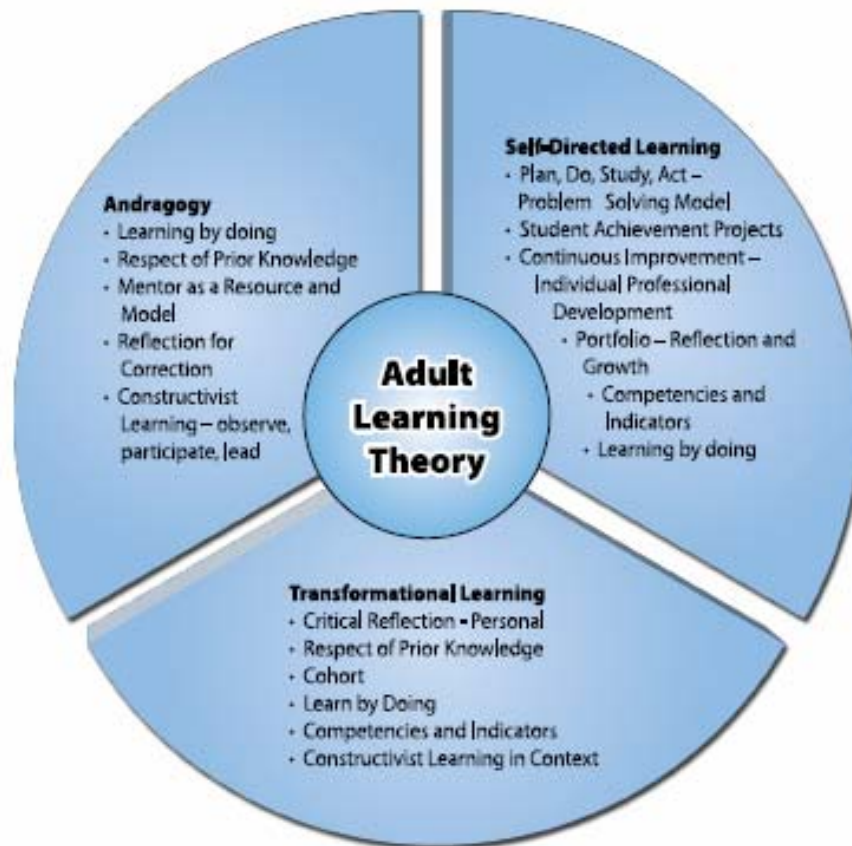


Figure 4. Connecting Heuristic Methodology and Grounded Theory To Create an Internship Design Model

<b>Heuristic Design</b>	<b>Correlation</b>	<b>Grounded Theory</b>
<b>Moustakas, Clark</b>		<b>Straus-Corbin</b>
<i>Quality of the experience not the quantity of a behavior</i>		<i>A set of useful coding steps for analyzing qualitative data</i>
<b>Initial Engagement</b>	<i>Identifying a question Tacit knowing</i>	
<b>Immersion</b>	<i>Dialogue and Tacit Knowing</i>	<b>Interviews/Co- researchers</b>
<b>Incubation</b>	<i>Reflection</i>	<b>Open-Coding</b>
<b>Explication</b>	<i>Constant &amp; Comparative</i>	<b>Clarification of themes</b>
<b>Illumination</b>	<i>Themes/Correcting mistakes</i>	<b>Axial Coding</b>
<b>Creative Synthesis</b>	<i>Program Design</i>	<b>Theory Model</b>

## Appendix B

Figure 2: Axial Coding Themes and Adult Learning Theory



Appendix C

Figure 3. Formulated Model of Effective Principal Internships

