

Faculty Research Grant
Final Report
Arkansas Tech University

Mid-South Educational Research Association

Pensacola, Florida

November 6 – 8, 2013

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November 12, 2013

B. Restatement of Problem

The Mid-South Educational Research Association (MSERA) Annual Meeting was held in Pensacola, Florida, November 6 – 8, 2013. My paper “*Supporting Novice and Veteran Educators: Keeping them in the Field of Education*” was presented at this conference. This venue offered an excellent opportunity for the dissemination of my research results. Additionally, the conference proved to be informative and beneficial as I made professional contacts and attended many informative sessions.

My paper, “*Supporting Novice and Veteran Educators: Keeping them in the Field of Education*” addresses how to support all teachers as they seek to make a difference in the lives of children and youth. As a result of this research, I have gained a better understanding of the value of mentoring and professional development as invaluable means to help sustain teachers’ enthusiasm and growth. Furthermore, I always strive to integrate the results of my research into my curriculum at ATU for the betterment of the students.

C. Brief Review of the Research Procedure Utilized

The MSERA Annual Meeting afforded me the opportunity to interact with other professionals from across six states to present papers and discuss current research trends and local, state and national initiatives. My presentation concerned the issue of burnout. A survey was completed by approximately 450 Arkansas educators in the fall of 2011. This study was conducted in order to: (a) assess the current climate in the PK-12 environment regarding the amount of stress that educators sustain; (b) examine ways that novice and veteran educators seek to support themselves in order to remain in the field of education; and (c) examine productive ways that all educators can be supported professionally.

D. Summary of Findings

Approximately 400 Arkansas classroom educators and 50 administrators from small, medium, and large school districts were surveyed. The results of the survey indicated that a significant number of educators consider leaving the field due to the demands of the job. The percentage of those who reported a high degree of burnout was about the same as those who report being content in the field of education, regardless of the years of teaching experience.

Data from the survey illustrate the need for effective support in managing stress. Historically, mentoring has been established as a productive means of coaching professionals who are new to a field. Building upon this fact, this study promotes supportive measures for both novice and veteran teachers. The case is made for the importance of mentorship programs, detailed considerations for mentors are noted, and implementation methods are examined. Professional development opportunities are seen to be valuable opportunities for both veteran and novice teachers.

E. Conclusions and Recommendations

Arkansas educators continually seek ways to improve their instructional effectiveness. As the survey revealed, a vast majority of educators take work home, spend extra time on the campus and use their own resources to purchase needed items for the classroom. Recommendations for supporting novice teachers include the following aspects of mentoring: 1) the development of a professional growth plan; 2) identification and celebration of strength areas; 3) procurement of resources, both human resources and material resources; and 4) the identification of professional growth opportunities. Recommendations for supporting veteran

teachers include: 1) professional development; 2) conferences and seminars; 3) networking and sharing of ideas with other educators; 4) valued input into planning and program development.

With this in mind, the research supports the recommendation of a comprehensive support network. Such a network should flow down from the administration in support of veteran and novice teachers alike. With such a “top down” approach, veteran teachers are then in a more advantageous position to help novice teachers. However, it still belongs to the administration to monitor the program and insure its success through active oversight and participation.

(Title page and Abstract from Conference)

Supporting novice and veteran educators: Keeping them in the field of education

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Abstract

Novice and veteran educators may find themselves overwhelmed with the demands and pressures known to be present in today's PK-12 schools. This study was conducted in order to: (a) assess the current climate in the PK-12 environment regarding the amount of stress that educators sustain, (b) examine ways that novice and veteran educators seek to support themselves in order to remain in the field of education, and (c) examine productive ways that all educators can be supported professionally.

Approximately 400 Arkansas classroom educators and 50 administrators from small, medium, and large school districts were surveyed. Some of the questions asked were: 1) To what degree do you feel that burnout is affecting you and your performance as a professional? (2) If the stress level at your job were going to be the same five years from now, would you contemplate a career change? (3) In the week of record, how many persons in your home other than yourself did any kind of work to help you directly in your role as educator?

Throughout the discussion of the results, data from the survey is reported and discussed to illustrate the need for effective support in managing stress. The results of the survey indicated that a significant number of educators consider leaving the field due to the demands of the job. Historically, mentoring has been established as a productive means of coaching professionals who are new to a field. Building upon this fact, this study presents the case for developing a solid mentorship program. The case is made for the importance of mentorship programs, detailed considerations for mentors are noted, and thought provoking issues are examined.



42nd Annual Meeting Program

PENSACOLA, FLORIDA



Member States:

Alabama, Arkansas, Kentucky,
Louisiana, Mississippi, Tennessee

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AR Teacher Corps



2:30 – 3:20 PM

RECRUITING/RETAINING EDUCATORS

Aquamarine 2

President: Edwinta Merriweather, Talladega College

Recruiting and Preparing Highly Motivated Non-Traditional Teacher Candidates

Gary O. Bunn, Donna Wake, University of Central Arkansas

* *Supporting Novice and Veteran Educators: Keeping Them in the Field of Education*

Stephanie P. Pepper, Arkansas Tech University

Personable and Academic Performance of Nontraditional STEM+ Teachers

Carolyn C. Williams, Alicia A. Cotabish, University of Central Arkansas; Gail Hughes, University of Arkansas - Little Rock

Pink Collar Profession

2:30 – 3:20 PM

TRAINING

Oleander 2

Training: Meta-analysis Using R

Randall Schumacker, Lauren Holmes, University of Alabama

2:30 – 3:20 PM

CURRENT ISSUES IN HIGHER EDUCATION (1)

Royal Palm Salon D

President: Shelley L. Holden, University of South Alabama

The Changing Role of the Federal Government in P-20 Education

Elizabeth E. Smith, University of Arkansas

Educational Attainment and Financial Satisfaction

Lauren A. Menard, Northwestern State University

The Importance of Mentorship, Faculty Approachability, Methodological Requirements, Interdisciplinary Collaboration, and Application Exercises in Graduate Students Development of Quantitative Proficiency

Amanda D. Leimer, University of Southern Mississippi

Thursday

2:30 – 3:20 PM

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Royal Palm Salon E

President: Veronica Outlaw, University of Alabama

The Effects of a STEM Professional Development Intervention on Elementary Teachers

Debbie D. Dailey, University of Central Arkansas; Ann Robinson, Gail Hughes, University of Arkansas at Little Rock; Alicia Cotabish, University of Central Arkansas;

EdCamp: Listening to the Voices of Teachers

Michael Mills, Donna Wake, University of Central Arkansas

Building Statewide Capacity: Developing an Interactive Online Professional Development Program

Julie D. Riley, LSUHSC Human Development Center; Brittney Wright, Dorothy Parks, Donna Hammons, Bambi Polotzola

The Importance of Professional Learning Communities for School Improvement

Leslie Jones, Nicholls State University

2:30 – 3:20 PM

TEACHER EDUCATION (2)

Royal Palm Salon F

President: Christopher N. Amos, University of West Florida

Consistent Confidence in Methods, Writing, and Classroom Management Preparation for Elementary Methods Classes

Ava F. Pugh, Cecil Hutto, Dorothy Schween, Rhonda Mann, University of Louisiana at Monroe

Teaching Pre-Service Teachers More than One Game Plan for Nine Months of Instruction

Tammy C. Cook, University of Montevallo

Most Effective Practices in Lesson Planning: Quantitative Analysis

Sid T. Womack, David Bell, Arkansas Tech University

The Impact of Teacher Preparation Program on Elementary Preservice Teachers' Sense of Reading Efficacy

Rebecca M. Giles, Andrea M. Kent, Mary F. Hibberts, University of South Alabama

