

Public Abstract

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Graduation Term:FS 2010

Department:Educational Leadership & Policy Analysis

Degree:EdD

Title:Middle Level Principals' Perceptions of the Adolescent Literacy Crisis: A Qualitative Study

The purpose of this research study was to examine Missouri middle school principals' perceptions of the adolescent literacy crisis and to ascertain how middle level principals are addressing adolescent literacy needs in their schools. The phenomenological qualitative research approach was selected due to the underpinning of the social constructivism and pragmatism paradigms of the research questions.

Data sources for this phenomenological qualitative research included an open-ended online survey administered to a random sample of middle level principal i and personal interviews. The research findings are based on the data collected from 50 research participants. Although there was not agreement regarding literacy being in a state of crisis, the study found consensus that literacy is a priority for middle level principals. Additionally, principals reported factors of family chaos, technology challenges, and expanded demands of literacy created additional challenges for adolescent literacy. According to the data, principals are addressing literacy needs through shared responsibility, varied delivery methods, and instructional leadership.

As middle level administrators strive to meet the multiple demands of their jobs, the literature and the findings of this research support the critical role of instructional leadership. In order to provide for the literacy needs of the adolescent students, principals are establishing a vision of literacy, mission for literacy, and a climate for learning. Additionally, as an instructional leader, the principal supports teachers and students by providing the needed resources and professional development for literacy.