INVESTIGATING THE SERVANT LEADER MENTOR: AN EXAMINATION OF

MENTORING THROUGH THE EXPERIENCES OF K-12 EDUCATORS TO

PROMOTE SELECTION STRATEGIES FOR BEGINNING TEACHER INDUCTION

PROGRAMS

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The undersigned, appointed by the Dean of the Graduate School, have examined the dissertation entitled:

INVESTIGATING THE SERVANT LEADER MENTOR: AN EXAMINATION OF MENTORING THROUGH THE EXPERIENCES OF K-12 EDUCATORS TO PROMOTE SELECTION STRATEGIES FOR BEGINNING TEACHER INDUCTION PROGRAMS

presented by Audrey P. Ebbrecht,

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and hereby certify that, in their opinion, it is worthy of acceptance.

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DEDICATION

My heart overflows with a good theme;

I address my verses to the King;

My tongue is the pen of a ready writer.

Psalm 45:1

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Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your

servant

Matthew 20:26

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ABSTRACT

Beginning teachers are leaving the profession at an alarming rate, financially draining the nation each year (Gonzales, 2007; National Commission on Teaching and America's Future [NCTAF] & NCTAF State Partners, 2002). One method schools enact to counter this problem is to require beginning teachers to participate in induction programs which often contain a required mentoring aspect by an experienced teacher (Ingersoll & Strong, 2004).

This qualitative narrative study was designed to investigate the mentoring experiences of quality teachers in order to provide knowledge for school district administration selecting mentor teachers for beginning staff. Data were gathered by examining the personal narratives of quality K-12 teachers (identified by having won the Missouri Teacher of the Year award), regarding their descriptions and experiences of mentoring as mentees. The conceptual framework of servant leadership was applied to provide a lens through which to study the phenomenon. The study was viewed through the lens of servant leadership due to the deep insights it provided into the mentoring relationship. "At its core, servant leadership is a long-term, transformational approach to life and work—in essence, a way of being—that has the potential for creating positive change throughout our society" (Spears, 1998, p. 4).

Participants for this study involved K-12 teachers from Missouri as the state requires beginning teachers to participate in a two-year mentoring program (Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2010). These participants, having acquired the Missouri Teacher of the Year award, had met criteria establishing them as elite and quality educators. The study consisted of four educators who participated in

several individual interviews sharing their personal stories of their mentors and the mentee process.

Data were collected and triangulated from interviews and field texts revealing the themes and characteristics of servant leaders: listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to growth, and community building (Spears, 1998).

The findings of this study implicated that the mentors of quality public K-12 teachers utilize the ten characteristics of servant leadership in their guiding of these teachers to reach their full potential. Therefore, the traits of servant leaders provide an outline and body of knowledge for an administrator to reference when trying to connect new staff with individuals who will positivity affect their career. Results provided by this study add to the existing body of knowledge of servant leadership and mentoring.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Background

Teachers face overwhelming pressure in today's classrooms trying to meet national/state standards, curriculum requirements, and instructional expectations (Kyriacou, 2001). In addition, beginning teachers face high expectations including classroom management, curriculum development, and high-stakes testing (Oliver, 2009). This array of issues often affects new teachers' decision to continue in the profession (Hancock & Scherff, 2010). Across the country, during the 2008-09 school year, 22.8% of teachers with one to three years teaching experience either left the teaching profession or moved to another school district (Keigher & Cross, 2010). "Researchers have consistently found that younger teachers have very high rates of departure" (Ingersoll, 2001, p. 502). Further, teacher attrition constitutes a greater concern when teacher turnover expenses and tax payer costs are considered (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2005).

The amounts school districts spend on recruiting, hiring, and training teacher replacements is extensive with per teacher costs ranging from $4,366 in small districts to $17,872 in large districts (Barnes, Crowe, & Schaefer, 2006). A report from the Alliance for Excellent Education (2005) found a national estimate of the cost for replacing teachers including both those who leave the profession or move to another district is $4.9 billion annually. Teacher attrition has become an issue for each state including Missouri which had 16.28% of teachers leave the profession or move to other school districts costing over a hundred million dollars (Alliance for Excellent Education).

Consequently, such large costs deliver an equally high level of concern for the future of teacher leaders. Kraft (2010) voiced his concern for today's leaders,

Too many are dropping out of the race, losing heart, and letting go of their dreams and lofty purposes. They are simply giving up and throwing in the towel. Due to the rapidly changing and fast-paced world we live in, it is increasingly difficult to lead and lead well with joy, clarity, and confidence. Some just hang on by their fingernails, waiting for retirement to rescue them from their disappointments, fears, and frustrations. (Kraft, 2010, p. 20)

As school districts acknowledge the struggle to retain teachers, often beginning teacher induction programs are implemented (Haun & Martin, 2004; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). A frequent key component of such induction programs is the mentoring of new teachers (Brill & McCartney, 2008; Ingersoll & Smith, 2004; Villar & Strong, 2007). The state of Missouri is one of many illustrating this principle (Hightower, 2010).

The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (2010) required beginning teachers, in their first two years of teaching, to participate in a mentoring program with a teacher of greater experience. Villar and Strong (2007) conducted a benefit-cost analysis of a beginning teacher mentor program and discovered an $807 savings per teacher per year in attrition costs due to the teacher mentor program. Furthermore, Smith and Ingersoll (2004) found a clear link between beginning teacher participation in an induction program and reduced rates of turnover where a major component of the induction program was the mentoring of beginning teachers. Hancock and Scherff (2010) determined a statistically significant predictor of teacher attrition to be teachers who lacked peer support. Since Missouri requires a two year mentoring program

and such programs have shown to lower attrition rates, local schools must decide the best ways to organize their mentor programs to see positive results.

Oliver (2009) discovered a well designed mentoring program had a positive impact on beginning teachers and their attitudes reflected increased confidence and a motivation to return to teaching. "When these [induction and mentoring] programs were well designed and implemented, novice teachers were not only staying longer; they were also developing into better teachers—and doing so at a faster rate—than had many before them" (Portner, 2005, p. xxii). Nevertheless, poorly implemented mentoring programs can cause damage to a district's retention rate (Brill & McCartney, 2008). A study by Wynn, Carboni, and Patall (2007) found that their mentors had observed 69% of beginning teachers for less than 3 hours during their school year suggesting the district's mentoring program may not be meeting expectations or producing desired results. Local districts must utilize effective mentoring techniques involving characteristics of successful mentors in order to supply beginning teachers with positive and beneficial support.

Local school districts need to create a mentoring experience that impacts beginning teachers and enables them to succeed professionally through a firm vision and plan (Meijers, 2008). Since quality teacher mentors are essential during this process and as mentors; they strive to influence mentees acquiring an important leadership role within their school (Blanchard & Hodges, 2005). Consequently, the theory of servant leadership narrows the broad concept of leadership and provides key characteristics of effective mentors to promote self-efficacy in mentees (Poon, 2006). Similarly, Cerit (2009) found "…a positive and significant relationship between servant leadership behaviors of

principals and teachers' job satisfaction, and that servant leadership behaviors of principals had a significant effect on job satisfaction" (p. 613). While Mayer, Bardes, and Piccolo (2008) identified "a direct relationship between servant-leadership and follower need satisfaction" (p. 192) revealing that leaders play a key role in improving job satisfaction for followers. Thereby, servant leadership could provide a focus for local school districts as they select mentor teachers who will positively impact teacher retention, thus providing the conceptual framework for this inquiry.

<div align="center">Conceptual Framework</div>

Blanchard and Hodges (2005) claimed that leadership is the process of influencing people in their thinking, behavior, or development towards established goals. This process of influence serves as a direct link between mentoring and leadership. Thus a beginning task of mentors, particularly teacher mentors, is to model effective leadership skills to mentees (Harris, Ballenger, & Leonard, 2004); this premise resulted in the researcher's examination of leadership theory as the theoretical foundation of this study. Leadership is a broad area of study in which multiple theories have been created (Yukl, 2006). Two leadership theories were considered for this study of mentor teachers due to their focus on individual needs in an organization: Burns' (2003) theory of transformational leadership and Bush's (2003) cultural model of leadership ultimately filtered to Greenleaf's (2002) servant leadership theory.

Transformational leadership theory instructs leaders to inspire and motivate followers to achieve organizational goals (Bush, 2003; Stone, Russell, & Patterson, 2004; Yukl, 2006). Since the primary focus of transformational leadership is on empowering individuals to accomplish organizational objectives it gives less attention to the needs of

the individual (Stone, et al., 2004). This lack of focus on individual needs created a disconnect between the purpose and framework of this study.

On the other hand, Bush (2003) developed several models of leadership including the cultural model. The major features of Bush's model include a focus on the values and beliefs of members, a development of shared norms/meanings, and expression through rituals and ceremonies. Moral leadership is categorized as one of the cultural models. This theory of leadership promotes individual followers through the use of the leaders' morals, beliefs, and values (Bush). Yukl (2006) stated this type of leadership is often used to study community leaders and leaders of non-profits, an ideal fit for public educators. Overall, the cultural model of leadership funneled to moral leadership could be considered for this study due to its focus on individuals and their needs in an organization.

However, contained deeper within the theory of moral leadership were multiple lenses, each were a consideration for the conceptual framework for this study. Burns (2003) studied the idea of change and how traits of leaders are used to transform followers. West-Burnham (1997) addressed moral leadership through his ideas of moral confidence requiring leaders to demonstrate and sustain ethical principles in their organizations, while moral leadership defined by Gini (1997) stated leaders are value-laden advocating beliefs to followers. Stiffney (2010) positioned the theory of servant leadership under the theoretical perspective of moral leadership. Whereas, Greenleaf (2002) developed this theory and claimed great leaders must be first seen as servants. Consequently, servant leaders guide followers toward advancement and accomplishment of their potential (Drury, 2005). This line of reasoning resonated with the theory of

servant leadership being best suited as the conceptual framework for this study due to its promotion of others before self for growth and its emphasize on mentoring (Greenleaf, 2002; Spears, 1998).

Furthermore, servant leadership is a theory of leadership in which the leader's focus is on the follower's needs in order to promote the follower's development and growth (Greenleaf, 2002; Mayer, Bardes, & Piccolo, 2008; Neill, Hayward & Peterson, 2007; Spears, 1998). Servant leadership theory identifies several characteristics of leaders: listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to growth, and community building (Barbuto & Wheller, 2007; Drury, 2005; Neill, Hayward & Peterson, 2007; Spears, 1998). Barbuto and Wheeler defined each characteristic: listening involves being receptive and interested in people's views, empathy is the understanding of other's lives, healing pertains to the mending of emotional health, awareness creates knowledge of surroundings, persuasion involves convincing others over formal authority, conceptualization nurtures goals of individuals, foresight anticipates the future and consequences, stewardship is the preparation of others for service, commitment to growth requires a commitment to helping others grow, and community building fosters an environment of trust (¶6-¶15). Each characteristic may play a key role in the servant leader's approach to the mentoring process (Poon, 2006) and is developed through continued learning (Barbuto & Wheeler).

Equally important servant leader mentors guide and support their mentees using the characteristics embodied in the theory in order to help meet the mentee's and organization's goals resulting in the follower's ability to lead (Rhodes, 2006; Sendijaya, Sarros, & Santora, 2008). Accordingly, many studies have found positive effects from the

mentoring process when objectives were well defined for mentor leaders (Harris, Ballenger, & Leonard, 2004; Meijers, 2008; Oliver, 2009; Wasserstein, Quistberg, & Shea, 2007), resulting in servant leadership theory providing objectives for leaders and possibly guided the mentoring process (Mayer, et al., 2008). Poon (2006) stated that there are three key facets of mentoring with servant leadership qualities: relationship, learning, and leadership development. Mentoring is a "natural relational process, experience and values pass from one generation to another" (Stanley & Clinton, 1992, p. 17). Through this relationship and interaction between mentor and mentee learning occurs and guides the development of leadership in the mentee (Poon). These objectives of relationship, learning, and leadership development were met using servant leadership characteristics by mentors, allowing the theoretical framework of leadership to be funneled (Heppner & Heppner, 2010) down to the conceptual framework of servant leadership and in order to provide in depth understanding for the educational mentoring process.

<div style="text-align:center">Problem Statement</div>

Teachers leave the classroom at an alarming rate causing many schools to suffer a net loss each year (National Commission on Teaching and America's Future [NCTAF] & NCTAF State Partners, 2002). This problem is further expanded as "researchers have consistently found that younger teachers have very high rates of departure" (Ingersoll, 2001, p. 502). Schools often spend each spring hiring more teachers than the year prior. "Our schools hired 232,000 teachers who had not been teaching the year before…but the schools lost more than 287,000 teachers who left for other occupations that year—55,000 more than they hired" (NCTAF & NCTAF State Partners, 2002, p. 4). This lack of

retention of teacher can ultimately lead to vast financial losses for districts as they replace teachers.

Consequently, each state in the union faces an educational crisis when the economic price tag of teacher attrition was considered (NCTAF & NCTAF State Partners, 2002). The Texas Center for Educational Research (2000) stated, "Texas is losing approximately $329 million each year due to teacher turnover" (p. 16), a major contributing factor included the 19% of beginning teachers who left after their first year of teaching. Alliance for Excellent Education (2005) addressed the issue, "the loss—to taxpayers, schools, educators, students, and communities—is immense" (p. 3). Thus, states have become interested in teacher induction programs to counter teacher attrition, particularly with beginning teachers (Brill & McCartney 2008; Ingersoll & Smith, 2004).

A common component for beginning teacher induction programs involves a process of mentoring by a veteran teacher (Ingersoll & Smith, 2004). However, districts must demonstrate caution when implementing mentoring programs since those lacking a shared vision have had ineffective results (Meijers, 2008). "Another cause of teacher attrition is badly structured and operated professional mentoring and induction/orientation programs that actually do more harm than good" (Brill & McCartney, 2008, p. 760). Conversely, mentoring programs with highly trained mentor leaders who have a clear understanding of the purpose of the program can have a substantial positive impact on beginning teachers (Oliver, 2009). School mentoring programs must be organized and strategic since "teachers participating in combinations or packages of mentoring and group induction activities were less likely to migrate to

other schools or to leave teaching" (Ingersoll & Smith, 2004, p. 706). As a result, schools are challenged to find effective mentors for beginning teachers.

A key component to consider when school administers are selecting mentor teachers is leadership. Teacher leadership suggests teachers have key roles in how schools operate and function (York-Barr & Duke, 2004). Smylie (1995) claimed one aim of developing teacher leadership was to "enhance the institutional capacity and performance of schools by placing teachers in positions of leadership and decision making, thereby increasing resources and expertise available for improvement" (p. 4). Discovering which leadership theory to apply to the mentoring process then becomes a crucial variable for administrators. "Servant Leadership offers an insight into the qualities that can bridge the gap between leadership and mentoring" (Pegg, 1999, p. 138).

Servant leadership promotes the idea of placing the needs of the followers over those of the leader (Greenleaf, 2002). This approach values the development of people through service, personal relationships, and collaborative work (Crippen, 2006; Drury, 2005; Neill, Hayward & Peterson, 2007). Servant leadership has been the focus of multiple school studies which included links found between servant leadership and school principals (Cerit, 2009; Harris, Ballenger, & Leonard, 2004; Taylor, Martin, Hutchinson, & Jinks, 2007). In addition, servant leadership has been used as a model for teacher effectiveness with students (Drury, 2005) and also applied to an investigation of a school inter-professional team (Neill, Hayward, & Peterson; 2007). Poon's (2006) model linked servant leadership to mentoring and called for further investigation of the topic. Although mentoring has been a common element in teacher induction programs (Stanulis & Ames, 2009) little is known about the use of servant leadership by mentor teachers and

the impact this may play on beginning teachers. This need for effective beginning teacher mentoring and lack of knowledge pertaining to servant leadership and teacher mentors established a basis for exploration.

Purpose of the Study

Due to the importance of successful beginning teacher mentor programs and the discovery of effective teacher mentors, additional research was required to investigate a link between servant leaders and teacher mentors. Evertson and Smithey (2000) stated the goal of mentoring as "preparing mentors to give specific support that enables new teachers to succeed in their entry year" (p. 303). Therefore, the purpose of this qualitative narrative study was to describe the mentoring experience of quality K-12 teachers in Missouri schools guided by the lens of servant leadership. The results of the study should contribute to the literature on servant leadership and mentoring as applied in a school setting (Creswell, 2007).

This qualitative study focused on the personal narratives of quality K-12 teachers (identified by having won the Missouri Teacher of the Year award), regarding their descriptions and stories of their past mentors. Established through multiple interviews with each participant, these stories guided investigation using a servant leadership lens applied to each narrative advocating the mentoring process (Creswell, 2007).The collection of participants' personal accounts relating to their mentors provided data examined by the characteristics of servant leaders and thus afforded meaning to the mentoring experience (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Creswell). Furthermore, participants' stories offered a distinctive avenue to gain knowledge and interpret life (Bruce, 2008). Therefore, this process contributed to the literature on servant leadership

and Poon's (2006) call to investigate, "Servant leader traits…may improve the effectiveness of the mentoring relationship, facilitate the transformation process in both the mentor and mentee, and result in the personal and professional development of the mentor and in particular, the mentee" (p. 9).

<div align="center">Research Questions</div>

The following research questions guided the investigation of this qualitative narrative study:

1. What are the mentoring experiences of quality K-12 teachers in the state of Missouri?

2. How have mentors, as shared through the narratives of mentees, influenced quality K-12 teachers in their professions?

3. How did mentors of quality K-12 teachers utilize characteristics of servant leadership during the mentoring process?

<div align="center">Design and Methods</div>

In order to examine quality teachers' personal accounts of their mentoring experience through the lens of servant leadership a qualitative narrative approach was utilized. To study this problem of practice (Creswell, 2007), data were gathered using the personal experience stories of quality teachers (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). For this study, a personal experience story was considered a narrative record of one's personal recollection of their mentoring experience (Creswell, 2008). The theoretical lenses of servant leadership provided the perspective and structure for understanding and evaluating the data collected. Utilizing the constructivist paradigm, the researcher's focus

was on gaining knowledge socially constructed by the individuals who participated in the research and finding meaning from the lived experiences of participants (Mertens, 2005).

Creswell (2008) defined qualitative research as "…research in which the researcher relies on the views of participants; asks broad, general questions; collects data consisting largely of words from participants; describes and analyzes these words for themes; and conducts the inquiry in a subjective, biased manner" (p. 46). Mertens (2005) simply stated "qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of meanings people bring to them" (p. 229). The qualitative methods for this study involved the use of narrative stories provided by participants about their personal experiences of mentoring (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). These personal experience stories were collected through multiple interviews of each participant. Participants shared their stories of people who have mentored them and impacted their lives through the purposeful investment of time and effort. Next, data were reviewed using the conceptual perspective of servant leadership by coding themes pertaining to the ten characteristics of servant leaders (Spears, 1998). Findings contributed to servant leadership and mentoring literature and provided further knowledge for school administrators during the mentor section process for beginning teachers. With this in mind, the following limitations, assumptions, and design controls were considered for this study.

Limitations

Limitations provide an identification of any potential weaknesses a study may encounter (Creswell, 2003). This qualitative narrative study was limited in setting to public school teachers in a Midwestern state having won the State Teacher of the Year

Award and who were mentored. This study should assist in future research examining servant leadership and mentor teachers, but may not necessarily be generalized to all school and mentoring settings. Additionally, the research was limited by examining the narrative story of participants' mentors through their point of view as mentees, excluding the mentor's perspective and story. Further, stories were coded for the ten themes of servant leadership disregarding other leadership styles and theories.

Assumptions

Holley and Colyar (2009) claimed "narrative inquiry is based on the premise that human beings are essentially raconteurs who experience the world and interact with others through storied lives" (p. 680). Assumptions held by the constructivism paradigm include a reliance on participants' views of an experience through broad and general questions (Creswell, 2007) and that this reality is socially constructed (Mertens, 2005). This study assumed the trustworthiness of participants' narrative stories as they answered questions and shared personal experiences. In order to ensure the participant's voice was not lost by the researcher's bias of having participated in the mentoring process, the participant's original voice was maintained through the use of extensive participant quotes and precise language (Creswell, 2008). Furthermore, the collection of multiple field texts and member checking (Creswell; Mertens) supported the study's credibility.

Design Controls

Narrative inquiry is a qualitative approach to research wherein "researchers listen to participants' stories about their lives and engage with them in reflective dialogue in order to interpret the meaning of the chosen area of research" (Bruce, 2008, p. 323). Since this research required participants to share their personal experiences as mentees

creating stories utilized as data for the conceptual lens of servant leadership, it was best to use a qualitative narrative design (Holley & Colyar, 2009).

> Generally, narratives are understood as stories that include a temporal ordering of events and an effort to make something out of those events: to render, or to signify, the experiences of persons-in-flux in a personally and culturally coherent, plausible manner (Sandelowski, 1991, p. 162).

Participants were identified as quality teachers by having won the Missouri Teacher of the Year award. This honor is awarded annually to a single teacher of excellence representing the best of Missouri teachers (Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2012). The setting of the study involved teachers in Missouri since the state requires beginning teachers to participate in a two-year mentoring program (Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2010). Participants shared their stories of the men and women who had invested in them as mentors throughout their careers during interviews conducted by the researcher. "Narrative analysis studies rely on stories as a way of knowing" (Coulter & Smith, 2009, p. 577). These personal accounts established the data collection framed by the conceptual lens.

Subsequently, the qualitative research focused on the coding of common themes in the participant's interviewed narratives (Holley & Colyar, 2009). "Narrative researchers may code the data of the stories into themes or categories. The identification of themes provides the complexity of a story and adds depth to the insight about understanding individual experiences" (Creswell, 2008, p. 521). An analysis of themes, based on Spears (1998) ten characteristics of servant leadership was used for restorying "the process of reorganizing the stories into some general type of framework" (Creswell,

2007, p. 56). Restoring data utilizing the theoretical perspective created an understanding and focus for research. Coding themes and restorying reflected information concerning mentoring and servant leadership presented throughout the review of literature. Credibility for the study was established by the collection of multiple field texts and member checking (Creswell; Mertens, 2005). Moreover, data collection consisted of thick, rich descriptions enhancing the transferability of the study (Mertens).

Definition of Key Terms

The purpose of this section is to clarify and explain key concepts and factors used in this qualitative narrative design study.

Cultural Model Leadership. Leaders' behavior and organizational views are influenced by personal ideals and value-preferences (Bush, 2003).

Mentee/Protégé. The receiver of mentor support, wisdom, and training in the mentoring process, thus taking an active learning role in order to become increasingly self-directed (Zachary, 2012).

Mentor. Served as a role model to mentee providing emotional, psychosocial, and career-related support ((Eby, Rhodes, Allen, 2010) in order to encourage and develop a mentee towards independence or fulfillment of a goal (Zachary, 2012). Four key categories utilized by mentors: attitude and character, professional competence, communication skills, and interpersonal skills (The National Foundation for the Improvement of Education [NFIE] (1999).

Attitude and Character	Mentor willingly serves as role model and demonstrates commitment, reflection,

resourcefulness while enjoying new challenges and solving problems (NFIE, 1999).

Professional Competence. Mentor is regarded as an excellent teacher, knowledgeable in pedagogy and subject matter understanding school policies/procedures (NFIE, 1999).

Communication Skills. Mentor articulates educational strategies, actively listens, and poses questions prompting reflective thought (NFIE, 1999).

Interpersonal Skills. Mentor is patient, maintaining a trusting mentoring relationship with an awareness of mentee's emotional and professional needs (NFIE, 1999).

Mentor Components of Beginning Teacher Certification. One of six beginning teacher requirements in the state of Missouri to upgrade an initial teaching certificate. The Missouri beginning teacher must have successfully completed 2 years of a mentor assistance program to apply for certification upgrade (Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2009).

Mentor Teacher/Educator. A teacher with at least 3 years of experience, enthusiasm, and commitment to teaching, self-growth, and mentoring, who holds a similar position as mentee. In addition, a teacher with a broad understanding of curriculum, instruction, and relevant administrative issues (Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2008).

Mentoring. The unique relationship and learning partnership between mentor and mentee, whose goal is protégé growth and development often through a role-model-observer process (Eby, Rhodes, & Allen, 2010; Zachary, 2012).

Missouri Teacher of the Year. Missouri K-12 quality teacher representing the best of all Missouri teachers (Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2012). The following criteria were met by each recipient:

Valid Missouri Teacher Certificate; employed full-time at an approved/accredited school district; holds one of the following positions—Pre-K through 12 classroom teacher, guidance counselor, instructional coach, or librarian; should be highly respected by students, parents, and colleagues; demonstrated practice in effectively promoting student performance regardless of student background and ability; play an active role in the community; effective public spokesperson; selected as the District Teacher of the Year. (Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, ¶3)

Moral Leadership. Leadership theory emphasizing leaders' ethical approach to leadership through a focus on their values and beliefs (Bush, 2003; Bush, 2010). Leaders, value laden, approach their role through a moral framework (Gini, 1997; Stiffney, 2010).

Quality Teacher. A current K-12 public school teacher having earned the distinction of Missouri Teacher of the Year since 1988 when Missouri began requiring beginning teacher mentoring (Missouri Revised Statutes, 2011).

Servant Leader. Individuals who model servant leadership characteristics seeking to serve individuals first thus leading others to fulfill their potential by meeting needs (Greenleaf, 2002).

Servant Leader Characteristics. Key qualities utilized by servant leaders for the development of followers (Spears, 1998).

Listening. Servant leaders actively listen genuinely interested in others' ideas and opinions, often using words sparingly in mindful reflection (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2007; Preskill & Brookfield, 2009; Spears, 1998)

Empathy. Servant leaders identify and emphasize commonalities, appreciating new perspectives and recognizing individual uniqueness (Beazley & Beggs, 2001; Spears, 1998).

Healing. Servant leaders foster an environment of restoration being aware of emotional needs and struggles of followers (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2007; Spears, 1998). Both servant and led recognize a need for wholeness and healing accomplished by serving others to meet their potential (Greenleaf, 2002).

Awareness. "General awareness, especially self-awareness, strengthens the servant-leader…It lends itself to being able to view most situations from a more integrated, holistic position" (Spears, 1998, p. 6).

Persuasion. A process used by servant leaders to convince and persuade followers to achieve goals in place of positional authority (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2007; Spears, 1998).

Conceptualization. "The ability to look at a problem from a conceptualizing perspective means that one must think beyond day-to-day realities…a servant-leader must stretch his or her thinking to encompass broader based conceptual thinking" (Spears, 1998, p. 6).

Foresight. A servant leader's ability to fully comprehend a situation and predict potential outcomes based their history and current environment (Burkhardt & Spears, 2000; Spears, 1998).

Stewardship. "A steward in an organization is responsible for preparing it…for the betterment of society…a desire to prepare the organization to contribute to the greater good of society" (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2007, ¶13)

Commitment to Growth. Servant leaders are committed to the development of each follower accepting responsibility to nurture others toward growth using all possible avenues (Spears, 1998).

Community Building. Servant leaders understand the importance of local, collaborative community encouraging rebuilding "by each servant leader demonstrating his or her own unlimited liability for a quite specific community-related group (Greenleaf, 2002, p. 53).

Servant Leadership. This leadership style promotes the idea of placing the needs of the followers over those of the leader. This approach values the development of people through service, personal relationships, and collaborative work (Crippen, 2006; Drury, 2005; Neill, Hayward & Peterson, 2007).

Transformational Leadership. Leaders inspire and empower followers to achieve goals by focusing on follower's needs, while developing their own leadership capacity and demanding a metamorphosis change (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Burns, 2003).

<div align="center">Summary</div>

This study explored the problem of beginning teacher attrition rates. The narrative research gathered described the mentors of quality teachers and the impact each had in

the teacher's professional life. The paradigm of social constructivism was utilized as data were collected through a qualitative narrative design to address the research questions. The theoretical foundation of leadership funneled into the conceptual framework of servant leadership for this study and provided a theoretical lens to review participant narratives. The research added to the body of knowledge on both servant leadership and teacher mentoring.

The background and purpose of the study were provided in this chapter through an overview of teacher retention rates and beginning teacher induction programs including mentoring by experienced teachers. Presented in Chapter Two is a review of related literature that is significant to the study, while framed in Chapter Three are the research designs and methodology utilized for data collection. Outlined in Chapter Four is an analysis of data collected during the study. Lastly, provided in Chapter Five are the findings, conclusions, and ideas for future study.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

As fall arrives, students enter schools, gather at desks, and wait for teachers who may be just as new to the classroom. "Getting beginning teachers off to a good start is just as important as getting students off to a good start" (Ganser, 1999b, p. 8) in order to retain teachers in the profession. However, the American public school is facing an educational and financial crisis as teacher attrition rates soar (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2005; Gonzales, 2007; National Commission on Teaching and America's Future [NCTAF] & NCTAF State Partners, 2002). During the 2008-2009 school year over 22 percent of public school teachers with 1-3 years of experience moved school districts or left the profession (Keigher & Cross, 2010). The Texas Center for Educational Research (2000) discovered "Texas is losing approximately $329 million each year due to teacher turnover" (p. 16). Schools responded to this crisis in multiple ways including induction programs for beginning teachers (Haun & Martin, 2004; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004) often including mentoring as a key strategy to retain teachers (Brill & McCartney, 2008; Ingersoll & Smith, 2004; Villar & Strong, 2007).

Allen (2006) argued, "Mentoring is the process that awakens our confidence in our abilities and opens doors that lead to personal or professional growth" (p. 30). Consequently, the value of the mentoring program in a school district can be immense when properly structured or a program poorly structured and implemented can cause further concerns (Brill & McCartney, 2008). Encompassing and conceptualizing many of the qualities needed to be an effective mentor is the theory of servant leadership

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(Greenleaf, 2002). Thus, an examination of the use of servant leadership qualities by teacher mentors requires further investigation.

The review of literature was initially organized through an examination of mentoring in schools and its history and role in Missouri public schools. Further, definitions of mentoring and servant leadership qualities were also examined from the literature. Finally, a synthesis of literature on mentoring and leadership theory which ultimately narrowed to the conceptual framework of servant leadership within schools was presented.

<div align="center">Mentoring</div>

The National Foundation for the Improvement of Education [NFIE] (1999) insisted, "Mentoring is one important mechanism for advancing the teaching profession as a whole" (p. 15). Nevertheless, the concept of mentoring is not a new theory in the educational world or society. Clawson (1996) referenced examples of Moses and Aaron/Joshua when he stated "the fact that it [mentoring] has endured, documented, for millennia…suggests that mentoring fulfils some deep, important yearnings for connection between the generations" (¶1).

Many authors have claimed the origins of mentoring in the ancient roots of Greek mythology revealing the relationship between mentor and protégé in the tale of Ulysses (Odysseus) as he leaves for war entrusting his family to his friend Mentor (Allen, 2006; Barondess, 1995; Clawson, 1996; Little, 1990). As noted:

Ulysses, Telemachus' father, went off to fight the Trojan War and entrusted
Mentor with the multifaceted training his son needed to grow into adulthood and
to assume his royal responsibilities. The term 'mentoring' became synonymous

with a broad and deep influence from a senior, more experienced and wise

individual to another, younger, protégé. (Clawson, ¶2)

Yet, there is division on the contemporary interpretation of the story and its original text.

Colley (2002) believed the myth to have been historically transformed in order to fit a

modern picture of mentoring. "Thus the myth of kindly nurture and self-sacrificing

devotion…is a modern creation, contrasting starkly with the brutal processes of the

ancient myth" (Colley, p. 261).

The current practical view of mentoring may trace more accurately back to

apprenticeships (Little, 1990), leading to a narrower concept of mentoring during the

Industrial Revolution where the protégé learned a single skill from one mentor (Clawson,

1996). Mentoring took on a more bureaucratic role during the mid 1900s as "a powerful

way for some people to understand and navigate the political realities of the industrial

corporation" (Clawson, ¶9). Clawson further explained that in today's Information Age

(Process Age) the focus of mentoring shifted from a formal administrative role to the

engagement of individual people and their needs.

This shift in mentoring towards the examination of individuals and their needs

created a path for many industries, including education, to better connect employees. In

the late 1970's mentoring, became a topic of discussion in educational literature (Colley,

2002). In the years following, mentoring began to play a dominate role in educational

reform.

Since the early 1980's, when mentoring burst onto the educational scene as part of

a broad movement aimed at improving education, policymakers and educational

leaders have pinned high hopes on mentoring as a vehicle for reforming teaching

and teacher education (Feiman-Nemser, 1996, p. 2).

Education Week's Quality Counts (Hightower, 2010) edition determined twenty three

states in the United States require beginning teachers to participate in an induction or

mentoring program. Yet, the high attrition rate of new teachers continues. "When

implemented properly, mentoring and induction programs can be crucial to improving

teacher retention…poorly implemented programs can do more harm than good" (Brill &

McCartney, 2008, p. 760).

Ingersoll and Smith (2004) discovered that new teacher participation in an

induction and mentoring program had an association with turnover rates. The strength of

this association was dependent on supports given to beginning teachers.

Spending time and energy trying to 'motivate' people is a waste of effort. The real

question is not, 'How do we motivate our people?' If you have the right people,

they will be self-motivated. The key is to not *de*-motivate them. One of the

primary ways to de-motivate people is to ignore the brutal facts of reality (Collins,

2001, p. 89).

Several factors were found to reduce beginning teacher turnover, prominently noting the

finding of the *right people*. "The strongest factors were having a mentor from the same

field, having common planning time with other teachers in the same subject, having

regularly scheduled collaboration with other teachers, and being part of an external

network of teachers" (Ingersoll & Smith, p. 35). Further, when beginning teacher

induction programs incorporated multiple support factors it had a statistically significant

effect on teacher turnover (Ingersoll & Smith). A major factor in these supports depends

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upon the relationships built with other teachers, particularly with a mentor from the same content area. These positive results reveal the need for experienced teachers to take on mentoring responsibilities, often requiring teachers to engage in a new professional role (Collins, 2001).

Furthermore, educational mentors serve in deeper roles than just setting examples in their professions. "Mentors worthy of the name serve as teacher, sponsor, role model, confidant, and more" (Little, 1990, p. 298-299). Teacher mentors must meet their regular classroom expectations and take on the extra responsibility of guiding a beginning teacher. Yet, the distinction between hero and mentor must be recognized.

There is one essential difference between a hero and a mentor: A hero is someone you idolize, while a mentor is someone you respect. A hero earns our amazement; a mentor earns our confidence. A hero takes our breath away; a mentor is given our trust. Mentors do not seek to create a new person; they simply seek to help a person become a better version of himself (Wooden & Yaeger, 2009, p. 6).

Mentors must accept several responsibilities in order to build successful relationships with mentees. Effective mentors have four key categories of qualities: attitude and character, professional competence, communication skills, and interpersonal skills (NFIE, 1999). These categories incorporate important responsibilities and strategies of the mentoring process for teachers.

Attitude and Character

The selection of mentor teachers must begin with an examination of the teacher's attitude toward the profession and the mentoring process. Effective teacher mentors

possess a willing attitude to interact with a beginning teacher as a role model and a belief that mentoring will improve instructional practice (NFIE, 1999).

> Given a choice between talent and attitude, I'll take attitude every time…people with a good attitude are usually team players…they usually have a teachable spirit. People with negative attitudes tend to be lone rangers. You can't teach them a thing (Leman & Pentak, 2004, p. 34).

The mentor's role is to lead a beginning teacher through the learning process to promote growth, not simply help the mentee when a problem arises (Feiman-Nemser, 2003). This requires a mentor teacher to devote time and planning to the process which must be fueled by their attitude towards mentoring.

Time plays a central role in the mentoring process and mentors must have a willing attitude to devote their time and effort. "The heart of effective mentoring is the time that mentors and their protégés spend together" (Ganser, 1999b, p. 11). Mentors and mentees must find time to meet for learning, processing, and discussion (Feiman-Nemser, 1996; Feiman-Nemser, 2001b; Kardos & Johnson, 2010). Equally important, mentor teachers need time to train and develop as mentors.

Mentor teacher training must be a priority for successful mentoring programs. "Effective mentoring requires the veteran teachers called upon to serve as mentors to be familiar with the needs of beginning teachers, teacher development, and a host of other topics related to facilitating the start of a teaching career" (Ganser, 1999a, p. 42). This knowledge is not easily gained and requires teacher mentors to go through a training process. Training opportunities for mentor teachers to learn effective mentoring skills and strategies are important for mentors to understand the program (Feiman-Nemser, 2003;

Ganser, 1999a; Holloway, 2001; Janas, 1996; Zachary, 2005) including training conducted outside the district for a broader perspective (Ganser, 2002a). Stanulis and Ames (2009) conducted research examining the process of an experienced teacher as she learned to mentor. The study revealed implications that the learning needs of mentor teachers, not just beginning teachers, must be taken into account for induction program planning. Evertson and Smithey (2000) found trained mentors have a positive effect on beginning teacher practice. Teacher mentors must have a positive attitude, especially in the use of their time; nevertheless, their character plays an equally important role.

Johnson (2002) claimed that "excellent mentors are kind, healthy, and competent" (p. 89). The mentoring relationship heavily depends upon the character of the mentor and an ability to lead through example. "To be effective mentors should possess patience, enthusiasm, knowledge, a sense of humor and respect" (Allen, 2006, p. 30). The list of characteristics held by a mentor teacher may vary by mentoring purpose and may include moral attributes, personality traits, and individual experience. Yet, a key character trait of mentors is having the knowledge to guide another individual (Spears, 1998). Guidance from the mentor enables the growth of the mentee, who will later be able to stand alone. "Guiding behaviors stimulate the mentees' creative and critical thinking, empower them to envision future situations, encourage them to take informed risks, and help them build the capacity to develop perceptive decisions and take appropriate actions" (Portner, 2003, p. 8). Each mentoring program must define the key characteristics of mentors to provide the best guidance of their individual goals. A mentor's attitude and character guide an organization when selecting mentors, while also possessing a professional competence in their field.

Professional Competence

Mentors must not only be experienced and successful in their personal professions but also able to pass this knowledge on to others (Billett, 2003; Feiman-Nemser, 2001b; Johnson, 2002). Yet, not all great teachers make great mentors as it requires one to articulate their individual thinking process (Feiman-Nemser, 2003; Pegg, 1999). Similar to a coach who passes his skill, knowledge, and strategy on to players, a mentor is responsible to pass along professional understanding.

> Coaching behaviors allow mentors to serve as role models to their mentees; to share relevant experiences, examples and strategies; and especially to open new avenues by which mentees can, through reflection and practice, take responsibility for improving their own teaching. (Portner, 2003, p. 8)

However, not all players become coaches and administrators assigning mentors must be sure candidates are capable of modeling professional competence to mentees.

Mentors must possess professional competence and the ability to make this knowledge accessible to others. Kram and Isabella (1985) found that mentors provide two types of professional competence: career-enhancing and psychosocial functions. Career-enhancing functions include helping the mentee understand the organization and learn the ins and outs of the profession, whereas the psychosocial sphere involves setting an example as a role model and providing mental support through counseling and possibly friendship. Both career-enhancing and psychosocial components of professional competence occur during mentor observations and assessments (Kram & Isabella).

Mentors understand the value of observation and assessment in their profession and the role each plays in transferring professional knowledge. Often data are gathered and assessed through the observation process of mentoring. "Assessing behaviors ensure that the mentees' professional needs are identified so that mentoring decisions can be based on a thoughtful consideration of a variety of data" (Portner, 2003, p. 8). Mentors should be observed by mentees in order to model many of the professional skills needing to be transferred (Kardos & Johnson, 2010). Mentee observations must also be conducted to provide an assessment avenue to collect data on the mentee's progress (Holloway, 2001). Nevertheless, many mentors are not fulfilling this responsibility and not providing this support needed by beginning teachers (Feiman-Nemser, 2001b).

Kardos and Johnson (2010) conducted a study evaluating the experiences of mentoring for beginning teachers. It was found that "large proportions of new teachers…had never been observed by their mentors or did not have at least three conversations with their mentors about classroom management, lesson planning and classroom instruction" (p. 32). Results revealed only 41% of teachers were observed by mentors in the classroom, and furthermore, there was a lack of educational conversation between mentors and mentees, as only 58% had conversations about curriculum and 56% about instruction (Kardos & Johnson). In such cases, it would be difficult for mentor teachers to supply professional competence to mentees given that much of the success of transferring professional competence depends upon the mentor's communication skills with the mentee.

Communication Skills

The ability of mentors to effectively communicate with their protégé is an essential element to guide new teachers. As communicators, mentors must regularly provide open and honest feedback particularly pertaining to teaching and learning (Allen, 2006; Feiman-Nemser, 2001b). "Novices need opportunities to talk with others about their teaching, to analyze their students' work, to examine problems, and to consider alternative explanations and actions" (Feiman-Nemser, p. 1030). Often times these discussions lead to questioning by the mentee for advice, yet, mentors should use questioning to push beginning teachers to a deeper understanding and knowledge of the profession (NFIE, 1999). This will further guide the protégé toward desired outcomes. "The guiding skill of the mentor is to ask the right questions the right way, and at the right time—questions that encourage the mentee to reflect on his or her decisions" (Portner, 2003, p. 8). However, a mentor's communicative success is not solely based on discussion and questioning, but rather demands active listening.

Quality mentoring is dependent on the mentor's ability to listen actively to a mentee in order to truly understand the needs of the individual by devoting attention to the speaker (Allen, 2006). Active listening requires the listener to be actively focusing on others, asking relevant questions, and being genuinely interested in what is being said (Barbuto & Wheeler 2007; McNaughton, Hamlin, McCarthy, Head-Reeves, & Schreiner, 2007). Active listeners give the speaker the understanding that they are present, respectful, and interested in the conversation and have the time to fully understand a situation (Bryant, 2009). Allen referred to this type of listening as mindful. "But mindful listening means devoting your attention to the speaker, rather than thinking of your next

remark" (p. 31). Speaking and listening skills are essential for the effective communication of mentors as they work with mentees to establish relationships through their interpersonal skills.

Interpersonal Skills

Mentors must foster relationships with their mentees in order to support beginning teachers in the learning community (Ganser, 1999b). "The heart of every successful new-teacher mentoring program is the relationship between mentors and their protégés" (Ganser, 2002b, p. 29). Mentors with an exemplary status provide quality professional support creating a relationship based on respect and trust (Missouri State Teachers Association [MSTA], 2005). "Great leaders instill a sense of meaning and belonging in their followers by putting the personal imprint of who they are and what they stand for on their people" (Leman & Pentak, 2004, p. 45). Mentors must build relationships through collaboration to fully assist beginning teachers in their first years of teaching. Lindgren (2005) discovered that mentoring is a proficient method to support beginning teachers and participants claimed the mentoring process had helped them develop positively as individuals. A supportive mentoring relationship will encourage the mentee both emotionally and professionally (Feiman-Nemser, 2001a). Odell and Ferraro (1992) found beginning teacher mentees most valued the emotional support provided by mentors during their first year of teaching. Yet, mentee support is not solely found with the mentor, but rather the entire school community. Key to the development of the mentor/mentee relationship is the school administration and staff who understand the purpose of the mentoring program and support teachers involved (Ganser, 2002b;

Feiman-Nemser, 2001b). As the mentee builds and benefits from these relationships, the mentor also finds encouragement.

Allen (2006) claimed the mentor and mentee relationship reflects a gift exchange where both members gain wisdom throughout the process. Quality mentoring yields positive outcomes not only for mentees but renews a mentor's confidence and understanding in their professional role. Holloway (2001) discovered that "experienced teachers were particularly enthusiastic because they believed that mentoring allowed them to help others, improve themselves, receive respect, develop collegiality, and profit from the novice teachers' fresh ideas and energy" (p. 85). During the mentoring process, mentors experience professional development as they improve and manage their skills of observation, coaching, and analysis as they educate a professional colleague (Feiman-Nemser, 2001b). Both mentees and mentors benefit from well organized and purposeful mentoring leading to a successful induction program (Holloway).

Successful mentoring induction programs depend upon the mentors' ability to excel in the four key areas of attitude and character, professional competence, communication skills, and interpersonal skills (NFIE, 1999). Feiman-Nemser (2001b) simply stated, "Just as all students deserve caring and competent teachers, all beginning teachers deserve caring and competent mentors" (p. 1036). A teacher must possess an ability to lead in order to accomplish these tasks. Thus, mentoring is rooted in leadership theory, conducting an orchestra of individuals seeking to influence.

Mentoring and Leadership

Leadership theory addresses the four key areas of successful mentoring: attitude and character, professional competence, communication skills, and interpersonal skills (NFIE, 1999).

> Leadership is a process of influence. Anytime you seek to influence the thinking, behavior, or development of people toward accomplishing a goal in their personal or professional lives, you are taking on the role of a leader. Leadership can be as intimate as words of guidance and encouragement to a loved one or as formal as instructions passed through extended lines of communication in organization. Leadership can be nurturing the character and self-worth in children and promoting greater intimacy and fulfillment in personal relationships, or it can involve distributing diverse resources in an organization to accomplish a specific objective and task. (Blanchard & Hodges, 2005, p. 5-6)

Wooden and Jamison (2007) claimed the most powerful leadership law as that of teaching by example, being a role model positivity impacting people. Collins (2001), in his research detailing the difference in a good company and a great company, found the utilization of a leadership style blended with personal humility with an intense level of personal will as the distinction. Leman and Pentak (2004) wrote "what distinguishes a great leader from a mediocre one is that a great leader has a heart for his people" (p. 101). Parnell and Bruning (2012) discovered the truth of leadership while commanding an elite infantry platoon on the Afghanistan eastern border:

> You cannot lead men who are unwilling to be led. You must inspire them to give you the power to do so. That power comes only from their minds, their hearts, not

from discipline or devotion to army regulations. When death lurks, nothing else

matters but the bond of trust, or lack thereof, between soldier and leader (p. 89).

Furthermore, he quoted *Gates of Fire* as his approach to his leadership style, "A king

does not require service of those he leads but provides it to them. He serves them, not

they him" (Pressfield, 1998, p. 360). Mentoring characteristics are directly linked to

quality leadership and the service of its followers. Therefore, the conceptual framework

for this study begins with an examination of leadership styles filtering to the theory of

servant leadership.

<div align="center">Conceptual Framework</div>

The theoretical foundation for this mentoring research was viewed through the

lens of leadership since successful leaders "set up their successors for even greater

success in the next generation" (Collins, 2001, p. 39). As the lens of leadership was

narrowed these mentor leaders were examined by their service to mentees.

Leadership mentors are often authority figures who use their power to sculpt the

lives with which they come into contact. They show us strength in their own

convictions; they exhibit sound judgment in their decision making and

deliberateness in their actions. Their lessons can be difficult to swallow,

especially when they come in the form of discipline or perceived toughness, but

their lessons stay with us for years and sometimes even for a lifetime (Wooden &

Yaeger, 2009, p. 5-6).

The term leadership often takes on a complex meaning leaving authors to provide

multiple definitions of the word. "Researchers usually define leadership according to

their individual perspectives and the aspects of the phenomenon of most interest to them"

(Yukl, 2006). Burns (2003) claimed the meaning of leadership as controversial due to vast differences of interpretation; "some will use it neutrally, dispassionately, to analyze qualities of both, say, a Gandhi and a Hitler" (p. 2). This lack of boundaries for the concept of leadership has led to the emergence of multiple leadership theories. Each theory narrows the understanding of the term and creates an understanding to be applied in key circumstances.

Two leadership theories were considered for this study: Burns' (2003) theory of transformational leadership and Bush's (2003) cultural model of leadership filtering to Greenleaf's (2002) theory of servant leadership as the conceptual framework. Each of these theories directly focuses on the individual within an organization to create change. The focal point of a mentoring program must be the mentee and a mentor's ability to meet the needs and provide guidance to the mentee. Thus, both theories of leadership address this focus on the individual.

Transformational Leadership

The theory of transformational leadership was first based upon Burns' work with leadership in 1978 (Hawkins, 2009; Stone, Russell, & Patterson, 2004). Burn's conceptualization of a transforming leadership style began through the examination of Franklin D. Roosevelt's presidency where he first claimed Roosevelt led the country through the depression using a style of transactional leadership, but later during the days of World War II Roosevelt's style changed to transformational leadership (Burns, 2003). According to Burns, transactional leadership causes a change in a give and take manner while transformational leadership demands a metamorphosis change.

…A change in the very condition or nature of a thing, a change into another

substance, a radical change in outward form or inner character, as when a frog is

transformed into a prince or a carriage maker into an auto factory. It is a change

of this breadth and depth that is fostered by transforming leadership. (Burns, p.

24)

Often times these leaders are seen as change agents, visionaries, and role models in their

time leading from the forefront of an organization (Hawkins).

Several elements are demonstrated by transformational leaders including

charisma, motivation, intellectual encouragement, and personal attention (Stone, Russell,

& Patterson, 2004). "Transformational leaders help followers grow and develop into

leaders by responding to individual followers' needs by empowering them and by

aligning the objectives and goals of the individual followers, the leader, the group, and

the larger organization" (Bass & Riggio, 2006, p. 3). The focus of the individual in

transformational leadership warranted the possibility of using this theoretical perspective

for this study. Yet, transformational leadership's idea of complete change is not the

purpose of teacher mentoring programs. Individuals are encouraged to grow through

mentoring, but for this study, the entire system would not change. Further,

transformational leadership ultimately focuses on the organizational objectives being

accomplished by individuals rather than solely trying to better the individual. For these

reasons Bush's (2003) cultural model of leadership narrowed to Greenleaf's (2002)

theory of servant leadership arguably seem suited to the conceptual framework of this

study.

Cultural Model to Servant Leadership

Bush (2003) developed six models of educational leadership and management including a cultural model. Cultural models of leadership "assume that beliefs, values and ideology are at the heart of organizations. Individuals hold certain ideas and value-preferences which influence how they behave and how they view the behavior of other members" (Bush, p. 156). The concept of values can be pivotal to an organization's design.

> Values characterize what an organization stands for, qualities worthy of esteem or commitment. Unlike goals, values are intangible and define a unique distinguishing character. Values convey a sense of identity, from boardroom to factory floor, and help people feel special about what they do. (Bolman & Deal, 2008, p. 255)

The cultural model of leadership has four key qualities making it unique from other models: focus on values and beliefs, emphasize of shared norms and meanings, use of rituals and ceremonies, and assumption of heroes and heroines existence (Bush). The theory of moral leadership encompasses each of these qualities with its focus on values, beliefs, and ethics within leadership (Bush).

Moral leadership has gained value due to an increasing belief that leaders need to assume an ethical approach to decision making (Bush, 2010). "This model assumes that the critical focus of leadership ought to be on the values, beliefs and ethics of leaders themselves" (Bush, 2003, p. 170). Leaders, conscious of the scheme or not, are value laden and express a moral framework through their actions (Gini, 1997; Stiffney, 2010). West-Burnham (1997) considered leadership consistently employing an ethical system

over time to reflect an idea of moral confidence, claiming there were no value-free

decisions made by leadership in schools when considering student learning. "Truly

effective leadership requires imagination and hard work, but it needs a moral center"

(Stiffney, p. 96). DePree (2001) stated a vital aspect of long term leadership to be in the

understanding of a moral purpose. Yet, not all moral frameworks in leadership support

positive outcomes (Gini), thus Stiffney claimed servant leadership as a key component to

moral leadership to humbly guide leaders to benefit and serve individuals. "Servant-

leaders must know what they ultimately serve. They must, with a sense of humility and

gratitude, have a sense of the Source from which all values emerge" (Zohar, 1997, p.

120).

<p align="center">Servant Leadership</p>

Consequently, the model of servant leadership fulfills the moral desire

organizations are finding crucial in leaders.

> A new moral principle is emerging, which holds that the only authority deserving
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> one's allegiance is that which is freely and knowingly granted by the led to the
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> leader in response to, and in proportion to, the clearly evident servant stature of
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> the leader (Greenleaf, 2002, p. 23-24).

The term servant leader was first coined by Robert Greenleaf in his 1969 essay

developing his theory of leadership for organizations: servant leadership (Greenleaf,

2002). Greenleaf's reading of Hermann Hesse's *Journey to the East* led him to an

understanding of the value of the service and leadership of a key character (Greenleaf,

2002). This character was first seen as a servant to each of the journeymen, but later by

his guidance and wisdom he was seen as the leader of the group. Greenleaf's reflection on this text, led to his essay detailing his ideas for a new leadership model.

Individuals who seek to serve first model servant leadership; they have a natural tendency to serve which is later followed by an aspiration to lead (Greenleaf, 2002). "Servant-leadership emphasized increased service to others, a holistic approach to work, building a sense of community, and the sharing of power in decision making (Spears, 1998, p. 4). Greenleaf (2003) in an introduction to his parable depicting the servant as teacher stated, "The ultimate test of the servant motive is what one does with one's optional time for which one is not paid" (p. 78). Servant leaders as individuals exemplify key qualities and characteristics which impel them to first serve then lead.

The identification of individuals as servant leaders is rooted in several discernible characteristics (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2007; Greenleaf, 2002; Spears, 1998). "People are not your most important asset. The *right* people are. Whether someone is the 'right person' has more to do with character traits and innate capabilities than with specific knowledge, background, or skills" (Collins, 2001, p. 64). Spears detailed ten characteristics of servant leaders: listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to growth, and community building. The following details each characteristic in relation to servant leadership.

Listening

An initial quality of servant leaders is their ability to genuinely listen when communicating with others. "One of the defining qualities of servant leaders is their inclination to listen first…servant leaders use words sparingly…Their art is learning how to say just enough, without excess or embellishment" (Preskill & Brookfield, 2009, p.9).

Servant leaders are receptive and interested in the ideas and opinions of followers in order to identify and clarify organizational/individual goals (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2007; Spears, 1998). "The good-to-great leaders understood…creating a culture wherein people had a tremendous opportunity to be heard and, ultimately, for the truth to be heard" (Collins, 2001, p. 74). Listening carefully to others oftentimes results in a servant leader's better understanding of himself (Greenleaf, 2003). Active listening requires one to "Listen with your eyes, not just your ears" (Wooden & Jamison, 2007, p. 74). Further, understanding the value of silence and a humbleness to accept when silence is superior to words is evident in a servant leader (Greenleaf, 2002).

Empathy

"An empathetic orientation enables an individual to identify with another, to emphasize commonalities rather than differences, and to appreciate other perspectives as valid and legitimate" (Beazley & Beggs, 2001, p. 59). Servant leaders recognize and accept the uniqueness in the strengths and weaknesses of each individual (Spears, 1998).

> A manager can't manage what he doesn't know…So you have to make a point of knowing not just the status of the work but also the status of your people. Many mangers focus too much on their projects and not enough on their people…They're preoccupied with the work and not with the workers. (Leman & Pentak, 2004, p. 25-26)

Servant leaders realize and emphasize with others' circumstances and problems (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2007). "For all the shortcomings I see in others, I keep in mind that my own failings are many" (Wooden & Jamison, 2007, p. 23). A servant leader always accepts

and never rejects, thus requiring a tolerance of imperfection since those led are imperfect (Greenleaf, 2002).

Healing

The concept of healing by servant leaders is defined in both their healing of others and themselves. Servant leaders are aware of the emotional needs and struggles of others and their role to help in the healing process (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2007; Spears, 1998). They foster an environment of restoration. Greenleaf (2002) concluded that the concept of healing was one of "wholeness" and was accomplished by both leader and follower. "There is something subtle communicated to one who is being served and led if, implicit in the compact between servant-leader and led, is the understanding that the search for wholeness is something they share" (p. 50). All are broken and the understanding of healing is known by and applied to self and others by servant leaders.

Awareness

Servant leaders are aware of their environments and happenings in such a way to utilize all available resources and options. "Awareness aids one in understanding issues involving ethics and values, and it enables one to approach situations from a more integrated, holistic position" (Burkhardt & Spears, 2000, p. 227). When one is aware the entire picture is understood and the servant leader may step back to reflect and make decisions.

> The cultivation of awareness gives one the basis for detachment, the ability to
> stand aside and see oneself in perspective in the context of one's own experience,
> amid the ever present dangers, threats, and alarms. Then one sees one's own
> peculiar assortment of obligations and responsibilities in a way that permits one to

sort out the urgent from the important and perhaps deal with the important.

(Greenleaf, 2002, p. 41)

Furthermore, the servant leader continues to develop and exercise awareness to better serve followers. "The vision has to be something bigger than you are…Servant leadership starts with a vision and ends with a servant heart that helps people live according to that vision" (Blanchard & Hodges, 2005, p. 113).

Persuasion

Servant leaders seek to convince and persuade followers to accomplish ideas rather than requirements given by formal/positional authority (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2007; Spears, 1998). "The servant-leader seeks to convince others, rather than to coerce compliance" (Spears, p. 6). This fosters a spirit of collaboration focusing on an understanding and support of all members (Beazley & Beggs, 2001; McGee-Cooper & Trammell, 1999). Leman and Pentak (2004) recommended "when directing your people, use persuasion, not coercion. Instead of making pronouncements, make requests. Offer suggestions and ideas. Don't dictate and demand; instead, advocate and recommend" (p. 72). An example of such persuasion is seen in the opening of Greenleaf's (2003) *Teacher as Servant* parable as the head of Jefferson House invites the character to join the house by persuasion, not requirement. This conversation entails a definition of the goals for the house and the purposes its members are trying to accomplish, thus convincing the character to join the house.

Conceptualization

In addition, servant leaders have the ability to conceptualize the world and its possibilities (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2007). They utilize their ability to conceptualize when

facing organizational dilemmas as they visualize and think beyond regular daily realities (Spears, 1998). "Servant-leaders seek to nurture their abilities to dream great dreams. This means that one must be able to think beyond day-to-day management realities" (Burkhardt & Spears, 2000, p. 227). Servant leaders must be creative and willing to take risks as they try to build and accomplish goals. "Leaders, therefore, must be more creative than most, and creativity is largely discovery, a push into the uncharted and the unknown" (Greenleaf, 2003, p. 51). The servant leadership characteristic of conceptualization encourages individuals in organizations to try new ideas and learn from the results.

Foresight

Servant leaders display foresight in their ability to understand a situation and foresee the likely outcome using lessons they have learned from the past and their knowledge of current circumstances (Burkhardt & Spears, 2000; Spears, 1998). Servant leaders utilize a balance of foresight and intuition to understand how to apply facts and logic to a situation (McGee-Cooper & Trammell, 1999). "Foresight is critical in helping organizations move from a survival outlook, reacting to the immediate events, to being proactive, moving with an incremental plan" (Young, 2001, p. 245). Greenleaf (2002) explained foresight as the leader's daily ability to be the combination of historian, contemporary analyst, and prophet. "Foresight is the 'lead' that the leader has. Once leaders lose this lead and events start to force their hand, they are leaders in name only" (Greenleaf, p. 40). Often foresight enables the servant leader to anticipate decisional consequences with accuracy (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2007).

Stewardship

Service, the central goal of servant leadership, is demonstrated through the leader's ability to be a steward in an organization. A steward prepares an organization to accomplish its goals to the betterment of society through openness and service (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2007; Spears, 1998).

> Stewardship is to hold something in trust for another. Historically, stewardship was a means to protect a kingdom while those rightfully in charge were away, or, more often, to govern for the sake of an underage king. The underage king for us is the next generation…It [stewardship] is the willingness to be accountable for the well-being of the larger organization by operating in service, rather than in control, of those around us. (Block, 1993, p. xx)

Servant leaders represent stewards entrusted to support and strengthen organizations for future growth. Greenleaf (2002) simply stated "old people may have a part to play in helping potential servant-leaders to emerge at their optimal best" (p. 44). Collins (2001) found great companies are led by leaders who "look out the window to attribute success to factors other than themselves. When things go poorly, however, they look in the mirror and blame themselves, taking full responsibility" (p. 39). Stewardship requires this humility in order to strengthen companies beyond their current state (Collins).

Commitment to Growth

Servant leaders are committed to the growth of individuals through service to enable each person to fulfill his potential (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2007). Leaders strive to nurture an individual's growth in multiple areas: professional, personal, and spiritual (Burkhardt & Spears, 2000; Spears, 1998). Greenleaf's (2003) *Teacher as Servant*

character, Mr. Billings, represented a commitment to growth throughout the parable as he works with college students. "He stands before them [students] as a model of what he hopes they will become: true servants" (p. 78). Leaders guide individuals of organizations to higher levels of performance and learning, using the present as a time to encourage each to reach his potential (DePree, 2001). "To deal with individual differences…closely monitor each individual's progress, study the inner workings of each, and teach and respond accordingly" (Nater & Gallimore, 2010, p. 13). Servant leaders endeavor to develop people into higher roles of leadership (McGee-Cooper & Trammell, 1999). The goal for providing growth is to empower others to find their own paths (Covey, 1999), which requires high levels of unrelenting commitment (Leman & Pentak, 2004).

Community Building

Servant leadership recognizes a shift in modern society where large institutions culturally dominate the lives of individuals instead of local communities (Spears, 1998). The servant as leader understands the value of a highly collaborative and interdependent community and will give credit to individuals generously (McGee-Cooper & Trammell, 1999). Each leader devotes effort to community building in an organization rather than the isolation of individuals (Beazley & Beggs, 2001).

> Where community doesn't exist, trust, respect, and ethical behavior are difficult for the young to learn and for the old to maintain…all that is needed to rebuild community as a viable life form for large numbers of people is for enough servant-leaders to show the way…by each servant-leader demonstrating his or her own unlimited liability for a quite specific community-related group. (Greenleaf, 2002, p. 52-53)

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Servant leaders understand the value of building an environment of community within an organization and fostering a spirit of cooperation with individuals (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2007).

Servant Leadership and Mentoring

As Spears (1998) concluded, this list of servant leader characteristics is not exhaustive, yet, it provides an understanding of the leadership at the focal point of this study.

> The ideal, most productive relationship between leader and follower occurs when a servant-hearted leader and a servant-hearted follower engage one another in an atmosphere of mutual service and trust. It is when a clear sense of purpose, process, and practice passes from the leader and is received and owned by the follower. The follower in turn responds with trust and willingness to perform and take instruction. (Blanchard & Hodges, 2005, p. 141)

Further, these servant leader characteristics are understood through an examination of Parnell's (Parnell & Bruning, 2012) use of authority and power within his U.S. Army unit. Known as Outlaw Platoon, Parnell commanded his men into multiple fierce battles in Afghanistan rooting out a highly trained force of insurgents. His reflections upon the end of his deployment prove the modern-day importance of servant leadership.

> Then there was me. I was the ultimate authority within the platoon. I just tried not to use it. I'd learned that the strongest thing a leader can do once his men entrust power to him is put it back into their hands. I'd spent the year watching them run with that authority and do amazing things with the freedom it gave them. We were creative, flexible, and light on our feet out there. Serving the men of Outlaw

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Platoon was the greatest honor of my life…Who was I that day? I was a man who

bore witness to greatness. A leader and servant of heroes. Being a part of the

platoon validated my life. (Parnell & Bruning, 2012, p. 351-352)

Parnell naturally became a servant leader to his platoon, never having to mention or

define the term, but rather simply living it. His actions during his time with the platoon

created his lasting influence; mentoring them through his acts of service and thus

preparing new recruits to take on leadership roles.

Servant leaders consider their area of leadership to simply be on loan and not

entitled solely to them. Rather, it is an act of service where they must look beyond their

own time of leadership and mentor a new generation of leaders (Blanchard & Hodges,

2003).

Knowledge is nothing unless it is shared. I know that knowledge for knowledge's

sake is a wonderful ideal, but in reality, it is the *transmission* of understanding

that is the very basis of civilization. It's what allows human progress to move

forward. If we don't pass on what we've gained, we are halting the upward reach

of society, and we are denying everything that came before us that enabled us the

luxury of learning those lessons we refuse to share. (Wooden, 2009, p. 7)

Mentoring provides leaders with mentees who are better prepared to fill openings of

greater responsibility (Yukl, 2006). Servant leaders utilize mentoring to promote the

continuation of a shared vision, thus bringing to question its impact in an educational

setting.

Servant Leadership and Education

Servant leadership continues to stir organizations around the world (Spears, 1998) yet little research has been conducted in relation to its impact in schools (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2007; Mayer, Bardes & Piccolo, 2008) or teacher mentoring (Poon, 2006). The following studies have investigated servant leadership in the school setting and provided information for the study of quality teachers and their mentors.

School Climate

There are several factors which can influence a school's climate. Black (2010) conducted research to determine the impact of servant leadership in a school setting, and discovered a significant positive correlation between the school's climate and servant leadership. "The strong relationship suggests that when servant leadership is perceived to be present, the perceptions of the school climate are positive" (p. 459-460).

Joseph and Winston (2005) studied the perceptions of servant leadership in an educational setting and its correlations with leader and organizational trust. Support was found for the suggestion that servant leadership establishes organizational trust. Findings also included support for several hypotheses including that servant-led organizations have higher levels of leader trust and organizational trust than non-servant led organizations (Joseph & Winston).

School Administrators

School administrators, particularly principals, practicing servant leadership establish a tone of service in schools. Cerit (2009) discovered a positive relationship between school principals identified as servant leaders and teacher job satisfaction. "The understanding of servant leadership may contribute to improving teachers' job

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satisfaction due to its characteristics such as developing, supporting, helping and providing service to employees" (Cerit, p. 616). This conclusion spurs further inquiry to its impact on teacher retention.

In addition, Taylor, Martin, Hutchinson, and Jinks (2007) examined school principals identified as servant leaders and evaluated their leadership practices. Findings revealed that servant leader principals were rated significantly higher in several leadership areas. Results "concluded that servant leaders…are perceived by their teachers as more effective leaders in the areas of challenging the process, inspiring a shared vision, enabling others to act, modeling the way and encouraging the heart (Taylor, Martin, Hutchinson, & Jinks, p. 411). School administration has benefited from servant leadership as has district administration.

Crippen and Wallin (2008) investigated the role of school superintendent through the lens of servant leadership. This qualitative study gathered information on superintendents' perceptions of their mentors utilizing the characteristics of servant leadership to analyze the information. All ten servant leadership characteristics were found in each superintendent style of leadership and nine of the ten characteristics were mentioned when describing qualities of their mentors. These findings "suggest that there has been a move to support a more growth-oriented, moral, and stewardship-based leadership paradigm currently being advocated in education" (Crippen & Wallin, p. 562).
Teachers

Teachers as servant leaders shift the classroom focus from teacher driven to student centered. Hays (2008) compared a traditional teaching style to that of a servant leader teacher. The ten characteristics of servant leadership were applied to the

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experience of the classroom and teachers. Student narratives created from interviews, journals, and course evaluations represented each of the characteristics to create an understanding of classroom servant leadership. "Servant teaching offers a richness of experience, and permits and promotes learning to occur that may be virtually impossible to achieve through other means" (Hays, p. 130).

Drury (2005) investigated teachers in higher education with servant leadership qualities as a variable for effective teaching. The study discovered "students perceive their best instructors to have a servant leader mindset in the classroom" (p. 8). Findings indicated that servant leadership could be a viable method to transform education.

As servant leadership continues to be investigated in schools and classrooms there is still need for additional inquiry to fully understand its impact for education and students. Furthermore, little attention has been given to the area of servant leadership and teacher mentoring. Poon (2006) stated a need for empirical research into the impact of servant leadership on both mentor and mentees; claiming such research may "improve the effectiveness of the mentoring relationship" (p. 9). Thus, this study of servant leader teacher mentors contributed new knowledge and understanding to educational literature.

Summary

Teacher attrition is just one of the many concerns plaguing schools today. Mentoring has become a common solution in many states to combat the problem, but has the leadership of individual mentors been taken into account.

> And I came to see the problems of the world as not so much the result of the work
>
> of destructive and harmful people as they are the consequences of the neglect of

the so-called good people who are capable of exerting a constructive influence.

(Greenleaf, 2003, p. 105)

The mentoring relationship has a long history of guiding individuals to achieve a higher level of their potential (Clawson, 1996; Feiman-Nemser, 1996, Little, 1990). "Words can be powerful, but the power of the individual example…is much greater" (Wooden & Jamison, 2007, p. 59). Effective mentors have several characteristics which promote leadership and an ability to promote a positive influence (Allen, 2006; NFIE, 1999). This study then reviewed mentoring through the conceptual framework of servant leadership and each of its characteristics (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2007; Greenleaf, 2002; Spears, 1998). Lastly, prior research on servant leadership in education was discussed as foundational knowledge for the study.

Therefore, this research study focused on whether the mentor's use of servant leadership characteristics were imbedded within the mentee and mentor experiences and ultimately might improve the retention of teachers. Explored in Chapter Three will be the research design and methodology utilized along with the research questions, population sample, methods of data collection, and data analysis. Presented in Chapter Four are the analysis and the results of the data collected. Findings, conclusions, implementations for practice and recommendations for future research are described in Chapter Five.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Introduction

Beginning teachers are leaving the profession at an alarming rate, financially

draining the nation each year (Gonzales, 2007; National Commission on Teaching and

America's Future [NCTAF] & NCTAF State Partners, 2002). "It is clear that thousands

of dollars walk out the door each time a teacher leaves" (Barnes, Crowe, & Schaefer,

2006, p. 3). The Alliance for Excellent Education (2005) claimed developing and

retaining teachers is critical to accomplishing the educational goals of the nation. One

method schools enact to counter this problem is to require beginning teachers to

participate in induction programs, often leading to higher rates of job satisfaction,

commitment, and retention (Ingersoll & Strong, 2004).

Often beginning teacher induction programs will require a mentoring aspect by an

experienced teacher. Mentoring of beginning teachers has proven to be an effective

component for induction programs (Ingersoll & Smith, 2004) if well structured, yet,

schools must be careful as a poorly planned mentoring program may do more harm than

good (Brill & McCartney, 2008). It is crucial to provide a well-structured mentoring

program built upon the ideas of providing "psychological support and instruction-related

support" (Wynn, Carboni, & Patall, 2007, p. 213) for success. Finding a mentor teacher

capable of supplying these needs is a challenge for school districts as they try to have

successful induction programs.

The theory of servant leadership provides an avenue to accomplish the supports

beginning teachers need from their mentors. Servant leadership is a style of leadership

where the leader's focus is on the follower's needs in order to promote development and growth (Greenleaf, 2002, Mayer, Bardes, & Piccolo, 2008; Neill, Hayward & Peterson, 2007; Taylor, Martin, Hutchinson, & Jinks, 2007; Spears, 1998). The purpose of this study was to explore the mentoring stories of quality teachers about the individuals who have guided them in their professional lives. Participant narratives were reviewed using the conceptual lens of servant leadership. The design and methods of this study were organized by first examining the research purpose and questions, then an explanation of the study's design and data gathering processes, and finally a clarification of the data analysis procedures including trustworthiness and study limitations.

Research Purpose

Due to the importance of successful beginning teacher mentor programs and the discovery of effective teacher mentors, additional research is required to investigate a link between servant leaders and teacher mentors. Evertson and Smithey (2000) stated the goal of mentoring as "preparing mentors to give specific support that enables new teachers to succeed in their entry year" (p. 303). The purpose of this qualitative narrative study was to describe the mentoring experience of quality K-12 teachers in Missouri schools guided by the lens of servant leadership. The results of the study contributed to the literature on servant leadership and mentoring applied in a school setting (Creswell, 2007).

This qualitative study focused on the personal narratives of quality K-12 teachers, identified by having won the Missouri Teacher of the Year award, regarding their descriptions and stories of their past mentors. Established through multiple interviews of each participant, these stories guided further investigation as a servant leadership lens

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was applied to each narrative advocating the mentoring process (Creswell, 2007).The collection of participants' personal accounts concerning their mentors provided data that was examined by the characteristics of servant leaders, thus affording meaning to the mentoring experience (Creswell). Participants' stories offered a distinctive avenue to gain knowledge and interpret life (Bruce, 2008; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Therefore, this process contributed to the literature on servant leadership and Poon's (2006) call to investigation, "Servant leader traits…may improve the effectiveness of the mentoring relationship, facilitate the transformation process in both the mentor and mentee, and result in the personal and professional development of the mentor and in particular, the mentee" (p. 9).

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the investigation and exploration of this qualitative narrative study.

1. What are the mentoring experiences of quality K-12 teachers in the state of Missouri?

2. How have mentors, as shared through the narratives of mentees, influenced quality K-12 teachers in their professions?

3. How did mentors of quality K-12 teachers utilize characteristics of servant leadership during the mentoring process?

Research Design

The research approach of this qualitative narrative study was to gather data through multiple stories and field texts (Clandinin, 2006; Creswell, 2007) about teachers' mentors providing insight on beginning teacher mentoring and attrition, a problem of

practice (Creswell, 2007). The research, using a qualitative narrative design, examined the stories of quality teachers as they recounted their mentors and their experiences as mentees (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). "The techniques through which narrative investigators collect or initiate the production of narrative data are taken from the familiar toolbox of qualitative researcher (observation, interview, focus group, archival examination, etc.), yet in employing them they focus on stories" (Spector-Mersel, 2010, p. 213). Afterward, interviews and field texts were examined through the theoretical lens of servant leadership. By understanding the role of mentors in the professional lives of quality teachers from a perspective of servant leadership furthered the knowledge base of beginning teacher induction and mentoring programs. "Narratives have the effect of evoking dissonance in the reader, enabling the reader to look at educational phenomena with renewed interest and a more questioning stance" (Coulter & Smith, 2009, p. 577-578). Overall, the problem of practice approach provided a foundation for the methodology of the study.

To study this problem of practice, data were gathered using a qualitative design. Mertens (2005) stated, "Qualitative methods are used in research that is designed to provide an in-depth description of a specific program, practice, or setting" (p. 229). Furthermore, using an educational perspective Creswell (2008) defined,

> Qualitative research is a type of educational research in which the researcher relies on the views of participants; asks broad, general questions; collects data consisting largely of words (or texts) from participants; describes and analyzes these words for themes; and conducts the inquiry in a subjective, biased manner. (p. 46)

Qualitative researchers understand that reality is constructed by the social interaction of individuals and are interested in how people respond and make sense of their experiences in the world (Merriam, 1998). Researchers use an emerging approach to inquiry sensitive of setting and participants while analyzing data for patterns with a goal of extending literature or signaling a call for response (Creswell, 2007). Recent historical developments in educational qualitative research portray philosophical, procedural, or participatory/advocacy themes (Creswell, 2008). For this study, a qualitative research design provided the best understanding of the research purpose and questions as the complex issues of teacher attrition and mentoring warranted further detailing and exploration (Creswell, 2007).

Therefore, the qualitative design of this study utilized the narrative research approach to investigate quality teachers' experiences with the mentoring process, and reflected on the impact of their individual mentors (Pinnegar & Daynes, 2007). "Narrative research designs are qualitative procedures in which researchers describe the lives of individuals, collect and tell stories about these individuals' lives, and write narratives about their experiences" (Creswell, 2008, p. 61). Clandinin and Connelly (2000) claimed narrative research as the science of people.

> These are the sciences of people. People's lives and how they are composed and lived out are what is of interest. We social scientists are…interested in observing, participating with, thinking about, saying and writing the doings and goings-on of our fellow humans. (p. xxii)

During the study, quality teachers told the stories of their mentors who had impacted their professional lives and thus required narrative recounts. Merriam (1998) stated, "As a

research technique [narrative analysis], the study of experience is through stories. Emphasis is on the stories people tell and on how these stories are communicated" (p. 157). The significance of narrative research is found in the documentation of these individual human experiences (Holley & Colyar, 2009) creating an avenue of knowing and understanding (Coulter & Smith, 2009). "We learn from stories and stories help us to interpret life" (Bruce, 2008). The purpose of this study was to describe the complexity of the mentoring experience through the narratives of quality teachers guided by the lens of servant leadership and thus required a reliance on participants' subjective views. The researcher assumed a constructivist worldview to direct this narrative qualitative study (Creswell, 2007).

The constructivist paradigm in narrative research reflected the basic tenet "that reality is socially constructed" (Mertens, 2005, p. 12). Furthermore, this study reflected Creswell's (2007) social constructivism worldview as the mentoring experiences of participants were socially based, dependent on human interaction. Merriam (1998) detailed,

> In interpretive research, education is considered to be a process and school is a lived experience. Understanding the meaning of the process or experience constitutes the knowledge to be gained from an inductive, hypothesis—or theory—generating mode of inquiry. Multiple realities are constructed socially by individuals. (p. 4)

Basic beliefs of the constructivist paradigm includes not only multiple, socially constructed realities but also that findings are created, values explicit, and a link exists between participants and researcher (Mertens). The social constructivism paradigm

created a foundational structure for this narrative research and guided the design of this study.

Overall, this study employed a social constructivist qualitative narrative research design (Cladinin & Connelly, 2000; Creswell, 2007; Mertens, 2005) which established a basis for data collection. Data were gathered through the stories of quality teachers who described their mentors, reviewed through the lens of servant leadership. Additionally, information collected revealed further understanding and information about servant leader mentor teachers.

<center>Participants</center>

The participants in a research study are those individuals the researcher is studying and referred to as subject or participant (Mertens, 2005). Clandinin & Connelly (2000) claimed that in narrative research people are the key elements to lived stories. This study used purposeful sampling in selecting participants for data collection. "Purposeful sampling is used so that individuals are selected because they have experienced the central phenomenon" (Creswell, 2003, p. 220). Mertens stated that researchers using purposeful sampling have a "goal of identifying information-rich cases that will allow them to study a case in-depth" (p. 317). Criterion purposeful sampling was employed since participants in this study were selected based on their acquisition of the Missouri Teacher of the Year Award, having met state-level criterion establishing quality teachers. Purposeful sampling through the selection of Missouri Teachers of the Year created knowledge and understanding of the research questions (Creswell, 2008).

Population and Sample to be Studied

Participants for this study involved K-12 teachers from Missouri since the state requires beginning teachers to participate in a two-year mentoring program (Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2010). The study focused on the population of Missouri Teacher of the Year award recipients and their narrative stories of the men and women who had mentored them in their professional lives. These selected teachers were current K-12 public educators in the state of Missouri who had met criteria establishing excellence in teaching based on the National Teacher of the Year program (Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2012). Having met these criteria verified these teachers as elite and quality educators, and thus provided the population through purposeful sampling to study mentoring. "The Teacher of the Year represents Missouri's 70,689 teachers…Only 43 individuals have been named to the select group of Missouri Teachers of the Year since the state began participating in the national awards program in 1957" (Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2012, ¶5). Recently the recipient for the 2012-2013 school year was announced, making the total 44 teachers. Multiple strategies were taken by the researcher to narrow the population of Missouri Teachers of the Year in order to focus the population to a specific sampling for the study.

Sampling Procedures

Several methods were applied to narrow the population of Missouri Teachers of the Year to a concise sample to study. First, the list of 44 award winners was narrowed to a list of 25 containing only the teachers who had won Missouri Teacher of the Year since 1988. In 1985 Missouri passed the Excellence in Education Act, requiring districts to

"provide a plan of professional development…for a teacher's first two years of teaching" (Missouri State Teachers Association, 2005, p. 19). This Act eliminated Teacher Lifetime Certification with a system of renewable certification. Therefore, all valid teaching certificates issued prior to 1988 were exempt from the professional development requirements in the first two years of teaching (Missouri Revised Statutes, 2011); even so, it was not until 2003 that all Missouri teachers were under the new requirements of renewable certification (Missouri State Teachers Association). Thus, all beginning teachers required two years of mentoring to upgrade certification classification. The researcher chose to limit the Missouri Teacher of Year population to those having won after 1988 since it represented the year Missouri began its current mentoring mandates.

From 1988 to 2012, a total of 25 teachers have won the Missouri Teacher of the Year award (Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2012). The researcher further condensed this list by eliminating all individuals not currently in teaching positions in Missouri due to factors including retirement and state relocation. A database of Missouri educators' salaries provided a current public record of Missouri teachers' earnings and employers revealing those educators still employed and teaching in the state (St. Louis Post-Dispatch, 2012). Of the 25 Missouri Teachers of the Year, ten were still working in Missouri public schools.

Further, each of the 25 teachers were divided into three teaching level categories: elementary (grades K-5), middle (grades 6-8), and secondary (grades 9-12). The researcher categorized state winners based on their teaching level at the time they were awarded Teacher of the Year in order to have all three teaching level categories represented. These diverse participant constructs established participant variation within a

small samples size so that "any common patterns that emerge from great variation are of particular interest and value in capturing the core experiences and central, shared aspects or impacts of a program" (Patton, 1987, p.53). Therefore, of the ten current Missouri Teacher of Year educators, four were selected as study participants for interviews: one elementary teacher (grades K-5), two middle level teachers (grades 6-8), and one secondary level teacher (grades 9-12) were chosen for interviews. Furthermore, two males and two females were selected to ensure equal representation of gender.

Overall, measures for selecting the sample included using a criterion purposeful sampling of quality Missouri teachers. A quality teacher criterion for this study was met through the selection of participants who had earned the Missouri Teacher of the Year award. Narrative research often consists of the selection of one or two participants for data collection through several interviews about their personal experiences (Creswell, 2007; Creswell, 2008). This study selected four participants to interview about their mentors and the mentoring process as experienced as a protégé. The four participants established equal gender representation and a sampling of all three teaching levels including two teachers for middle level as one educator was in a building containing grades 7-8 and the other grades 8-9.

Site Selection

Criterion purposeful sampling was utilized in the selection of four (Creswell, 2007; Creswell, 2008) quality teachers, established by winning the Missouri Teacher of the Year Award, narrowed by a randomization protocol for narrative interviews. "Selecting respondents on the basis of what they can contribute to the researcher's understanding of the phenomenon under study means engaging in purposive…sampling"

(Merriam, 1998, p. 83). The collection of participants established the site selection. "In a narrative study, one needs to find one or more individuals to study…who shed light on a specific phenomenon or issue being explored" (Creswell, 2007, p. 119). Participants' first-order narratives were the central focus of inquiry: telling stories about their own experiences with the central phenomenon (Creswell). As Clandinin and Connelly (2000) stated, "Experience is what we study, and we study it narratively because narrative thinking is a key form of experience and a key way of writing and thinking about it" (p. 18). Thus school sites were not at the heart of the research but rather the participants.

Participant and Site Permissions

Multiple steps were followed to collect data from participants involved in the study. Data collection procedures first required permissions from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) to be gathered (Appendix A). "An IRB is a committee mandated by the National Research Act" (Mertens, 2005, p. 332) and is required for all institutions conducting biomedical/behavioral research involving human participants (Mertens). The use of interviews was utilized for qualitative data collection and permissions were first received in order to move into the participant selection phase of the study. Permissions/Informed consents had to be granted from each institution and individual participating (Appendix B). "Access may require finding one or more individuals in the group who will allow the research in—a gatekeeper or key informants" (Creswell, 2007, p. 71). A letter that proposed the research and contained an explanation of the following was given to gatekeepers for permission: why the site was chosen, types of research activities, how results would be reported, and what could be gained from the study (Creswell, 2003). Further, administrative permissions and participant letters of informed

consent were attained. After approvals were received, the researcher began the process of data collection.

Data Collection

"The purpose of data collection is to learn something about people or things. The focus is on the particular attribute or quality of the person or setting" (Mertens, 2005, p. 344). Data collection includes phases of gaining permission and sample selection, in addition to selecting the type of data gathered, forms of recording information, and managing the collection (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007). For a narrative study, the researcher's main focus is on the sample where each of the participants has a story to share of personal experience relating directly to the research inquiry (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Creswell, 2007; Creswell, 2008). This qualitative narrative study of quality teachers describing their mentors required a well planned and organized data collection founded on quality teacher interviews in order to gain a "full range and depth of information" (Mertens, 2005, p. 345). As narrative research facilitates exploration of participant interview content, it is a valuable approach for analysis (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996). The following section will address the tools and procedures utilized for data collection.

Data Gathering Tools and Procedures

Data collection relies on "a series of interrelated activities aimed at gathering good information to answer emerging research questions" (Creswell, 2007, p. 118). The foundational basis for selecting which data gathering procedures to utilize in this research was based on data collection tools which would best answer the research questions.

Participant Narrative Interviews

Narrative research depends upon the interviewing process as a direct avenue to obtain detailed stories of participants (Creswell, 2008; Merriam, 1998) "In this approach to research, researchers listen to participants' stories about their lives and engage with them in reflective dialogue in order to interpret the meaning of the chosen area of research" (Bruce, 2008, p. 323). Clandinin and Connelly (2000) commented on how interviews can be used as a variety of field texts.

> [Interviews] may be turned into written field texts through a variety of means. Whole tapes can be transcribed; field notes can be made as one listens and relistens to the tape recordings; or partial transcriptions can be made for segments of the taped interview, depending on the researcher's interests. (p. 110)

Selected quality teachers participated in individual interviews sharing their personal stories of their mentors and the mentee process. "At the root of in-depth interviewing is an interest in understanding the lived experience of other people and the meaning they make of that experience" (Seidman, 2006, p. 9). Interviews enable the researcher to fully understand participants' perspectives and impressions of an experience (Mertens, 2005). Creswell (2007) detailed the following series of steps in the interviewing procedure to be utilized in this study.

Determine Interview Type. The type of interview exercised must reflect the process most useful to answer research questions (Creswell, 2007). Initially, the first two personal interviews were conducted for each participant face-to-face, while a third follow-up interview was conducted by telephone. Mertens (2005) claimed three advantages when conducting interviews: depth of information, relationship development,

and participant flexibility. Interviews included open ended and semi-structured questions to establish an understanding for each narrative since "the kinds of questions asked and the ways they are structured provide a frame within which participants shape their accounts of their experience" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 110). Furthermore, Merriam (1998) explained, "There is no predetermined set of questions, and the interview is essentially exploratory. One of the goals of the unstructured interview is, in fact, learning enough about a situation to formulate questions for subsequent interviews" (p. 75). After participant interviews were collected and transcribed, each was coded for themes using a servant leadership perspective.

Record Keeping Devices. Interviews were recorded for accuracy, later transcribed for analysis utilizing the theoretical perspective of servant leadership. "This practice [tape recording] ensures that everything said is preserved for analysis" (Merriam, 1998, p. 87). Fieldnotes were also taken during interviews to further inform the study and protect against any technological failures (Mertens, 2005). "Fieldnotes are accounts describing experiences and observations the researcher has made" (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995, p. 5).

Interview Design/Refine Questions. Interviews were first-order narratives as the participants were retelling stories about their own lives and experiences (Creswell, 2007). "By conceptualizing the research text as a narrative, the researcher is cast as a storyteller, the participants become the characters, and the plot orders the reader's comprehension of significant events" (Holley & Colyar, 2009, p. 681). Interview protocols (Appendix C) contained open-ended questions used in the interview which represented a narrowing of the central research questions (Creswell, 2007). These broad questions encouraged a

fuller descriptive history of the mentoring process (Merriam, 1998). Interviews questions were semi-structured and provided a framework for participants to share their experiences (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000).

Interview Site and Permissions. Interview sites were chosen by participants out of convenience as the sample takes precedence over site in this narrative research (Creswell, 2007). Permissions were gained from the Institutional Review Board, participants, and participants' institutions and administrators.

Interview Process. Interview protocols (Appendix C) presented semi-structured questions providing for open-ended answers by participants. Interview protocols were presented to participants prior to interviews in order to allow them time to reflect upon their mentors thus providing fuller more detailed stories. The first two interviews took approximately one hour each to conduct, while the third interview was conducted by telephone taking approximately one hour. Each participant was interviewed on three different occasions, as "the goal of multiple interviews is to increase the accuracy of the results" (Mertens, 2005, p. 202). The purpose of the interview design was to engage the participant in a one-on-one interview to share an oral telling of his or her story pertaining to the research questions (Bruce, 2008; Creswell, 2007; Creswell, 2008). Mertens defined this as the "narrative study of lives" (p. 268) where the research method determining meaning from interviews is present-centered.

Field Texts

Transcribed interviews, interview fieldnotes, and any documented material provided by participants were gathered for data as field texts (Clandinin, 2006; Creswell,

2007). After examining all field texts, data analysis procedures were set in motion in order to apply servant leadership as the theoretical perspective.

Servant Leadership Lens

Interview responses and field notes revealed a collection of narratives depicting the mentors of quality teachers and their impact on the teachers' professional lives. This collection of data provided the basis of analysis for the theoretical lens of servant leadership. "A theoretical lens in narrative research is a guiding perspective or ideology that provides structure for advocating for groups or individuals and writing the report" (Creswell, 2008, p. 515). Servant leadership exemplifies several key characteristics (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2007; Greenleaf, 2002; Spears, 1998) which served as the data lens and framework. Narratives were reviewed for themes and ideas connected to Spears's ten characteristics of servant leaders: listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to growth, and community building.

Data Analysis Procedures

Data analysis involved the examination of all collected data in order to address the research question (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007). "It involves preparing the data for analysis, conducting different analyses, moving deeper and deeper into understanding the data, representing the data, and making an interpretation of the larger meaning of the data" (Creswell, 2003, p. 190). The qualitative narrative data were reviewed through a social constructivist paradigm and analyzed through the theoretical perspective of servant leadership emphasizing participant stories (Merriam, 1998).

Qualitative Data Analysis

Narrative data analysis represents a complexity of human experience making possible multiple interpretations (Bruce, 2008).

> There are no formulae or recipes for the 'best' way to analyze the stories we elicit and collect. Indeed, one of the strengths of thinking about our data as narrative is that this opens up the possibilities for a variety of analytic strategies. Such approaches also enable us to think beyond our data to the ways in which accounts and stories are socially and culturally managed and constructed. (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996, p. 80)

This study analyzed the collected narrative data of each participant's experience with mentoring through the lens of servant leadership (Merriam, 1998). The narrative researcher conducted data analysis through the process of restorying in order to develop understandings and findings in the study.

Restorying

"Restorying is the process of gathering stories, analyzing them for key elements of the story, and then rewriting the story to place it within a chronological sequence" (Ollerenshaw & Creswell, 2002, p. 332). The qualitative research analysis of restorying began by organizing the narrative field texts into useable forms such as interview transcriptions and typed interview fieldnotes. The restorying process began as the researcher gathered narratives, analyzed each for themes, and finally rewrote each into a logical sequence recognizing the purpose of the study (Creswell, 2008). "Generally, narratives are understood as stories that include a temporal ordering of events and an effort to make something out of those events: to render, or signify, the experiences of

persons-in-flux in a personally and culturally coherent, plausible manner" (Sandelowski,

1991, p. 162). This study focused on both participants' stories and servant leadership

themes which emerged in the narratives (Creswell, 2007), thus ending restorying through

a write-up sequence which reflected the portrayal of servant leadership characteristics.

Coding of Servant Leadership Themes

"Narrative constructs serve to mediate how readers understand the story" (Holley

& Colyar, 2009, p. 681). Field texts, including interviews and interview field notes, were

reviewed and organized to find common themes of the ten leadership characteristics

(Spears, 1998). "The researcher then searches for connecting threads and patterns among

the excerpts within those categories and for connections between the various categories

that might be called themes" (Seidman, 2006, p. 125). These themes reflected

information gained through the stories of participants of their mentors. "The

identification of themes provides the complexity of a story and adds depth to the insight

about understanding individual experiences" (Creswell, 2008, p. 521). Themes coded

during restorying were used to gain a richer knowledge base of each narrative and

mentoring.

Role of the Researcher

The role of the researcher is of importance as data are collected and analyzed in

qualitative narrative studies. Researchers collaborate with participants and are actively

working together in order to fully and accurately describe the narratives of participants

(Creswell, 2008). Research is shaped not only by participants, but also the researcher as

interview questions are developed and directed by the researcher. "The researcher

influences the results of oral history studies by determining which questions to ask and by

selection and editing decisions in reporting results" (Mertens, 2005, p. 278). Clandinin and Connelly (2000) agreed, "The way an interviewer acts, questions, and responds in an interview shapes the relationship and therefore the ways participants respond and give accounts of their experiences" (p. 110).

Further, in qualitative research "the researcher comments on past experiences, biases, prejudices, and orientations that have likely shaped the interpretation and approach to the study" (Creswell, 2007, p. 208). The researcher is a public school teacher and has taught in a Missouri middle school setting for the past nine years. The researcher has met Missouri beginning teacher guidelines in years past and been mentored by an experienced teacher. The researcher has also had several influential mentors in the past who have helped shape her educational outlooks. The researcher believes mentoring to be a powerful tool for education, and fosters a curiosity of servant leadership's impact on the process. "Narratives are ultimately reflective and subjective interpretations of life and its meanings" (Bruce, 2008, p. 329). As with the social constructivism paradigm, interpretations of the study's findings reflected the researcher's own experiences and background while the researcher tried to make sense of the meanings participants have put on the mentoring process (Creswell). Yet, the following strategies to address issues of quality guided the researcher in order to gain a genuine picture of each participant's personal experience.

<center>Strategies to Address Issues of Quality</center>

Narrative qualitative research requires an acknowledgment of strategies employed to ensure the merit of the study and trustworthiness. "The researcher must establish indicators that provide evidence that the information generated in the research is

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trustworthy and believable" (Mertens, 2005, p. 346). Qualitative research standards for quality data collection include credibility, dependability, transferability, and confirmability.

Credibility

Credibility confirms a research study's interpretations and findings as accurate and true (Creswell, 2008). Credible narrative research has a correspondence between participant perceived social constructs and the researcher's portrayal of participant narratives (Mertens, 2005) thus validating findings (Creswell, 2008). To ensure credibility in this qualitative study, interviews and restorying were reviewed through member checking. Clandinin and Connelly (2000) claimed,

> When narrative inquirers return to participants with text, their question is not so much, Have I got it right? Is this what you said? Is this what you do? Rather, it is something much more global and human: Is this you? Do you see yourself here?

Member checking is the reviewing process by a study's participants to verify accuracy of the researcher's account (Creswell, 2008). "This approach validates their [participants'] experience by inviting them to share that experience and also affirms the importance of getting their experience right" (Bruce, 2008, p. 327).

Dependability

Reliability refers to the quantitative research method where a study can be replicated, whereas narrative research is focused on individual stories. Thus dependability, or consistency, reflects the idea of reliability for quality control of qualitative research (Merriam, 1998). "Rather than demanding that outsiders get the same results, a researcher wishes outsiders to concur that, given the data collected, the results

make sense—they are consistent and dependable" (Merriam, p. 206). Recording of interviews for accuracy, applying triangulation of data for themes, and explaining the researcher's position strengthened the dependability of this study (Creswell, 2008; Mertens, 2005; Merriam).

Transferability

Transferability refers to the extent a study's findings can be applied in general situations (Merriam, 1998). In-depth field texts of interviews and interview fieldnotes containing rich detail of each participant's experience with mentoring helped establish the study's transferability (Creswell, 2007; Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995).

> In qualitative research, the burden of transferability is on the reader to determine the degree of similarity between the study site and the receiving context. The researcher's responsibility is to provide sufficient detail to enable the reader to make such a judgment. (Mertens, 2005, p. 256)

Furthermore, it must be remembered that the narrative reveals an individual, unique story, "What distinguishes narrative inquirers is their understanding that understanding the complexity of the individual, local, and particular provides a surer basis for our relationships and interactions with other humans" (Pinnegar & Daynes, 2007, p. 30). Rich, thick description including details of setting and culture enhanced the transferability of this study (Creswell; Mertens).

Confirmability

Confirmability is the confirmation of the accuracy of the study's findings, rather than simply having been created by the researcher (Mertens, 2005). "Qualitative data can be tracked to its source, and the logic that is used to interpret the data should be made

explicit" (Mertens, p. 257). Member checked interviews and an extensive review of servant leadership literature offered additional confirmability to the study.

Throughout the data collection and analysis stages of this research multiple strategies were put into place to control for issues of quality. "Being able to trust research results is especially important to professionals in applied fields, such as education, in which practitioners intervene in people's lives" (Merriam, 1998, p. 198). Overall, the designs and methods of this qualitative narrative research furthered knowledge on the concepts of servant leadership and mentoring.

<div align="center">Significance of the Study</div>

The qualitative narrative study of quality teachers describing their mentors, reviewed through the theoretical perspective of servant leadership, contributed new knowledge to educational literature, practice, and institutions. Servant leadership has become one of the new trends in leadership models; yet, little research has been conducted to examine its impact in schools (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2007; Mayer, Bardes & Piccolo, 2008) or the specific role of mentoring and servant leadership (Poon, 2006). Quality teachers, describing their mentors, may serve as a guide for school administrators when selecting mentors for beginning teachers and lead to better success with beginning teacher attrition. As John Wooden, a successful teacher and National Collegiate Athletic Association coach, stated,

> There are seven mentors who had an enormous role in shaping my own life. These individuals have inspired me in more ways than I can count. Some are remarkable world figures; others are quiet persons of dignity who never saw their names in the newspaper, let alone a history book. But together, these mentors

shaped my life into one that was equipped to shape the lives of others. I look to

these figures for guidance, and I owe my various successes to them. Collectively,

my mentors challenged me to be better and encouraged me to persevere. (Wooden

& Yaeger, 2009, p. 8-9).

In practice, this study provided mentoring knowledge for educators through the

framework of servant leadership since mentor programs with clear objectives have more

success (Oliver, 2009; Stanulis & Ames, 2009) than those without (Meijers, 2008). The

research may guide the selection of mentor teachers in individual K-12 institutions.

School leaders may select or train mentors using servant leadership as a foundational

basis for the program. Overall, the study of quality teachers' narratives depicting their

mentors, examined through the lens of servant leadership, provided further knowledge

and literature for beginning teacher mentor programs.

<center>Anticipated Study Limitations</center>

Research cannot be created perfectly and limitations to the research must be

addressed and clearly discussed in the study (Mertens, 2005). Potential weaknesses the

study may encounter are identified as limitations in the research (Creswell, 2003). There

were several limitations to be addressed in this narrative qualitative study including

setting and relationships. The setting of this study was limited to public school teachers

who had won the state Teacher of the Year award located in Missouri, thus, findings

could not necessarily be generalized to all school settings. This study added to the

literature base of servant leadership and mentoring, but may not necessarily be

generalized to all mentoring programs and settings. Furthermore, the research was

limited by the one sided examination of mentoring through the narratives of quality

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teachers and their personal experience as mentees; it excluded the mentor's story and point of view. As the study investigated mentoring from a servant leadership perspective it did not reveal a complete picture of all educational mentoring due to the exclusion of other leadership styles and theories. Each of these limitations led to suggestions for future study of the problem.

Summary

Explored in this study was the problem of beginning teacher attrition rates through the lens of quality teachers' mentoring experiences and narratives. The research for this qualitative study was gathered using a narrative design based on the social constructivist paradigm. Narrative data was examined using a servant leadership theory perspective. Data collection procedures included the use of interviews and collected field texts. Data analysis included the coding of themes for narrative interviews and interview field texts guided by the theoretical lens of servant leadership. Multiple strategies were taken to ensure quality control of the research including: member checking, recording of interviews, and detailed descriptions. Several limitations of the study were recorded and serve as recommendations for future research. Overall, the research design and methods of this study have contributed to the knowledge of servant leadership and mentoring of beginning teachers. Contained in Chapter Four is an in-depth description and analysis of data collected. Presented in Chapter Five is a summary of findings, study limitations, conclusion, study implications and recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

Introduction

Teaching is a demanding occupation and many beginning teachers are finding it difficult to remain in the profession due to a combination of issues (Hancock & Scherff, 2010). Ingersoll and Smith (2004) found that "beginning teachers with mentors from the same field were less likely to leave after their first year; but, there was no doubt much variety existed among the respondents' mentoring programs" (p. 38). This variety of mentoring programs often leaves school district personnel to assign mentors to beginning teachers with few guidelines and little consistency within programs. Consequently, the purpose of this narrative investigation was to describe the mentoring experiences of four quality K-12 public classroom educators in Missouri. These experiences, guided by the lens of servant leadership, offered an opportunity to contribute to the understandings of mentoring and servant leadership. Through the analysis of the stories of some of Missouri's most highly effective teachers (Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2012) the researcher hoped to gain insight into effective mentoring utilizing the characteristics of servant leadership in order to further the literature on the impact of the mentor/mentee relationship and the transformation of both resulting in personal and professional development (Poon, 2006). Additionally, the study provided school administrators further perspective for beginning teacher mentor selection in order to combat teacher attrition.

Presented in this chapter is a review of the study's design, data collection methods, conceptual framework, research questions, and the process of data analysis.

Furthermore, detailed descriptions of setting and introductions of each educator participant will be presented in order to supply a rich understanding of the narratives provided by each teacher. Additionally, the researcher viewed narratives through themes developed from the characteristics of servant leadership (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2007; Greenleaf, 2002; Spears, 1998).

The study was viewed through the lens of servant leadership in order to examine the profound insights it might provide into the mentoring relationship. "At its core, servant leadership is a long-term, transformational approach to life and work—in essence, a way of being—that has the potential for creating positive change throughout our society" (Spears, 1998, p. 4). Moreover, a social constructivist worldview was applied to each narrative seeking understanding in today's world and classroom through a complexity of views (Creswell, 2007). Ultimately, this study was driven by the curiosity of understanding the mentoring experiences of quality teachers; thus, data were collected in the form of narratives as "narrative is the best way of representing and understanding experience" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 18). The stories of people's lives matter and narrative inquiry, which strives to tell these stories, matters (Clandinin & Rosiek, 2007) and in applying this idea the researcher of this study strived to represent data through each participant's own words and story in order to create meaning.

<center>Study Design</center>

This qualitative study focused on the personal narratives of quality K-12 teachers (identified by having won the Missouri Teacher of the Year award), regarding their descriptions and stories of their past mentors in order to provide insight on mentoring induction programs and the problem of practice (Creswell, 2007) of beginning teacher

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attrition. During the study, participants told their individual stories of the men and women who have played a mentor role in their lives describing the impact each made on their personal and professional life. "Every experience is encountered in the context of a web of historical meaning and significance 'story.' Thus narrative inquiry for school-based research refers, at bottom, to a particular concept of experience as the phenomenon under study" (Xu & Connelly, 2010, p. 352). Overall, this study approached the collection of research through a social constructivist qualitative narrative design (Creswell, 2007; Mertens, 2005). Furthermore, criterion purposeful sampling (Creswell, 2008) was utilized in the selection of participants as individuals were selected based on their acquisition of the Missouri Teacher of the Year Award thus meeting quality teacher criterion as established by the state. Four individual subjects, award recipients and currently still teaching in K-12 classrooms, were selected to participate in three interviews each. Interviews included open-ended and semi-structured questions which established an understanding for each narrative. Interviews were then transcribed and coded using servant leadership characteristics as a guide. Therefore, coded interviews were used to order and make sense of (Rhodes & Brown, 2005) each participant's mentoring experience. "Stories captured through research activity are invariably rich and much can be taken from them to enhance practice, change systems or improve the experience of students, service users or other participants" (Allen, 2006, p.6).

<center>Data Collection Methods</center>

Prior the start of investigation, the researcher collected permissions from each school district gatekeeper (Appendix B) in order to conduct and collect research in his/her district. After securing gatekeeper permissions, the researcher completed and

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submitted the formal University Institutional Review Board application. This application

included information about the purpose and intentions of the study. Upon receiving

approval from the University of Missouri (Appendix A) the researcher then contacted

each of the four participants to request their permission to participate in the study and

letters of informed consent were collected (Appendix B). Next, the researcher traveled to

each participant's selected meeting place to conduct interviews. Each participant took

part in three audio-recorded interviews: two face-to-face interviews and one telephone

interview. After, interviews were transcribed and interview transcripts were sent to each

of the participants for review and member checking (Creswell, 2008). This gave

participants the opportunity to provide feedback and/or clarification to any of their

responses. The triangulation of interview transcripts and fieldnotes enabled the researcher

to code for servant leadership themes found in the data.

<center>Conceptual Framework</center>

The theoretical foundation for this research study was established through the lens

of leadership and narrowed to the conceptual framework of servant leadership. Several

leadership theories exist and this study focused on Bush's (2003) cultural model of

leadership due to its emphasis on values and beliefs. Moral leadership falls into the

cultural model because of its reliance on an ethical approach to decision making (Bush,

2010). Several frameworks of leadership are supported under moral leadership but not all

promote positive outcomes (Gini, 1997). Therefore, servant leadership became a focal

point for this study as it spotlights a humble leader who serves his followers (Stiffney,

2010). The leader's service to the follower is intended to benefit the follower and

promote growth, foundational concepts to the idea of mentoring. Thus, servant leadership

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became the conceptual framework for this study guiding data interpretation. "The great leader is seen as servant first, and that simple fact is the key to his greatness" (Greenleaf, 2002).

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the investigation of this qualitative narrative study:

1. What are the mentoring experiences of quality K-12 teachers in the state of Missouri?

2. How have mentors, as shared through the narratives of mentees, influenced quality K-12 teachers in their professions?

3. How did mentors of quality K-12 teachers utilize characteristics of servant leadership during the mentoring process?

Process of Data Analysis

The process for this study's data analysis involved several steps for completion. Prior to each interview, participant's received letters of informed consent detailing the study and the interview protocols so that participants were able to anticipate what the study required of them. Initial and secondary follow-up interviews were conducted face-to-face with each participant. A third, final interview was conducted over the phone as the participant gave details to a few follow-up questions, wrapping up the interview process. Audio tapes recorded each interview for accuracy and were transcribed verbatim and later shared with participants in order to confirm accuracy.

Transcribed interviews were then reviewed multiple times in order to obtain accurate information about each of the characteristics of servant leadership. The

researcher assumed a constructivist worldview when approaching the data (Creswell, 2007; Mertens, 2005). The researcher applied the paradigm's beliefs that multiple, socially constructed realities exist, findings are created and values are explicit (Mertens). Furthermore, the researcher triangulated the data provided by each participant's interviews and field notes in order to discover themes linked to the characteristics of servant leadership.

To ensure quality of the research, strategies were applied to support the credibility and dependability of this narrative study. All interviews were reviewed through member checking and a review of servant leadership literature enhancing the study's credibility. Further, the recording of interviews for accuracy and application of triangulation for themes strengthened the dependability of this study (Creswell, 2008; Mertens, 2005; Merriam).Interview participants and fieldnotes were assigned data codes (Appendix D): educator participant 1 (E1), educator participant 2 (E2), educator participant 3 (E3), educator participant 4 (E4), educator 1 first interview (E1:1), educator 1 second interview (E1:2), educator participant 1 third interview (E1:3), educator 2 first interview (E2:1), educator 2 second interview (E2:2), educator participant 2 third interview (E2:3), educator 3 first interview (E3:1), educator 3 second interview (E3:2), educator participant third interview 3 (E3:3), educator 4 first interview (E4:1), educator 4 second interview (E4:2), educator participant 4 third interview (E4:3), fieldnotes educator participant 1 (E1:F), fieldnotes educator participant 2 (E2:F), fieldnotes educator participant 3 (E3:F), and fieldnotes educator participant 4 (E4:F). Interviews and notes were read thoroughly in order to ensure accurate findings.

Settings

The narrative approach to this study focused on the stories shared by each participant and thus the setting had little influence. "Emphasis [for narrative research] is on the stories people tell and on how these stories are communicated—on the language used to tell the stories" (Merriam, 1998, p. 157). Each participant shared stories about the men and women who have mentored them throughout their lives, therefore covering multiple settings and experiences over time. The settings of the interview sites were chosen by participants out of convenience as the data focused on their reflections, not their current teaching sites (Creswell, 2007). The narrative research stories shared throughout this study cover childhood settings; urban, rural, and suburban school districts; public and private schools; represented grade levels from K-12; and public/private settings such as softball fields, homes, and hospitals.

The current teaching settings of the four participants included an elementary school, middle school, junior high school, and high school. All four schools were in the state of Missouri; three of the districts were suburban school districts while the fourth was in a small town location. "Researchers often focus on the narrative identities of people who have experienced special circumstances" (Spector-Mersel, 2010, p. 215) and in this case mentoring was that circumstance, not the current school setting of each participant.

Participants

A total of four participants were selected using criterion purposeful sampling (Creswell, 2008) having each won the Missouri Teacher of the Year award establishing each as a quality educator. Further, all four were current classroom educators in K-12

public school districts. Two of the participants were male and two female. Commonalities existing between all four included having won the state award, current Missouri teacher certification, and having had mentors throughout their lives. Otherwise a rich variety of backgrounds and experiences were spoken of by participants.

"By conceptualizing the research text as a narrative, the researcher is cast as a storyteller, the participants become the characters, and the plot orders the reader's comprehension of significant events" (Holley & Colyar, 2009, p. 681). In the following section the researcher will describe each participant by a process of restorying to provide connections between ideas (Creswell, 2008). Included in the section are the descriptions of the participants' backgrounds, along with the descriptions of the men and women they feel have mentored them.

Educator #1

Ms. Josephine March (pseudonym) has been at her current position at a seventh-eighth grade middle school classroom teacher in a Missouri suburb for the past nine years. Her career began at a private K-8 school for a year before moving to another state where she was a long-term substitute for a year and a half. Following, she moved back to Missouri and worked at a learning center in an urban area running the testing center and teaching one class of special needs students. Next, she moved out of state again and was a family teacher for a year at Boys Town. She moved back to Missouri and taught for the next 12 years at an urban K-8 private school. Then she transferred to her current position. Josephine spends each summer working in the urban core with students, ages 14-18, helping them create neighborhood documentaries.

Josephine's winning of Missouri Teacher of Year surprised her as she almost did not apply for her district's award. "A parent nominated me from my district and they sent me a letter that said, 'Congratulations, you've been nominated! Please fill out this form.' I thought it was so sweet and then I put the form in the recycling bin." After some more encouragement Josephine filled out the form.

> I really kept thinking it was going to end and so I was very relaxed…So, I went in the interview and I chitchatted and had a good time. It was announced in a surprise announcement. They called me up and I had no speech prepared because I didn't think I was going to win. So, I told everyone, "Have a safe drive home and thank you very much." Then I filled out an application from the state and basically I really wanted not to embarrass myself—that was my goal.

Josephine did not embarrass herself and in a surprise assembly at her school she was announced the Missouri Teacher of the Year.

Josephine has had several mentors in her life which have made a lasting influence on her and her career. Meg (pseudonym), a close friend of Josephine's, has had a great deal of impact on Josephine's outlook on life. The March family (pseudonym) has served over the years as key influence in Josephine's life as she was the oldest of seven children. Mr. and Mrs. Laurence (pseudonyms) had been trained through Boys Town and had returned for some retraining when Josephine was working there. They provided key wisdom on behavior/classroom management and community building for Josephine. Finally, several teaching colleagues have mentored Josephine in her life, including Amy (pseudonym) who has served as an editor and enabled Josephine to progress in her writing.

Educator #2

Ms. Lucy Honeychurch (pseudonym) currently teaches in a Missouri elementary school that services grades K-6 in a suburban school district. This is her 14th year in the district, having taught the first three years and then left for eight to have and stay home with her children. She returned and has been in two elementary schools within the district for the past 11 years. Throughout her career she has taught several of the elementary grade levels including kindergarten and 3rd-6th grades. She has taught at three different buildings, had five main principals and three assistant principals throughout her career. She takes particular pride in her school district as it is the district she attended as a child through graduation. She and her family have close ties to the community and the relationships she has developed within it.

Lucy's experience with Missouri Teacher of Year began long before she was ever nominated, but rather when her husband was nominated.

Every year that I can remember my husband, who is a teacher in the district, has been nominated for Teacher of the Year. He never turns in the paperwork and I always give him a hard time, "Someone took the time to nominate you so you need to take the time to fill that out." He never does. So, finally he decided a few years ago that if he was nominated he would fill it out…Well, lo and behold I've never been nominated and I get nominated. So we both fill out our paperwork!

Lucy advanced to the state level, "For me that was a great sense of pride…to able to move forward and find out I was a finalist was a little bit mind blowing and really humbling." Winning held a great deal of responsibility for Lucy.

It was about being the best spokesperson and best representative of what we [teachers] do in our state and what we do for kids. How hard we're working and how hard DESE works for our kids and everything they do for our curriculum, our assessments, and our support of teachers. And it felt like a lot of responsibility and I was happy to shoulder that responsibility. But I wanted to make sure that I did the best job I could for everybody I knew I was representing.

Lucy has been mentored by several men and women throughout her life both personally and professionally. Mr. and Mrs. Honeychurch (pseudonyms), Lucy's parents, have played key roles in her life shaping her personality and character. Lucy's dad, a very intelligent and reflective man, instilled in her a strong work ethic of perfectionism and the necessity of being a lifelong learner. Lucy's mom taught her the value of empathy and genuinely seeing people in order to help and serve them. Lucy's best friend, Catharine (pseudonym), has been a fellow teacher with Lucy since her student teaching and has guided Lucy through her educational career encouraging her to be a risk taker, always doing what is best for students. Dr. Emerson (pseudonym) has been a graduate professor of Lucy's who has greatly impacted her outlook on the classroom and leadership. Lastly, Charlotte (pseudonym) was one of Lucy's school administrators, revolutionizing her notions of active listening and the value of a calming, reflective personality.

Educator #3

It is the twelfth year of classroom teaching for Mr. Jem Finch (pseudonym) in his current position at a suburban junior high school in Missouri servicing eighth and ninth grade students. Overall, Jem has been teaching for nineteen years, beginning his career in two rural school districts in Nebraska, the first five years teaching high school and then

two years at a junior high school. There were not many teaching openings in a small town, so after marrying his wife, an education major, they moved to Missouri to find teaching jobs in the same district. Missouri and Jem's current district were suggested by Jem's brother and both Jem and his wife were able to find jobs. The district Jem has been teaching in is reconfiguring for next year and his school position will change to that of middle school teacher of sixth-eighth grade students. Jem pursued his master's degree in curriculum and instruction with an emphasis in instructional technology and is currently writing his dissertation for his doctoral degree. Technology has become a passion in Jem's teaching as seen in his blog and podcast pertaining to education and technology where educators across the nation seek his council about classroom ideas.

Jem's journey to Missouri Teacher of the Year began in his school building where he was nominated by his colleagues. Next, he won the award for his district, against other teachers nominated from each school.

Then I participated in the state one, and to be honest, a lot of it is just being in the right place at the right time. I don't really feel like I do anything that highly unusual or different than everybody else in the school.

Jem's humility proved he was anything but a regular teacher, just in the right place. "I didn't really understand all the implications of what would happen. It has definitely had a lot of impact since then."

Jem's mentors included men and women who from an early age invested in him and his abilities. Mr. and Mrs. Finch (pseudonyms) instilled a strong work ethic where gaining an education was an expectation. Ms. Maudie (pseudonym) was Jem's childhood next door neighbor who bought an Apple II computer when it first came out, insisted on

teaching her son and three neighborhood boys how to use it and type. Jem was one of these boys and his love of computers was ignited. Coach Atticus (pseudonym) was Jem's high school physics teacher and basketball coach. His attention to detail and teaching of fundamentals transferred lessons that Jem applied in his life and later on the court as he coached. Finally, Jean Scout (pseudonym) was Jem's educational methods professor during the end of his undergraduate degree and student teaching experience. She taught him that education should be fun and she encouraged her students to find engaging activities to use in their classrooms.

Educator #4

Mr. Henry Jones (pseudonym) has been in the teaching profession for twenty-one years as a high school teacher. His career began in a very small, rural school where he taught seventh-twelfth grade students. Next, he moved on to a slightly bigger school but was still teaching several preps and electives. Then he moved to his current district, a small town high school in Missouri, teaching tenth-twelfth grade students and he has been teaching there for the past eighteen years. Recently, the district has seen enormous growth by about 36% and a more diverse student population.

Henry was nominated for the Missouri Teacher of the Year award by his district's superintendent and Henry decided to try for it as the process would allow him to do some reflective thinking about his experiences and career. Henry became a finalist and went to the state capitol to interview, causing some anxiety since he had not been on an interview in years. Winning the award came unexpectedly to Henry as he thought his interview with the panel went poorly.

I remember there were two pivotal moments in that interview. One of them was

when this woman asked, "If you had to give a press conference and you found out

that your school had the lowest MAP (Missouri Assessment Program) scores in

the state how would you handle it?" I don't remember exactly what I said but I

was really critical of the state test. Here I was in the Department of Education

building, with a microphone in front of me, telling these people that the state test

had problems. So, I walked out of that interview and I told Donovan (pseudonym

of past MO Teacher of the Year), "I just blew it, didn't I?" Then afterward they

told me I was the only one who gave an honest answer.

Ultimately, Henry won the award knowing "the whole time that I was representing other

people and this is just kind of the attitude you must have. It is a big charge actually, it's a

big responsibility."

Henry has been influenced by several key people throughout his life who have

served him as mentors. Henry's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Jones (pseudonyms), were both

very prominent in his life but for very different reasons. Mr. Jones taught Henry

persistence, how to get a job, and strong worth ethic. Mrs. Jones was an encourager who

seemed to understand her children better than they did themselves and pushed Henry to

pursue an education. Mr. Sallah (pseudonyms) was Henry's middle school teacher and a

major in the reserves who held his students to high standards. He pulled Henry out of his

shyness by taking notice of him and pushing him to achieve things outside his comfort

zone. Finally, Dr. Marcus Brody (pseudonym) was Henry's professor with a sense of

humor and high expectations giving Henry confidence to graduate college and later

pursue graduate degrees and publication.

Themes

The researcher studied interviews of each participant investigating the stories of their mentors searching for the characteristics of servant leadership: listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to growth, and community building. These ten characteristics of servant leadership represent the themes in this research study. The themes depicted in each narrative create a clear understanding for K-12 public school administrators pertaining to mentoring and its effect on quality teachers. This concept will be detailed further in Chapter Five.

Seek to Understand by Listening

The first characteristic of servant leadership is that of listening and the active process it involves. All four educator participants claimed the value of listening in the mentoring relationship and its importance for communication. Each listed the quality as mandatory for mentors and some even thought it was the most important aspect of the relationship.

Josephine found the value of listening in the results it can produce in a mentee's reflective thinking.

> I think a good mentor listens…They [mentees] need to vent or they need to be enthusiastic and you do not want to take that away from them. Sometimes they come up with their own solution which is always preferable. Then you [the mentor] could always help tweak and change it a little bit, to add a few suggestions, but if it comes from them it becomes about self efficacy—they believe they can do it. You want to make sure that they do it; you don't want to

make them over reliant on you because it is their classroom and you can't fix it
there.

Josephine found the act of listening as a way to empower mentees.

The process of active listening was taught to Lucy by one of her mentors,
Charlotte.

She [Charlotte] taught me how to be a better listener…it is my goal and what's
interesting is I find myself practicing that in my personal life more. And it's not
just about listening; it's about really hearing someone and understanding what it is
they are speaking about. Is this a time when someone is just speaking because
they need to get it out or is this a time when someone is speaking and they need
some of those reflective questions/answers…it's really listening for where people
are…I think the best communicators are the people who end up being the best
listeners in the end.

Learning to listen took time for Lucy to learn and had to be modeled by Charlotte for
Lucy to truly understand it.

She [Charlotte] was a very good listener. It was really uncomfortable for me at the
beginning because I really didn't have someone who had ever had a conversation
with me like that before. So, at first I thought she is really shy. I'd really never
encountered anyone who was so thoughtful. So, over time I realized that the
wheels were just turning in her head and some of that was just information that
she was putting in the back of her head for when she needed it later. It wasn't
anything that needed to be part of this conversation, she just put it back there for

later on and she was building little information pockets for every single person

she came in contact with.

Jem mentioned the importance of listening in the mentoring process as "being able to listen not dictate the conversation. Being able to stop and listen to the person and ask questions, being supportive, especially as a teacher." Expanding further he mentioned an example from one of his student teachers.

If he [student teacher] would teach a lesson I might just come in and say, "What did you think worked? What would you change?" So, instead of me jumping in right away and telling him what I thought I needed to listen to him…Then I could give advice or suggestions. I have no idea what he really needs—let him speak and then I can give him support.

Jem understood the value of listening in the mentoring relationship and utilized it in his classroom with his student teacher.

Henry found listening valuable in all relationships, not just mentoring. "Listening is so understated. I just think it is probably the most important thing in any type of relationship, including the mentoring one…they [school leaders] need to be actively listening." Furthermore, he referenced how technology has hindered our listening ability as many people are now on their phones when they are suppose to be engaging with people.

Engaged listening is so important because you learn a lot about people if you truly [listen]…as my grandfather would say, "Seldom do you regret your silence." You learn so much about people and you screw things up so much when you talk too

much…Teachers are very quick to want to give advice even if it is not solicited.

So, self-discipline is helpful but listening is the most important characteristic.

Understanding through Empathy

Servant leaders strive to fully empathize with others, genuinely wanting to understand others (Spears, 1998). Each of the four participants spoke about empathy and role it played with their mentors.

Josephine clearly expressed her thoughts on the role of empathy, "You cannot be a mentor if you're not empathetic…You should not be a mentor without empathy, wow, that would be a problem! The mentee is not going to feel willing to open up, to talk, to share." Furthermore, while describing the personalities of her mentors she stated,

> They [her mentors] are all patient and willing to explain and go through it over
>
> and over again. The usually have a sense of humor which you need a sense of
>
> humor when you are dealing with kids and when your mentoring too. I think you
>
> need to remember what it was like to be inexperienced.

This idea of remembering what it was like to be inexperienced as a teacher, created empathy to guide Josephine in her own teaching.

Mrs. Honeychurch, Lucy's mother, played a major role in her understanding of empathy and helping others.

> My mom has a super giving heart and I think that is what I learned from her. She
>
> mentored me in the sense of seeing other people and having empathy for them,
>
> considering what it might be like to walk in their shoes…She taught me how to
>
> consider what if I didn't have what I have, there's a lot I don't know. So, what can
>
> I do to offer support for them, how can I help them…that is what she taught me.

Mrs. Honeychurch taught Lucy to see people, not with judgmental or preconceived ideas about people, but really see them for who they are and then take action through helping.

Jem remembers a specific moment Jean showed empathy to him during his student teaching enabling him later to be empathic with his own student teachers.

> Right as I started to do my student teaching the girl I had been dating for four years decided she wanted to take a break. It was horrible timing because it was right as I was really focusing on what I was doing. So, Jean [said], "Focus on this and don't worry about that right now. Everything will work out." So, that whole idea that everything was going to be fine…whatever happens is supposed to happen. She wasn't a counselor to me or anything but she understood that there was a lot going on right then. She gave me a little bit of space and…she was just like take the time you need, come back and then work on that.

Then in regard to his student teachers, her influence is seen.

> I always remember what it was like to be a student teacher. You have no money, you're trying to do a gazillion things that you have never done before. The whole art of being able to manage a classroom and that is stuff you really have to learn and go through by trial and error. So, yeah, I definitely have empathy.

Henry, as the others, was shown empathy and has transferred it into his own classroom. When two of Henry's close family members passed away within a short time frame of each other, his superintendent made a lasting impression on him.

> I remember I was teaching night class and I was teaching here. I kind of don't remember much of it, it was kind of a fog. But I do remember two things pop out about that. The first is the superintendent set me down and said anytime you want

to go, you just go. You go do what you need to do with your family. I really felt like that was a really important moment for me because no one had been interested up to that point…this superintendent said anytime you need to go, absolutely no question, go be with your family.

This caring attitude is reflected in his classroom on the first days of school.

Knowing that you've been there and know what they [the students] are going through really makes them calm down from some of their anxiety, especially if you can laugh about it. Yes, empathy is something people lose track of and they forget where they've been.

Healing to Become Whole

The characteristic of healing enables both the servant leader and the person they are leading to become whole. Servant leaders accomplish this by creating restoration and being conscience of the emotional needs and struggles of followers (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2007; Spears, 1998). The mentoring relationship was often a healing process for both the mentee participants of this study and their mentors. Both grew and benefited from the mentoring process, transforming each member (Spears).

Josephine noted: "All of them [my mentors] made me a better teacher. I have learned and grown from each one of them and I picked up on their passion for kids and teaching." Moreover, her mentors gained from the relationship too.

I think my enthusiasm wears off a little bit. I really like my students even when they frustrate me. So, I think that probably helps…we are all in this together and it will be okay. Friendship—that is a huge part of it.

Friendships have formed with her mentors, creating a lasting bond.

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Lucy reflected on both the healing of her life due to being mentored and that of those who mentored her.

Getting a lot of great ideas from folks, the support they allowed me to have and the opportunities. They allowed me to fail and there was no judgment, I might have been judging myself but they weren't…the opportunity to know they are making a difference for me and they knew they were helping me grow. They continue to help me grow.

Lucy commented further when speaking of young teachers she is mentoring.

They [new teachers] are so hungry to have someone [to share with]…but it's me getting to hear their great ideas and me getting to hear their energy. Even though they are nervous about some things or that they don't have the answers. They also have this great energy about them because they are doing what they always wanted to do and sometimes we lose that when we have taught 20 years.

The mentoring relationship is a mutual healing process.

Jem's mentors encouraged his abilities and helped him transform into the person he is today.

I learned skills that were going to help me out later. Each of those people [mentors] taught me something that I use today; my love for computers has grown into something that has become what I do—The confidence to be able to do what I want to do for a living. I don't do anything right now that I feel I have to. I am doing things I enjoy doing; they gave me the ability to cultivate the things that I wanted to do to become successful.

He elaborated further about the impact his mentors may have gained from the experience of leading him.

> I think they [my mentors] saw it as more than a job. They saw it as something
> they enjoyed doing. It was a service that they could provide back to the
> community. I think that all of them saw it as more than just a job
> opportunity…When I come back and tell them that they meant a lot to me and
> that they impacted my life that makes them feel good.

Henry was transformed by his relationship with Mr. Sallah simply as it influenced how he interacts with his students today.

> The benefits I got from my eighth grade teacher was simply that relationship…It's
> not just if you can remember your teachers because I could probably rattle off
> every single teacher I ever had K-12…I remember him [Mr. Sallah]; and it is one
> thing to have a memory but I use some of his techniques...Freshmen, they think I
> am really mean because I actually do hall duty… I will call them on things and
> they think I am being mean but I am just doing my job. Two years ago there was a
> kid out there who calls a girl a whore so I pull him into the classroom…and I said,
> "You know what, I've got an idea. Let's go downstairs and call your mom and tell
> her what you just called this girl. Wait, I have a better idea. Let's go downstairs
> and call her father and you can tell her father what you called his daughter."
> …That is something Mr. Sallah would have done! …What is important is
> respect. I earn and try to get their respect and if they like me that would be great,
> if they don't I get it. I am supposed to teach them; if you just worry about being
> liked you compromise some of your expectations and that's something that my

eighth grade teacher [Mr. Sallah] wouldn't have done. He was strict on the

surface but if you get to know me I am sentimental, a little soft, and I like my job

and they [the students] know it.

Then referencing the benefits his mentors have received from mentoring him he

mentioned,

He [Dr. Brody] takes a lot of gratification [from our mentoring relationship]

knowing that, while certainly I have not ridden on anyone's coat tails, he has

deeply influenced me. I have told him whenever I can and all of those guys

[mentors] thank you so much for what you've done for me. He [Dr. Brody] gets

embarrassed a little bit but he is very proud. So, I think when you get older it

takes on a different type of benefit, it's kind of a delayed gratification—which is

true of what education is about anyway.

Personal and Global Awareness

Servant leaders have both and inner awareness about their own personal lives and

an outer awareness of world understanding. "Awareness also aids one in understanding

issues that involve ethics and values. It lends itself to being able to view most situations

from a more integrated, holistic position" (Spears, 1998, p. 6). Each participant weighed

in on how their mentors were both self and world aware.

Josephine shared:

So I went to a party the other night and everyone was sitting around talking about

TV shows they liked. I felt very awkward because I do not watch very much TV

and it just doesn't interest me. I want to know all about the world, talk about

movies, art, or whatever—all of my mentors have been like that…they look for

deeper meanings in things. They look at the big pictures of the issues. For them it

is a profession and a calling, more than a job…[They] go out and try to make the

world a better place and they believe that is important.

Furthermore, she discussed the importance of self-awareness when her mentors had to

make tough value-based decisions.

Those teachers were the ones who would stand up, who would make the

decisions. Not that it was easy for them, but they were willing to take hits for

what was best for the kids in the long run, even if it meant getting someone upset

with them.

Lucy saw very different examples of awareness in her parents both as a child and

an adult.

My dad was very aware of himself and his individual goals and aspirations…he

was not selfish but he was very aware of himself and his students…My dad was

super reflective and "I am going to plan until I cannot plan anymore." …We ice

skated growing up because I grew up in the country and I had a pond...I needed

new ice skates, we had to research and research and research because I needed

new ice skates…

My mother was very intuitive with everyone she knew. She did not know a

stranger and if she met you and noticed that you needed new shoes, well, she was

going to be taking care of you. She was going to be getting your address and

mailing you a pair of size 8 flats…My mom for years until my dad died… would

make over 50 Easter baskets every year…and take them up to our social services.

She is a very giving person and so that is what I grew up with… I think my mom

was very aware and she would go without to help everybody else.

Jem found that his mentors were aware of self and others, thinking it a natural

characteristic of teachers.

All the people [mentors] that I mentioned would be extremely confident people.

Atticus and Jean were all well educated people and they all have a purpose. They

were both teachers; obviously they were very aware of what they were doing

especially because I was a student of theirs. I think that falls under their role as a

teacher. So, I think they were aware; I don't know if they really knew how much

impact they would have on me...but I have thanked then personally several times.

I have told them that they had a huge impact on my life. I think they were aware

but I also think they may have just said it was part of their job.

Henry reminisced about his mother's, Mrs. Jones', self awareness and her

awareness of the hardships of others.

My mother, she really had a strong sense of self. She was a very faith based

person…she kept two journals and one journal was full of quotes and things she

had come across and passages and lines and another journal was a daily journal.

She wrote in it up to the point where she went into a coma… She was very faith-

based and had a very secure sense of where this journey was going…[She was a]

very hard worker, volunteered like crazy. She founded a literacy program in

Arizona where they retired. The area had like a 35% illiteracy rate and she

founded a literacy program for adults. After she died she was named Woman of

the Year and all this other stuff—front page. It was very, very appropriate because

she did more with her high school diploma than most people I know with a masters degree.

Persuasion to Create Understanding

Servant leaders do not rely on direct command or positional authority when leading and solving problems. Instead they use persuasion to create an understanding in followers and convince them of a solution (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2007; Spears, 1998). The participants of this study were questioned about how their mentors solved problems in order to gather information about if their mentors used a form of persuasion.

Josephine reflected on how her mentors first gathered knowledge on what she needed before they would provide solutions to problems.

Basically it started with what my needs were, finding out what my needs were and what I needed. They [mentors] did not come in with a preplanned agenda. They came in going, "So, how is it going?" Checking in on me first. "What do you need?" A lot of times they would next ask, "What did you try?" Then they would offer concrete advice.

Lucy spoke a lot about the value of empowering the mentee, persuading someone to learn and then be able to problem solve on their own the next time. She felt both Dr. Emerson and Charlotte had taught her to do this as they were reflective and laid a foundation of empowerment for their students/employees.

When you're problem-solving you must lay the foundation so that later you do not have to do this again. You can empower…in my class, what I tell them [her students] because kids can tattle all the time, but I teach them, "Have you used a wish and a thank you?" You say, "I wish you wouldn't *spit* on me, thank you for

being my friend." Nine times out of ten that takes care of it…Empowering them to

take care of it because I do not want to be the tattle can all day long that you can

tell your tattles to and I also don't want you to think I am the one in charge here. I

want you to be able to be in charge and it's no different than being in charge of

your own learning if they are five or eighteen years old…Just like we are going to

empower the adults we work with; we want those adults to turn around and

empower their students.

Jem saw his parents use persuasion when he sought their opinion about his going

back to school for a doctoral degree.

My parents encouraged me to take advantage of the opportunity to work on my

doctorate…they basically encouraged me to make the choice I felt like I wanted

to do. They didn't say you have to do it or something, they just said we will

support you and help out however we can if you decided to do it.

This may have been based on how they found solutions to challenges in their own life.

"As far as solving problems, they [Mr. and Mrs. Finch] were very reflective. They would

talk, mom and dad talked whenever there was a situation. They communicated very well

with each other. I don't remember my parents making a lot of rash decisions."

Henry's father, Mr. Jones, may not have used persuasion, "My father was not

much of a planner. If there was something wrong, you mess with it and you fix it; which

caused him to do things several times—and I was always holding the flashlight." But Mr.

Sallah and Dr. Brody did.

Both Mr. Sallah and Dr. Brody were very similar, very deliberate, slow-paced

individuals. In both cases there was something going on—non-intrusive,

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nonthreatening. You go to some of these professors and they are so dang

intimidating…but those two were very approachable. I keep that in mind with my

students.

Thinking Beyond the Status Quo

Servant leaders look beyond the everyday pressures and broaden their minds and

thinking in order to be visionary (Spears, 1998). This involves leaders who are willing to

take risks to achieve something greater than the day-to-day. "A leader initiates, provides

the ideas and the structure, and takes the risk of failure along with the chance of

success…knowing that the path is uncertain, even dangerous" (Greenleaf, 2002, p. 29).

All study participants mentioned that their mentors were risk takers and encouraged them

to think beyond the safety of the status quo.

Josephine mentioned that her mentors were willing to make mistakes, admitting

them so others could learn.

> I was a horrible first year teacher. So, right after being named my district's
>
> Teacher of the Year I was getting my vacuum cleaner fixed. I didn't realize that
>
> the guy was one of my former students from my first year. He looks up and he
>
> says, "Ms. March, how are you? I saw on Facebook you were nominated Teacher
>
> of the Year." I replied, "I've learned a thing or two over the past twenty years."
>
> When I look at a new teacher now and they are beating themselves up, I say, "No,
>
> you're fine. You are going to be just fine."

Her mentors were willing to bend the rules in order to benefit and help students.

> I think mentors need to be focused on what is going to have the biggest impact on
>
> students. I also think they need to teach the teachers that it is okay to bend the

rules once in a while if you need to for a kid. I'm a big believer in sometimes it's

better to ask for forgiveness than ask permission if it is going to benefit the kids.

Lucy's mentors also encouraged her to take risks and not fear failure. "From the

beginning, these were mentors early on in my career; it was always never give up. I will

never give up, don't fear failure, and risk taking is okay. I've always had that from the

beginning." Additionally, her dad, Mr. Honeychurch, illustrated this in his life as a high

school teacher.

> He [Mr. Honeychurch] just made some really close connections with kids, that
>
> allowed them to feel safe, to take risks…Technology was really new at that point
>
> and he was the first person in our school to have a whole room full of computers,
>
> even before we had a computer lab because he wrote grant, after grant, after grant
>
> to be able to have a computer at every single station. If his kids were going to do
>
> drafting, the only way they could compete was to have experience with
>
> programming. He knew the majority of his kids probably were not going to
>
> college because that is not the kind of life they had. So, he said we can all put on
>
> our rose-colored glasses and pretend but what I know about most of my kids is
>
> they are not going to get to go to college…they need to be able to get out of my
>
> classroom and walk into a job interview. So, that was imperative to him. I think
>
> just knowing those were the conversations he was having with me he was
>
> mentoring me before I ever was a teacher. He was mentoring me to know what it
>
> was to be a good person, to persevere. What it meant to look outside the box and
>
> be a creative problem solver…to have real world applications.

It was Jean's mentoring that taught Jem to think creatively in his classroom, making lessons that engaged students.

Jean tried to instill in me that you can have fun and you can do all these things that are a little bit outside the box…all the history [class] experiences I had through high school were horrible. College it was basically just write down notes, it was all auditory. We hardly got to do any projects of any kind. Jean was completely the opposite. She said this should be fun and she encouraged us to do projects--we'd dress as a historical character. She did all kinds of interesting things and I think a lot of why I am still teaching today is because she instilled that you do not have to just stand up there and talk. I would never have lasted in that environment for very long…She came to my classroom my first year as Eva Braun. We were talking about World War II and she dressed up like Eva Braun, that was one of her things she did a lot of historical impersonations. My kids literally hated Eva Braun because she [Jean] was portraying her so well. They literally wanted to kill her right there.

Dr. Brody pushed Henry out of his comfort zone by encouraging him to publish some of his writings.

I did a lot of writing about my family [after a family death] and it ended up being about hundred pages of stuff …I ended up having this little autobiographical book. I made hard copies at Kinko's and sent it to my dad, brother, and sister-in-law. Then Dr. Brody called and said you need to think about publishing this thing. And I said no one wants to read about a nobody English teacher from Missouri and their life growing up in Wisconsin and coming here. He goes, "You would be

surprised." So, I did it. I had a thousand copies published and they are all gone so

he pushed me to a new area. Now I know I am not Stephen King but I would go to

conferences and I would speak and they would throw money down to buy that

book. I never imagined—I guess I just couldn't get it through my head that people

would actually pay money to read my words. What I found out later was it wasn't

necessarily my story but it was all of our stories. Everyone could see themselves

in [the book] and I understood that. Dr. Brody is the one who really helped me set

that goal. You put yourself out there in writing like that and you're very

vulnerable. But he always had confidence in me, for some reason I can't say no to

that man.

Lessons Learned and Foresight

"Foresight is a characteristic that enables the servant-leader to understand the

lessons from the past, the realities of the present, and the likely consequence of a decision

for the future" (Spears, 1998, p. 7). Greenleaf (2002) claimed important decisions involve

an information gap between the current information and that which is needed. Servant

leaders are able to "bridge that gap by intuition" (p. 36). Each participant alluded to this

in their interviews.

It was Meg who encouraged Josephine to become a teacher, having the foresight

to know it would be a good match for her.

The reason I am a teacher is because of Meg…I was actually accepted into law

school and because of a scholarship I spent a semester doing field research in

Ireland. The International Relations Council asked me to talk at local schools

about Ireland. I remember going to one particular high school, I had done several

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schools, and I am there talking to these students about Ireland, telling stories

when I walk into the room and I think I'm supposed to be right here. I think I'm

supposed to be a teacher instead of a lawyer…So, I was at a party that night with

Meg, she is a remarkable woman, and I turned to her and I say, "Meg, I think I'm

supposed to be a teacher rather than a lawyer."

If I had gone to anyone else in the world they would have said you are an idiot,

what are you thinking? In fact the longest lunch of my life was when I took my

father out and explained to him I would be going back to school for two and a half

years to get a bachelors in teaching rather than three years and have a law degree.

But Meg was like, "Oh, my gosh, you would be perfect" and she encouraged me

in that…She still takes credit for the fact that I am in the classroom because if she

hadn't said those few words—they really made an impact.

Lucy's friend, Catharine, had the ability of foresight in her teaching as she

designed and created curriculum based on what she saw as the needs of students, not

relying on current teaching trends.

Catharine has always been really good at grasping kids at a really deep level of

knowledge or high level of understanding in a way that other teachers weren't

doing. I mean this was back—I met her 1992…the way she was having students

apply their knowledge then not a lot of people were doing. It was really a lot of

text book learning: just multiple-choice, fill in the blank…we were doing things

that were so much more surface level, not her. That is what I learned about her,

she was willing to share everything with me…She wrote all of her own tests, she

created all of her own lessons, she might have used the text book here and there

but she created the lessons. The teachers manual was not her script and that taught me that I could do the same thing and not to be scared of that.

Jem's high school basketball coach, Atticus, used foresight in order to face each unique problem presented by his team's opponents leading to five state championships and over 500 wins.

Atticus would take in a lot of information and really think about it first and then find out what to do…I was the head varsity basketball coach for seven years so he was my mentor when I was playing for him. Then almost everything I did as a coach was based off of him. So, learning about solving the problem: they're playing us man-to-man, or how are we going to try to score off of this defense, I don't have very many tall players…So, he really analyzed things with a coach's mind. He always seemed to have the right solution to come up with for the problem. I think that is one of the reasons he became so successful because he could adapt to what other teams were doing…he analyzed things very well.

It was Henry's mom, Mrs. Jones, whose foresight saw something exceptional in Henry and pushed him to go to college and Dr. Brody's encouragement to keep him there.

I am the youngest of three; my brothers are in the military. We didn't have any money and it was my senior year in February and my mom pulls me aside and says you need to be the one who goes to college. She saw something in me. I said, "Mom, I hate high school. I just can't wait to get out. I'm just gonna join the service."

And she says, "You need to be the one." So, I thought about it and thought about it and I decided to do it. So, for the first time in my life, April of my senior year, I took the ACT and went to university...Then I had this…really bad professor and I almost quit college because he told me I would never make it as an English teacher. I almost quit but then right when I was on campus to go dropout I ran into Dr. Brody…he said, "No, you need to stick with me. You've got something, you can be something. I see something in you." So, I said, "Okay, I trust you."

Stewardship—The Greater Good

A servant leader views himself as a steward of an organization, safekeeping and preparing it to contribute to society (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2007). Each participant was encouraged to discuss how their mentors, by influencing them, contributed to the greater good of the community.

Due to Josephine's talent and hard work she has had the opportunity to be in several leadership positions, and her experience as a mentee helped shape how she guided the community.

Well, I've made lots of speeches for the community/state…If I had not been mentored at all or with my curriculum I would not have been pulled into the leadership, curriculum development, teacher evaluations, and district report stuff. All of that other stuff comes because they had an impact on me.

Lucy looked at both her roles in the classroom and community and how she has been shaped to take on these challenges.

By learning how to be a better listener and more reflective practitioner, whether is what you're doing in your own classroom or what you are doing during a staff

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meeting or what you are doing during collaboration time, impacts everyone

around you. Always being reflective and when you listen to other people … you

can always be grasping onto things that coincide with your beliefs and with who

you are.—grabbing onto those and making yourself a better person and a better

educator and being better for your students…I think anyone has the opportunity to

lead in a way that they are acting as a role model, as a good listener and therefore

a good taker of ideas. Figuring out how to listen to them completely and wholly

and find something that everyone can agree to, come to a consensus on …just

makes everyone stronger

Then in the community, I am on a couple different community committees

because again I have always been a part of the community. So taking those same

traits [taught by my mentors]…out in the community…I craft my message when I

speak to business leaders … it is crafted differently than if I speak to a ladies

group …or if I go out and speak to the folks at a retirement community. It's

crafting the message differently so when I'm out in public I have to be really

thoughtful about taking in everything. I need to be taking in so that when they ask

me for my opinion or my advice I am able to get something that is valuable.

Jem spoke of how the lessons his mentors taught him, he has put back into the

community and mentored others.

I don't specifically coach anymore but when I did coach I had very close

relationships with a lot of my players. So, that is definitely a result of me having a

relationship with Atticus. Some of those guys I coached 15 years ago now, we

still stay in touch. I feel like I have reciprocated, that I have continued on that

relationship that I had with my coach.

Hopefully some of the connections I had with my student teacher grew out of

those experiences I had with Jean. When Jean tried to instill in me that you can

have fun and you can do all these things that are a little bit outside the box and my

student teacher now…wants to do some of those things that are little bit more out

of the box. I think that is hopefully partially a result of me helping him out.

Henry reflected on how his mentee experience impacts how he works with student

teachers and new teachers in the community.

Any time you have a student teacher you have a really good

opportunity…hopefully because of the experience they had with you will branch

out into the community…As I see it, I am kind of a big picture guy, if you are

doing a good job mentoring the mentee will take the benefits that match their

personality and character and apply it to their personal and professional lives and

that just carries on. They are not going to take all my ideas, I am my own person,

you just can't transfer a whole person. So, they take what they think they can get

and they will apply it and then hopefully it will all come around…That is the

beauty of the job and it is also what is frustrating. You do not know the outcomes

of your own guidance; sometimes you don't know the whole outcome.

Commitment to Growth

Leaders exhibiting servant leader qualities are committed to the growth of people

and seeing them reach their full potential. "The servant leader is deeply committed to the

growth of each and every individual within his or her institution" (Spears, 1998, p. 8).

The purpose of mentoring is to encourage growth in the mentee and the mentor's commitment to this process plays a vital role. All four participants reflected on their mentors' commitment to their growth as individuals.

Josephine's colleague, Amy, committed herself to help Josephine become a better writer, encouraging her and editing her applications for Missouri Teacher of the Year and National Board Certification.

> One of the biggest mentors I had was [to help] in my writing process and that would be my friend Amy. Both the Teacher of the Year application and actually before that I applied for National Board Certification. She made me a much better writer and it was painful too. She was my mentor as far as writing and making sure I was being articulate. I got both so, she did help a lot because I could never have done it without her…I got a lot better at the end but when we first started there were a lot of red marks. She explained the whole thing…she would go through that stuff…she also reminded me of a lot of stuff I had done right. As I was filling out the application she said you've done this, you do this, and you need to include that and so she [helpful with] both content and the way I express myself which is a lot better because of Amy.

Lucy's dad, Mr. Honeychurch, was fully committed to Lucy's growth in all areas of her life to enable her to perform at her best.

> I performed my whole life…I tried out for all sorts of stuff and I was always scared. I couldn't eat the whole day before [an audition]. I danced and sang and my dad would stay up with me the night before callbacks auditions. My dad was so not a performer at all but he would sit on the couch and listen to me singing

that audition song over and over. My mom would say, "You're a little off pitch."

My mother was a perfectionist and a singer. So, finally she would say, "I am

going to bed, your father can work with you." So, she would go to bed and my

dad [would stay up]. It would be three in the morning and I would still be too

nervous to sleep and I would still be doing that audition piece again and again. He

would just sit there and say keep going, keep going; he would want me not to give

up…So that when you are finished you can look back and say whether I get it or

don't get it I gave it my all, the best me I could. Because if you don't give the best

you then you shouldn't be doing it…you don't do things halfway.

Jem discussed how his mentors were purposeful in seeing him grow as a person

and teacher.

Atticus…the whole emphasis was getting better, improving. I think back on what

Jean was trying to do. She knew that these were all skills that would help me out

and allow me to grow as a teacher so they were doing things purposely. Like

when I was trying to help my student teacher I would try to set him up with

situations where he would be successful. I did not try to give him impossible

situations or try to lead him into a situation that I knew would be impossible. So, I

think you, as a mentor, want to see the person that you are mentoring improve. It

would be pretty counterproductive to not want them to improve.

Henry discussed how even after all these years, he still is in contact with some of

his mentors and they are still concerned with his growth.

Mr. Sallah, my eighth grade teacher, really would go out of his way to talk to me

privately. In fact when I went back to my home town and I did a book talk, he was

in the audience. I didn't recognize the old bird…ever since eighth grade because I moved schools…I was out of contact with him, but he checked on me personally. Dr. Brody—I'm still in contact [with] and I talk to him all the time. He's like a second father; he really encourages me to do things. He was proud of me; I am his protégé …he is always providing me opportunities.

Community Building

Servant leaders understand that they are not the most important part of the community but rather others, thus they put others' needs before their own. Effort and value are placed on the development of people through several avenues: service, personal relationships, and collaborative work (Crippen, 2006; Drury, 2005; Neill, Hayward & Peterson, 2007). Each participant spoke fondly of their mentors and truly cares about them due to the fact that their mentors served them. Their service taught the mentees how to serve and further build community rather than create more separation.

Josephine learned from Mr. and Mrs. Laurence how to create community in her classroom, even after one has been hurt and offended. They taught her lessons

…like not taking it personally when a child is upset or mad at you. I had to do a video for Teacher of the Year and there is this one little boy [on it], he stole the show he was so hysterical. He was so funny and he was teasing me and it was cute. Everyone said, "Oh my gosh, he loves you so much."

…and I said, "In October he called me a bitch."

And they go, "What!?"

And I say, "Yes he did."

"Weren't you angry?"

No, he is twelve, I made him stay after school and he said it under his

breath…Because of Boys Town you know that it is age-appropriate and you have

to deal with it. You do not let them slide because that is not going to help. You

have to teach them to learn from it.

You will still take it personally sometimes…the fact that you know the kids have

horrible lives but if you don't teach them how to behave they are not going to get

any better so stay focused on the kids.

Lucy witnessed her dad, Mr. Honeychurch caring about his student in the

community right around her kitchen table over dinner.

He [Mr. Honeychurch] really looked out for…his high school juniors and

seniors…The stories he told at the dinner table were—he had a boy who fell

asleep in his class several times and it was really frustrating my dad because he

was teaching higher level classes. So, to sleep through a couple days of class was

not okay and he finally was like what is the deal. He pulls this kid aside and

asked, "What is going on? Do you need some help? Are you not sleeping at

night?"

"Well, Mr. Honeychurch I'm working a second job. I work after school and then I

leave and I work."

I can't remember where he worked a second job but he was literally working until

two or three in the morning. My dad is waiting for the other shoe to drop because

he is thinking it could be like some of his kids who worked just to have these

awesome muscle cars or whatever… "Tell me why you need two jobs?"

"Well, Mr. Honeychurch my dad left us and my mom is really sick and can't work."

You know my dad told us that story and I remember him getting tears in his eyes and he wasn't the kind of guy who cried a lot. I just looked at him and he told us what our family was going to do to help out that kid and what…he was doing at school to help that student out.

And that story stuck with me because I thought I know some teachers in high school who would never even ask. They would just be mad because you are a junior or senior and you were expected to be paying attention. You were expected to do your job and when you didn't, I'm done, you know. I will say we are so much about relationships now in education but I don't know that was quite so prevalent 20 years ago, 30 years ago. But I think he always knew that was important.

Jem's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Finch, owned a small town newspaper when he was growing up. It was at the print shop Jem learned the value of hard work and the value his parents placed and getting the paper to the community, working as a team—not in isolation.

They [Mr. and Mrs. Finch] emphasized do well in school. There was always time set aside for homework; there was that structure put into place to do your homework. If you needed help, ask them. Modeling what hard work looked like. When they took over the newspaper… I remember times they would take my brother and I down to the newspaper office the night before they officially printed

the newspaper. They would work on it till like three or four in the morning and we went to sleep in sleeping bags there. So just the whole idea of working hard.

Mr. Sallah taught Henry about creating community in their eighth grade class, by encouraging individual students.

I was very painfully introverted, still am…This was back when middle schools were just starting and we were doing thematic units. We wrote a play as a class and he [Mr. Sallah] decided he was going to put it on for the community. He needed people for practice so he stopped me in the hallway one day and asked me to try out. It was a musical and I said, "I can't. I don't sing. I can't dance. I'm terrified of getting up in front of people."

And he said, "What if I told you that you don't have to sing or dance?"

So, I did it; he got me to do it.

He noticed his students individually and helped them get involved to better the community and his students responded, appreciating him for his service to them.

It was funny because at the end of the year we all were talking and said let's chip in and get him [Mr. Sallah] a T-shirt that says his first name and then on the back "Do it now!" [his motto] in big letters. We all chipped in a buck or two, one of the girls got the shirt and on the last day of school—I was terrified. I am right in the front and he's got this bag on his desk. He picks it up, holds it in front of his face, turns it around reads that "Do it now!"and he starts to cry.

Each of the six participants was quality teachers who were mentored by a great number of men and women who shaped them and enabled them to better achieve their goals. Each of their mentors displayed servant leadership qualities: listening, empathy,

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healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to growth, and community building. Depicted in Figure 1 are the themes as they relate to mentoring and the characteristics to follow in order to become a servant mentor.
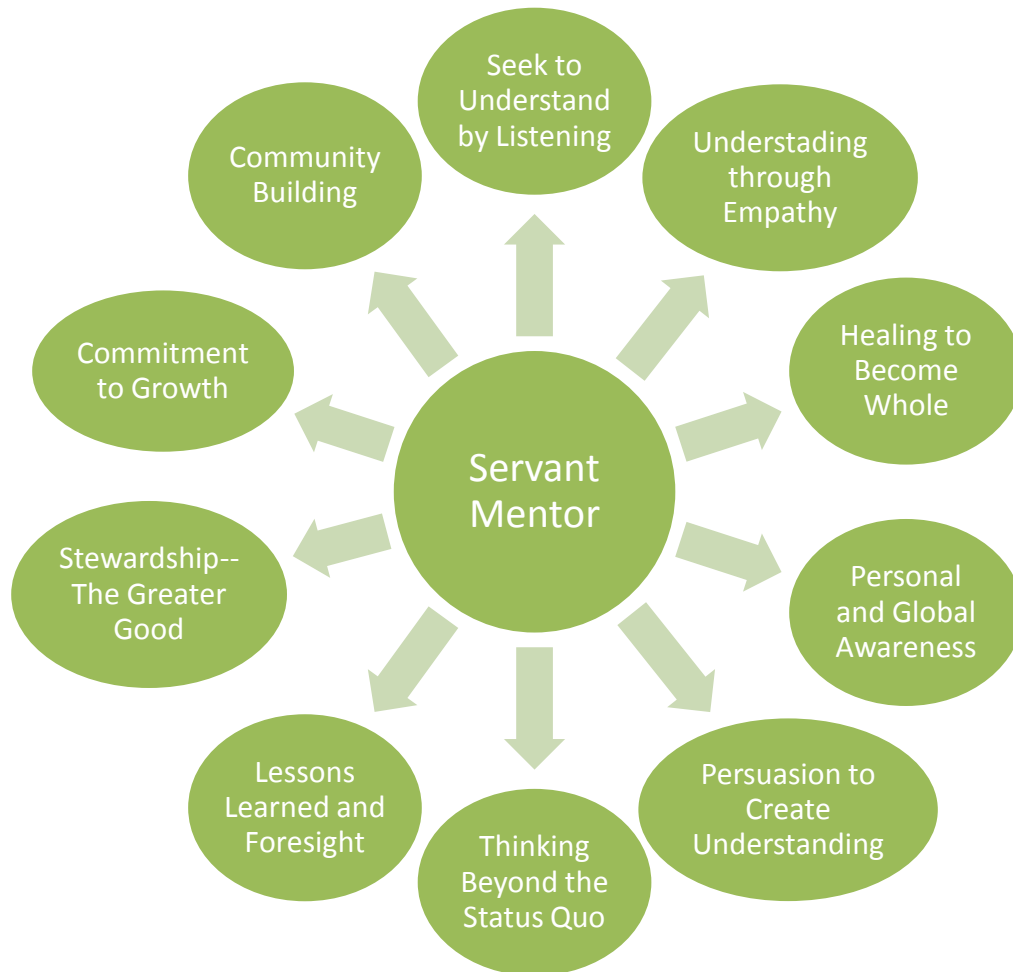
Figure 1: Represents the characteristics of a mentor displaying servant leadership

Summary

In Chapter Four several sections of the study's research were addressed: study design, data collection methods, conceptual framework, research questions, and process of data analysis. Additionally, a description of the study's settings and participants were discussed. The social constructivist worldview was maintained to study narratives

presented by each participant. Themes that were reflective of the characteristics of

servant leaders, emerged from data analysis of each participant's narrative, detailing how

mentors impacted each of their lives. Furthermore, presented in Chapter Five are

implications for educational practice and recommendations for future study.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

This qualitative narrative research study investigated the mentoring stories of quality K-12 public school teachers concerning their experiences as mentees. Furthermore, these narrative stories enabled these educators to reflect on the relationships which positively impacted their careers and personal lives. Data analysis focused on the discovery of servant leadership qualities referenced in educator's narratives establishing knowledge development for school administration as they seek to find mentors for beginning teachers. Triangulation of data found in interviews and fieldnotes from each participant enabled the researcher to check for consistency (Mertens, 2005) and examine responses to create a whole picture of mentoring for each educator. "Narratives are not adequately written according to a model of cause and effect but according to the explanations gleaned from the overall narrative" (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, p. 7). The researcher used the qualities of servant leadership to provide a focal lens to detail each of the participant's mentors (Holley & Colyar, 2009): listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to growth, and community building (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2007; Spears, 1998). These qualities served as themes to guide the data analysis of the detailed narratives as "the qualitative data analysis may be both descriptions of the story and themes that emerge from it" (Ollerenshaw & Creswell, 2002, p. 332).

Chapter Five provides a summary and discussion of the findings and conclusions discovered through the data analysis of participant narratives. Additionally, sections

detailing the implications for practice and recommendations for future study will be presented. The purpose of this qualitative narrative study was to describe the mentoring experiences of quality K-12 teachers in Missouri schools guided by the lens of servant leadership. Understanding this life experience of quality teachers offered insight and understanding of the mentoring process. "Life—as we come to it and as it comes to others—is filled with narrative fragments, enacted in storied moments of time and space, and reflected upon and understood in terms of narrative unities and discontinuities" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 17). The narrative stories of quality teachers widen the knowledge base of mentoring and servant leadership contributing to literature in order to guide mentor selection for beginning teachers.

Summary of Findings

Emily Dickinson once wrote, "A word is dead when it is said, some say. I say it just begins to live that day." Narrative research relies on this idea that a person's story, words carry meaning worthy of study. "These lived and told stories and talk about those stories are ways we create meaning in our lives as well as ways we enlist each other's help in building our lives and communities" (Clandinin, 2006, p. 44). Presented in this section are the findings from the narratives of quality teachers about their mentors and the effect being mentees had on their lives and careers. Narrative stories provided by participants were investigated through the lens of servant leadership due to its emphasis on individualized need fulfillment of followers to achieve their full potential (Greenleaf, 2002; Mayer, Bardes, & Piccolo, 2008; Neill, Hayward & Peterson, 2007; Spears, 1998). Data gathered was viewed through a social constructivist paradigm, believing that the human experience has varied and multiple meanings offering a complexity of views

rather than a single, narrow idea (Creswell, 2007). Thus, servant leadership's ten qualities served as themes to organize narrative data.

The ten themes found in the participant interviews were based on the qualities of a servant leader: Seek to Understand by Listening, Understanding through Empathy, Healing to Become Whole, Personal and Global Awareness, Persuasion to Create Understanding, Thinking Beyond the Status Quo, Lessons Learned and Foresight, Stewardship—The Greater Good, Commitment to Growth, and Community Building (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2007; Spears, 1998). These qualities guided the organization of each story shared by teacher participants as the purpose of the study was to describe quality teachers' experiences as mentees in order to provide knowledge of servant leadership and mentoring. Furthermore, the goal of the data was to provide knowledge for beginning teacher mentor selection by public school administrators.

As a servant leadership lens guided narrative data analysis, ten themes emerged based on the qualities of servant leaders. "It is important, therefore, for narrative researchers to be conscious of the end as the inquiry begins" (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, p. 7). Thus the research of the study was guided by the conceptual framework of the study narrowed to the lens of servant leadership and the three foundational research questions:

1. What are the mentoring experiences of quality K-12 teachers in the state of Missouri?

2. How have mentors, as shared through the narratives of mentees, influenced quality K-12 teachers in their professions?

3. How did mentors of quality K-12 teachers utilize characteristics of servant

   leadership during the mentoring process?

Consequentially, the presented data in Chapter Four offered a summarized, detailed

response to each research question with guided interpretations based on the review of

literature.

What are the mentoring experiences of quality K-12 teachers in the state of Missouri?

All four educator participants spoke of multiple mentors who had positively

impacted their lives by sharing their personal stories. Each participant shared stories from

both their personal and professional lives discussing the men and women who purposely

set aside time to influence and push participants to fulfill their potential.

Josephine March had several mentors including her close friend Meg who

encouraged her to become a teacher, the March family who instilled an expectation of

making the world a better place, Mr. and Mrs. Laurence who taught her classroom

management, and colleague teachers, particularly Amy who led her to become more

thoughtful and precise writer. Each of these mentors instilled life lessons that Josephine

still applies in her everyday life, impacting her students as she teachers. One such lesson

was when Josephine sought advice from Meg.

> Meg, who is diabetic, taught me *you will be fine, just deal with it*. I know that
>
> sounds odd, but she grew up with what we thought was a death sentence and I had
>
> the pleasure of throwing her 60th birthday party last year. So, that was wonderful
>
> and unexpected. When I was entering my 40s, there is an illness in my family that
>
> manifests itself in women in their 40s and I was like what am I going to do? What
>
> am I going to do? And she said, "You are going to deal with it and that is what

you are going to do." And she does the same thing in my classroom. I lost a student last year…and she goes you're going to deal with it; you are going to take care of the kids. You will do it." She is this sweet, gentle thing and I expected the *poor baby* thing and I got the "No, you are going to deal with it." It was the perfect thing she could have said.

Lucy Honeychurch positivity shines in her classroom as she communicated about the people in her life who have inspired her never do anything halfway, whether in her career or life. Lucy's father and mother, Mr. and Mrs. Honeychurch, have encouraged Lucy since a young age to work hard and care about others, Catharine has and continues to inspire Lucy in creating the child-centered classroom, Dr. Emerson led Lucy to understand the administrative side of education, and Charlotte through her quiet, reflective leadership implanted in Lucy a desire to be an active listener. Mr. Honeychurch's words of wisdom still impact Lucy daily.

So, now I will leave you with a quote that sticks out for me with him [Mr. Honeychurch] always from the time I did my first teaching interview to my Missouri Teacher of the Year interview. I know it will never leave me. He looked at me one day and said it, right before I was getting my first job. He said, "I just have to tell you the most important thing I can say is if you ever think you are done learning, you need to quit. You need to be done teaching"…He really meant it and it has never left my mind.

Jem Finch had several mentors who encouraged him throughout his life and career. His first mentors were his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Finch, who instilled the value of education, reading and a strong work ethic in him. Ms. Maudie opened Jem's eyes to the

world of computers and technology which became a major focus of his career. Coach Atticus, Jem's basketball coach, taught Jem the value of fundamentals, while Jean Scout encouraged Jem to think creatively in his teaching. Jem's recollection of Jean proves the value and importance his mentors played in his life.

> I think Jean wanted to instill a passion, so, that if it was something I wanted to pursue that I would have an understanding of how I could enjoy it. I think she wanted to give me the greatest chance possible to succeed and what I do after that was pretty much up to me. She wanted to allow me to understand some potential ways that I could use teaching and have fun at it. I think, at that point, it was kind of *we are going to help you*. Maybe I would have dropped out of teaching three years later or whatever, but I think that it was her job to give me the skills to allow me to be successful. She couldn't make it happen, but she could help me.

Henry Jones' mentors motivated him to move beyond what he thought possible and reach his full potential. His mentors were the men and women who could see this potential long before he could and pushed him out of his comfort zone. Mr. Jones, Henry's father, instilled a strong work ethic in him, while his mother, Mrs. Jones, understood his true abilities and pushed him to go to college. Mr. Sallah, teaching Henry's eighth grade class, taught him how to manage a classroom and have high expectations of students which was later reinforced by Dr. Marcus Brody who pushed Henry to progress in his career and provided the support Henry needed along the journey. Henry discovered each of his mentors, although very different from each other, had two commonalities.

One thing I want to add about all of the people I mentioned, [they all] had a really good sense of humor. You cannot be in this career; you cannot have this job, and not have a sense of humor. If you take yourself too seriously you're either going to burn a hole in your gut or the kids are going to laugh at you. You just have to be okay with making a mistake; you have to be okay with knowing kids are smarter than you sometimes. I mean if you're an elementary teacher that is an issue, but I learned that if I acted like I knew everything they were going to pounce on that. So, a sense of humor is key, and honestly…all the way through these would be high expectations and humor. My dad was not a scholar but boy did he have high expectations. All these other teachers had both; those would be the two things I'd say are common.

Each of the participants shared multiple narrative stories depicting the mentoring experiences of their lives. Interestingly, they also each shared a little information about their formal mentoring assigned by schools during their early teaching years. Three of them mentioned having been formally assigned mentors and one just mentioned the comments of an older teacher during his first year. None of them found the experience beneficial and did not claim these individuals as true mentors in their lives. Josephine March was never even informed she had a mentor.

"I will tell you my worst mentor story—it was my very first year at this school and I did not know she was my mentor. So, in February, when it was her birthday and I did not arrange a card, one of the other teachers came up and yelled at me. "She is your mentor, why did you not get her a birthday card?" And I was like, she's my mentor?

Lucy's story is only slightly more encouraging.

> I did go through the mentor program. My mentor was a first grade teacher and I
> was a sixth grade teacher, our paths never crossed. She is nice as can be…she is
> wonderful, but when I was going through the mentor program that is who I got
> partnered with and it did not help me a lick.

Jem had a formal, assigned mentor as well, but due to the size of the school it had little
effect.

> When I started teaching, I did not have a mentor in my content area. I was the
> only social studies teacher, so I got support from other teachers but nothing
> specific to my content. So, there were times I might ask my dad [Mr. Finch] since
> he had experience teaching.

Henry did not mention if he was formally assigned a mentor his first year of teaching but
an older staff member offered an opinion.

> My first year teaching I was in a very small school: it's October, I'm not much
> older than my students I was teaching. [I was] wearing a vest and tie in a little
> farm school…and I remember this colleague comes up to me, an older guy, kind
> of looks at me…laughs… "I remember when I was your age. I was all gung-ho
> and I was going to change the world…you're all excited, you think you can
> change everything…I give you three years and you'll be down in the boiler room
> with us smoking." The sad part about that story was he was the guidance
> counselor.

There was an extreme contrast between the two types of mentors: informal and formal.
Participants may have mentioned their assigned formal mentors once during interviews,

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but for those mentors who choose informally to impact participants' lives, participants were excited to talk about and share their experiences.

How have mentors, as shared through the narratives of mentees, influenced quality K-12 teachers in their professions?

Participants' narrative stories of their mentors reflected multiple lessons and the influence they had over their careers and classrooms. Commonalities among interviews included professional guidance with student awareness, classroom management, curriculum development, and professional growth.

It was very clear throughout interviews each participant cared about the students in their classes and wanted to see them succeed. Knowing students and being aware of their students' needs was modeled by different mentors in each participant's life. Lucy specifically commented about her dad's [Mr. Honeychurch] perfectionism being a model for her student awareness in her classroom.

My dad was a perfectionist and he did not do anything little. He built the house I grew up in and I'm telling you if a nail wasn't driven in straight we were redoing it…it was a life altering experience. Right there he taught me how to be a perfectionist… My goal is every year to take every single kid as far as I possibly can because I've got kids in here right now who I have tested at 300 site words. So what am I doing with them now? …These are the kids at the top of my class, so what do I do now because they don't really need any more site words? Now they need more comprehension, so, what am I going to set into place for them? I still have kids with 40 sites words, so what about those guys? And what about every single kid in between? It's thinking about every single child and how far I

am going to take them. It is thinking about every family and what impact have I had on that family, when they leave me will the parent still remember it is important to sit down with their kids each night asking them questions about school, showing them how important they think education is? Have I relayed that enough? Have I made them feel safe and comfortable in our school so that after kindergarten they continue to keep coming up here because they feel comfortable being a member of this culture? I think that would be a goal of mine but it is my goal every year. I don't know if I always reach it perfectly but I reach it the best I can.

Classroom management was mentioned by all four participants as being just one of the areas their mentors influenced their professional life. Josephine mentioned the importance of classroom management in even the small things in order to establish a productive learning environment, which she saw modeled by her mentors.

As far as the procedures and structures in the classroom—setting up my own classroom so I don't lose papers. It sounds little but when you do lose the kids' work it breaks their heart and it breaks that trust. I think also at Boys Town it was the classroom management and the structure where the kids can learn…feel safe, and feel free to make mistakes and so they [my mentors] really helped me.

Henry also remarked several times on how Mr. Sallah taught him the importance of having high expectations for students and enforcing the rules so that all students were safe to learn. "He didn't let people mess around; he had very high behavioral and academic expectations which when I was a kid I really took to."

Furthermore, each participant mentioned gaining curricular knowledge from some of their mentors. From knowing how to apply brain research in the classroom to being able to disregard a textbook to create student driven lessons were some of the ideas shared. Jean greatly influenced Jem in his understanding of teaching history to students by showing him how to creatively make lessons that interested students.

> I tried to do stuff that was little bit different, [based on] what Jean was allowing us to do in our methods class. So, just the permission to know you could do something different, you get out of that rut—that was big

Finally, each of the four participants discussed how their mentors pushed them to grow professionally, whether that was in a school leadership role or their own professional development. Henry summed up how his mentors encouraged him to move forward in his career.

> One of the things mentors have done for me is if I am ever stagnant for any period of time…something usually happens where I get involved with a mentor and I have another challenge…I don't know how that happens, it's really strange…I got my masters degree, which almost killed me because English masters are so hard. And after three years I was talking to Dr. Brody and he said, "Well they have this thing called National Board [Certification]"… And I said it looks really hard, I just finished my masters…it was three years and I was getting kind of stagnant, so, that suddenly arose out of that. It's kind of interesting how things work.

How did mentors of quality K-12 teachers utilize characteristics of servant leadership

during the mentoring process?

Servant leadership consists of ten character traits or qualities that are used by the servant leaders to guide followers to fulfill their potential: listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to growth, and community building (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2007; Spears, 1998). The servant leader's focus is "to make sure that other people's highest priority needs are being served. The best test…is this: Do those served grow as persons?" (Greenleaf, 2002). Mentoring provides an avenue for servant leaders to serve individuals.

Each of the four participants reflected on their mentors by sharing their personal narratives of being mentees. Each narrative story was examined by the ten servant leader traits to discover if the mentors of quality teachers utilized servant leadership to encourage and push these teachers to fulfill their potential. Each of the ten characteristics were applied by the mentors of the four quality teacher participants resulting in the emerging themes: Seek to Understand by Listening, Understanding through Empathy, Healing to Become Whole, Personal and Global Awareness, Persuasion to Create Understanding, Thinking Beyond the Status Quo, Lessons Learned and Foresight, Stewardship—The Greater Good, Commitment to Growth, and Community Building.

Throughout their interviews the participants depicted stories and experiences about their mentors and the ten characteristics of servant leadership. Some of these stories were direct examples of servant leadership like Lucy's direct story about her principal, Charlotte, listening to her and taking time for reflective thought. "She [Charlotte] was a very good listener. It was really uncomfortable for me at the beginning because I really

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didn't have someone who had ever had a conversation with me like that before." Some of the narratives were indirect references to the qualities of servant leadership, either seen in their mentors or comments the participants made refereeing to the characteristic. This was seen in Henry's comments about listening, "Listening is so understated. I just think it is probably the most important thing in any type of relationship, including the mentoring one." Thus he indirectly referenced the character trait in association with mentoring instead of offering a story depicting the use of it. All ten of the servant leader qualities were directly or indirectly referenced in all four participants' interviews and created themes to study the data.

<center>Conclusions</center>

Qualitative research investigations provide a detailed description of a specific problem (Mertens, 2005). In order to study the problem of beginning teacher attrition rates, a qualitative approach was applied based upon a social constructivist worldview (Creswell, 2007). Furthermore, the narratives of quality teachers were examined through the lens of servant leadership to gather knowledge of their lived experience for the selection of mentor teachers for beginning educators (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Creswell).

Qualitative narrative research embraces the understanding that the human experience can be better comprehended through the study of detailed stories (Pinnegar & Daynes, 2007). Narrative research "treats lived experience as both the beginning and ending points of inquiry" (Clandinin &Rosiek, 2007, p. 55). These narratives provide a clear vision into the mentoring experiences of quality teachers as seen through their perspective as mentees (Spector-Mersel, 2010). Therefore, the following conclusions are

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based on the study's data findings from the personal narratives of quality teachers and

their experiences as mentees in order to gain further knowledge for beginning teacher

mentor selection.

Servant Leader Qualities

Servant leaders hold to several defining attributes or beliefs (Barbuto & Wheeler,

2007). "Servant leadership is a long-term, transformational approach to life and work—in

essence, a way of being—that has the potential for creating positive change throughout

our society" (Spears, 1998, p. 4). The theory of servant leadership and the qualities of

servant leaders requires further inquiry as it may improve the mentor/mentee relationship

(Poon, 2006). The following conclusions focus on each servant leadership trait and their

role in the narratives of quality teachers in regards to their mentors. Direct mention of

servant leader traits refers to when participants recalled a direct, detailed story or general

statement of their mentor using this trait in their relationship. An indirect mention of

servant leader traits refers to when participants spoke about the trait but did not discuss in

it the form of a story directly linked to their mentors. Rather it may have been a statement

of an opinion about mentoring in general or a story about when the participant used the

trait with a mentee. Both methods prove a level of importance was applied to the trait in a

positive manner, and furthered the knowledge base of servant leadership and mentoring.

Listening

Servant leaders' first inclination is to listen, using words sparingly and

understanding the art of that balance in order to truly hear followers (Preskill &

Brookfield, 2009). From the data findings it can be concluded that the mentors of quality

teachers understand and utilize active listening. "The goal in active listening is to develop

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a clear understanding of the speaker's concern and also to clearly communicate the listener's interest in the speaker's message (McNaughton, Hamlin, McCarthy, Head-Reeves, & Schreiner, 2007, p. 224). All participants mentioned in their narratives the value of listening in the mentor/mentee relationship. As Henry stated, "Listening is so understated. I just think it is probably the most important thing in any type of relationship, including the mentoring one." Each of the four indirectly referenced listening as a valuable trait in mentoring and Lucy shared her direct story how Charlotte used listening in their relationship.

Empathy

Servant leaders understand that empathy involves an ability to identify with followers seeing commonalities and appreciating others' perspectives (Beazley & Beggs, 2001). The value of this is in being able to emphasize with people in their current circumstances and problems (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2007). Each of the participants placed a high value on empathy in mentoring relationships as they each mentioned their own views on the topic and shared stories of how their mentors showed them empathy in their relationships. Josephine clearly stated her views on empathy, "You cannot be a mentor if you're not empathetic…You should not be a mentor without empathy, wow, that would be a problem!"

Healing

The healing process for servant leaders is that of restoration, enabling both to fulfill their potential (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2007; Spears, 1998). Servant leaders and followers depend upon each other for restoration, finding a sense of wholeness (Greenleaf, 2002). Participants spoke of what they gained from their mentors and what

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they believed their mentors gained from the relationship, as all four shared direct narratives pertaining to mentoring. Jem stated, "I am doing things I enjoy doing; they [my mentors] gave me the ability to cultivate the things that I wanted to do to become successful." Josephine and Lucy reflected indirectly about the process as they mentioned what they believed mentors could receive from the relationship.

Awareness

Servant leaders possess self and world awareness, knowing their values and ethics and how to view issues from a holistic point of view (Burkhardt & Spears, 2000). Servant leaders understand vision is about helping others and oneself (Blanchard & Hodges, 2005). As Lucy commented about her mom, "I think my mom was very aware and she would go without to help everybody else." Each of the four participants shared direct stories about their mentors being both self and world aware. They each told stories depicting how their mentors understood the vision beyond themselves and helping others.

Persuasion

Persuasion is utilized by servant leaders in place of positional authority in order to convince followers to achieve goals (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2007; Spears, 1998). Just as Josephine shared, "A lot of times they would next ask, "What did you try?" Then they would offer concrete advice." Josephine, Jem, and Henry communicated direct stories of persuasion used by their mentors while Lucy indirectly spoke of its importance.

Conceptualization

Servant leaders must be able to conceptualize a problem, seeing the reality of the situation but also able to be visionary when finding solutions (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2007). This process involves the ability to be a risk taker. Lucy discussed how her dad utilized

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this in his classroom, "He [Mr. Honeychurch] just made some really close connections with kids that allowed them to feel safe, to take risks." Each of the four participants discussed conceptualization, three referring to direct stories with their mentors and Josephine mentioning it indirectly.

Foresight

Foresight enables a servant leader to predict or foresee the likely outcome of a situation or problem (Burkhardt & Spears, 2000; Spears, 1998). It is a balance between logic and intuition (McGee-Cooper & Trammell, 1999). Henry recalled his mom's foresight, "It was my senior year in February and my mom pulls me aside and says you need to be the one who goes to college. She saw something in me." All four participants were able to retell a direct story about their mentors' foresight.

Stewardship

Servant leaders demonstrate stewardship as they try to accomplish the goals of an organization through service for the betterment of society (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2007; Spears, 1998). Mentoring plays a key role in this, since often mentors are trying to pass knowledge on to another person to keep ideas or values alive. Jem had an example of this as he shared one of his stories about Atticus. "Some of those guys I coached 15 years ago now, we still stay in touch. I feel like I have reciprocated, that I have continued on that relationship that I had with my coach [Atticus]." Both Josephine and Jem shared direct stories, while Lucy and Henry indirect.

Commitment to Growth

Servant leaders are committed to the growth of each follower and serve them to enable them to achieve their full potential (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2007). This is often the

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goal of mentoring, to help someone achieve their goal or calling. All four educator

participants directly referenced their mentors' commitment to their growth during the

interviews. Jem stated it clearly, "So, I think you, as a mentor, want to see the person that

you are mentoring improve. It would be pretty counterproductive to not want them to

improve."

Community Building

Servant leaders recognize the importance of the community and collaboration,

continuing to build community rather than encourage isolation of individuals (Beazley &

Beggs, 2001; McGee-Cooper & Trammell, 1999; Spears, 1998). Each of the four

participants shared stories of how their mentors encouraged people to come together,

creating safe environments where people worked as a team. Lucy's dad's commitment to

community building was exemplified in his story of the high school student who had two

jobs. "I just looked at him [Mr. Honeychurch] and he told us what our family was going

to do to help out that kid and what…he was doing at school to help that student out."

Overall, all ten qualities of servant leadership were discussed by each of the

participants during their interviews. Some were directly spoken of, sharing stories of how

the mentor had used that quality with the participant. Some were indirectly referenced as

participants spoke of their opinions of good mentors or of stories about themselves

mentoring other teachers. Figure 2 depicts this breakdown of direct and indirect

references.

Mentoring Narratives																				
	Servant Leader Traits																			
	Listening		Empathy		Healing		Awareness		Persuasion		Conceptualization		Foresight		Stewardship		Commitment to Growth		Community Building	
	D	I	D	I	D	I	D	I	D	I	D	I	D	I	D	I	D	I	D	I
Participant 1		X	X	X	X	X	X		X			X	X		X		X		X	
Participant 2	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X		X			X	X		X	
Participant 3		X	X	X	X		X		X		X		X		X		X		X	
Participant 4		X	X	X	X		X		X		X		X			X	X		X	
	D: Direct Reference																			
	I: Indirect Reference																			

Figure 2: Represents the direct and indirect discussions of each educator participant in regards to their mentor narratives.

All ten of the servant leader traits were spoken of and shared in a positive manner by all participants giving value to the role servant leadership plays in mentoring. Poon (2006) called for research suggesting a positive impact between servant leader traits and the mentoring relationship. Each of these quality teachers, who have stayed dedicated to education, were positivity influenced by other people they claim to be mentors who utilized servant leader characteristics. Their narrative stories bring fresh knowledge and life to the mentoring process and confirm the value of the servant leadership lens in understanding mentors. Servant leader mentors enabled these quality teacher participants to grow and achieve great success in their professional lives. Furthermore, the goal of the servant leader is to motivate their followers to serve (Greenleaf, 2002), and all four participants have acted as mentors to others continuing the cycle of service.

However, this is not claiming the act of mentoring made these teachers the great success they are today, but rather it played a role in that success. As Greenleaf (2002) described when discussing Jefferson's success.

George Wythe was a substantial man of his times, a signer of the Declaration of

Independence and a member of the Constitutional Convention. But his chief claim

to fame is as Thomas Jefferson's mentor. It was probably the influence of mentor

on understudy, as Jefferson studied law in Wythe's office, that moved Jefferson

toward his place in history and somewhat away from his natural disposition to

settle down at Monticello as an eccentric Virginia scholar (which he remained,

partly, despite Wythe's influence.) The point of mentioning George Wythe is that

old people may have a part to play in helping potential servant-leaders to emerge

at their optimal best (p. 44).

These quality teachers, in their own right, have earned their success and worked

extremely hard to achieve so much in their careers. Yet, their mentors played a role on

the journey serving them and helping them to understand their potential, what they could

offer the world of education. As Henry stated, "Discussing my past mentors has helped

me reflect on my practices and reminded me how powerful and important others are. No

one ever achieves or fails in isolation."

<p style="text-align:center">Limitations</p>

Research studies and designs, as all things in life, cannot be perfect. Limitations

are identified by the researcher as potential problems the study may encounter or

weaknesses to its design (Creswell, 2008). "Therefore, it is incumbent on the researcher

to recognize and discuss the limitations of a study" (Mertens, 2005, p. 417).

An initial limitation of this study was in its setting and location. The study was

limited to a single state, Missouri, so findings may not be necessarily generalized to other

state locations and other state mentoring programs. Further, only public school educators

were interviewed, limiting the setting to K-12 public schools, excluding private educational institutions.

Furthermore, the qualitative narrative design to this study poses limitations, as the focus is on a small group of individuals (Creswell, 2008) and their stories rather than a large population. The goal of using criterion purposeful sampling for this study was to allow for an in-depth investigation of each participant's narrative (Mertens, 2005). Using the criterion of quality teachers established by those having won the Missouri Teacher of the Year award and still currently teaching in the classroom, limited the study to a small population. This excluded K-12 public school teachers who had never won the award but may have mentors. Additionally, narratives were one-sided, focusing on the stories of the mentee rather than the mentor. "In narrative inquiry, people are looked at as embodiments of lived stories" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 43). The purpose of the research was to understand the mentors of quality teachers and their lived stories of being mentored; thus the study limited the narratives in order to gain understanding and meaning of the mentoring experience by individual quality educators (Creswell, 2008). Moreover, participants were able to discuss multiple mentors they have had in their lifetime, instead of focusing on just one mentor. This gave a more detailed understanding of the complete picture of mentoring in the participant's life.

Another limitation to the study was analyzing the narratives of quality educators through the lens of servant leadership, excluding other leadership theories. The researcher used a process of focalization, providing the well-defined lens of servant leadership to view the unfolding of narrative episodes (Holley & Colyar, 2009) to interpret data. Other theories, including transformational leadership, may have provided a focal point for study

with its emphasis on empowering the individual to accomplish organizational goals (Stone, et al., 2004). However, other theories focused more on meeting organizational objectives rather than prioritizing the individual needs of followers—a key in the mentoring process and the main facet of servant leadership (Greenleaf, 2002; Mayer, Bardes, & Piccolo, 2008; Neill, Hayward & Peterson, 2007; Spears, 1998).

A final limitation to the study involves that of researcher bias. The researcher has been an educator in Missouri K-12 public schools for nine years and participated in a two-year beginning teacher mentoring program. Utilizing a social constructivist paradigm, the researcher understands reality is socially constructed and the research is not independent of them (Mertens 2005). Rogers (2007) claimed in a social constructivist stance that "in an interview analysis, then, it is possible to interpret relations between external (social) contingencies and internal (individual and self-reflective) experience" (p. 102). Yet, to ensure the participants' voices were presented accurately and not lost by the researcher's bias, findings were discussed using extensive participant quotes and precise language (Creswell, 2008).

<center>Implications for Practice</center>

The findings of this study implicated that the mentors of quality public K-12 teachers utilize the ten characteristics of servant leadership in their guiding of these teachers to reach their full potential. Thus adding a body of knowledge to confirm Poon's (2006) call to study the impact of servant leader traits on mentoring. The traits of servant leadership include listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to growth, and community building (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2007; Spears, 1998). These traits and characteristics were seen in the mentors of

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quality teachers, consequently providing a body of knowledge on the value of servant leader mentors, implicating their importance for mentee growth.

Further, as each participant was considered a teacher of utmost quality and experience, their narratives should be valued as helpful for understanding teachers and administrative goals with new staff. Each participant had servant leader mentors guiding them along their journey, thus mentoring of beginning educators may prove more beneficial if mentors selected demonstrate servant leader qualities. Often beginning teachers are required to have a mentor and each district chooses how to select mentors. This study implied mentors selected to guide and encourage beginning teachers to a level of quality will need to utilize servant leader traits. Servant leadership gives school administrators a list of traits to look for in their experienced staff when selecting mentors. The traits of a servant leaders provide an outline and body of knowledge for an administrator to reference when trying to connect new staff with individuals who will positivity affect their career. As Henry noted, "Mentors, if appropriately managed, are a vital part of our profession. I still believe that it's not just about new teacher retention; it should be an ongoing relationship throughout the duration of a career." Servant leadership provides this system of management to mentoring.

Finally, mentoring will not create quality teachers, but it may impact beginning teacher attrition. This study provided key knowledge of servant leadership and mentoring of quality teachers granting further understanding to the mentoring of beginning teachers. As Josephine mentioned,

> I believe mentor programs are incredibly helpful and will increase teacher
> retention. Their [beginning teachers] task is survival. So much is expected of

teachers and new teachers are hit with a tsunami of information and expectations. A good mentor helps a new teacher wade through that information and especially helps them prioritize. A good mentor will also remind the new teacher that their students are the top priority. We lose so many new teachers because they cannot get through the initial expectations.

Yet, convincing school districts to give their new staff mentors is not the problem; it is enabling them to understand which of their teachers would make good mentors. Lucy clarified,

Shortcomings [of mentoring] would include the manner in which mentors are chosen in some districts. This partnership is of utmost importance to the longevity of a teacher's career… We have to be smart about whoever picks the mentors; [he/she] has to be so smart because when that is not a smart choice it does no good for the mentee…In order to stay in the teaching profession, teachers need the support of their colleagues in order to continue on the journey of educating children. It is our human nature to need personal interaction. Mentoring offers us the opportunities to talk and to be heard, to ask for advice, to lean on another, to gain information, and to build relationships with those we respect.

This study's findings suggested that servant leadership gives administrators an avenue of knowledge in order to pick mentor teachers for their new staff making the experience impactful. The traits of a servant leader provide a groundwork of knowledge for administrators to consider as they assign mentors. Additionally, the study recognized the value of informal mentoring, enabling school leadership to better understand the importance of individuals outside the school setting who can influence teachers. Thus the

findings in this study gave more clarification and understanding to the mentor selection process of administrators. Though ultimately, "the narrative inquirer does not prescribe general applications and uses, but rather creates texts that, when well done, offer readers a place to imagine their own uses and applications" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p.42).

<div align="center">Recommendations for Future Study</div>

Results provided by this study add to the existing body of knowledge of servant leadership and mentoring. As indicated, little research has been conducted to examine the impact of servant leadership in schools (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2007; Mayer, Bardes & Piccolo, 2008) or the specific role of mentoring and servant leadership (Poon, 2006). Therefore there exists an opportunity for further research to be conducted concerning education, servant leadership, and mentoring to further knowledge and understanding of the topic. Provided in this section are three recommendations for future study.

It is recommended that for future research study pertaining to servant leaders and mentoring for data to be collected from the mentor's perspective. This may provide a wider range of knowledge of the process mentors use to guide followers, giving key insight into the traits of servant leadership. As Poon's (2006) call to research stated, "This, in turn, may improve the effectiveness of the mentoring relationship, facilitate the transformation process in both the mentor and mentee, and result in the personal and professional development of the mentor and in particular, the mentee" (p. 9). By studying the mentor's views on the mentoring relationship new knowledge can be added to this study and the body of literature on servant leadership and mentoring.

A second recommendation for study would be that of servant leadership and informal teacher mentoring. As the participants in this study discussed their mentors it

became very clear that their informal mentors, or those who had chosen to mentor them without being formally asked, seemed to have the greater impact. This creates a curiosity about informal mentoring and schools. As Jem mentioned,

> I think that effective mentoring is a critical part of retaining and supporting new teachers. I think that informal mentoring is often the most effective. Many of the programs which exist today are very formal—filling out forms, logging the number of minutes the mentor and mentee met, etc. I think the formal aspect is important because without it there might not be contact but the best mentoring isn't a result of a strict and rigid mentoring program.

The idea of informal mentoring in schools would provide a comparison to formal mentoring and create knowledge and add to the understanding of servant leadership. Furthermore, a comparison between male and female mentors could offer additional detail to a future study of informal and formal mentoring.

A third recommendation for future study involves an investigation of Teacher of the Year collaboration. Each state selects a Teacher of Year and then a national award is given to one. Yet, the entire year the state's Teacher of the Year participates in collaboration with all the other state Teacher of Year recipients. Each of the four participants in this study mentioned that this collaboration was the most beneficial aspect to winning the award and one of the most effective professional development opportunities of their careers. This left the researcher curious about what made this collaboration so effective over other teacher professional development. Research pertaining to this collaboration could add to the knowledge and literature on the servant leadership quality of community building.

Concluding Overview

The purpose of this qualitative narrative study was to describe the mentoring experience of quality K-12 teachers in Missouri schools guided by the lens of servant leadership. This qualitative study focused on the personal narratives of quality K-12 teachers (identified by having won the Missouri Teacher of the Year award), regarding their descriptions and stories of their past mentors. The collection of participants' personal accounts and stories offered a distinctive avenue to gain knowledge and interpret life (Bruce, 2008). The literature review presented knowledge on the problem of teacher attrition, historical background and current applications of mentoring in schools, and the theoretical perspective of servant leadership. The findings of this investigation found that each of the quality teacher participants' mentors utilized the character traits of servant leadership during the mentoring process. Throughout several individual interviews with participants it was clear each had benefited by their mentors' use of servant leadership. Participants' mentors had positively impacted them and the lessons they learned from their mentors continue to guide them in their careers and personal lives.

The data revealed that the mentoring relationship benefited from the mentor's use of servant leadership, offering knowledge for school administrators as they seek to assign mentors to beginning teachers. Great diversity existed in each participant's mentoring experiences and their mentors; yet the themes of servant leadership being applied by the mentors were discovered throughout the narratives. These great educators, who impact students daily, were each guided and led by several people in their lives who took the time to invest in them. Their mentors served them, leaving a legacy where their work might be carried on by those they invested in (Greenleaf, 2002).

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APPENDIX A

University of Missouri—Columbia Institutional Review Board Approval

March 4, 2013

Principal Investigator: Ebbrecht, Audrey P
Department: ELPA

Your Application to project entitled *Investigating the Servant Leader Mentor: An Examination of Mentoring Through the Experiences of K-12 Educators to Promote Selection Strategies for Beginning Teacher Induction Programs.* was reviewed and approved by the MU Campus Institutional Review Board according to terms and conditions described below:

IRB Project Number	1206935
Initial Application Approval Date	March 4, 2013
IRB Expiration Date	March 4, 2014
Level of Review	Exempt
Project Status	Active - Open to Enrollment
Regulation	45 CFR 46.101b(2)
Risk Level	Minimal Risk

The principal investigator (PI) is responsible for all aspects and conduct of this study. The PI must comply with the following conditions of the approval:

1. No subjects may be involved in any study procedure prior to the IRB approval date or after the expiration date.
2. All unanticipated problems, serious adverse events, and deviations must be reported to the IRB within 5 days.
3. All modifications must be IRB approved by submitting the Exempt Amendment prior to implementation unless they are intended to reduce risk.
4. All recruitment materials and methods must be approved by the IRB prior to being used.
5. The Annual Exempt Form must be submitted to the IRB for review and approval at least 30 days prior to the project expiration date.
6. Maintain all research records for a period of seven years from the project completion date.
7. Utilize the IRB stamped document informing subjects of the research and other approved research documents located within the document storage section of eIRB.

If you have any questions, please contact the Campus IRB at 573-882-9585 or umcresearchcirb@missouri.edu.

Thank you,

Charles Borduin, PhD
Campus IRB Chair

APPENDIX B

Informed Consent

1. District Gatekeeper Permission Letter

2. Administrative Permission for Educator Participation

3. Principal Permission for Educator Participation Letter

4. Principal Permission for Educator Participation

5. Letter of Informed Consent: Educator Participant

6. Informed Consent Form: Educator Participant

District Gatekeeper Permission for School District Participation Letter
< Name of District >

Dear < Title > <First Name > < Last Name >:

I would like to request your permission to invite an applicable educator in the < Name of District > to participate in a doctoral research study entitled: *Investigating the Servant Leader Mentor: An Examination of Mentoring Through the Experiences of K-12 Educators to Promote Selection Strategies for Beginning Teacher Induction Programs*. My intention is to examine the narrative stories of quality K-12 educators concerning their thoughts of the mentoring experience from the perspective of the protégé. Information gathered during data collection should be beneficial for K-12 educational leaders as they recruit mentor teachers for beginning educators. This study fulfills my dissertation research for a doctoral degree in Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis from the University of Missouri-Columbia.

For this study, a sampling was selected of educators having received the Missouri Teacher of the Year award who are currently working in K-12 public education as teachers. I am seeking your permission to contact < Name of School Principal > and < Name of Applicable Educator > of < Name of School > in order to invite < Name of Educator >, who meets these criteria, to participate in this study. < Name of Educator > will then participate in two personal interview sessions and one follow up phone interview. For your review, I've attached informed consent forms and the interview protocols.

Participation in the study is completely voluntary. The participant may withdraw from participation at any time < he/she > wishes without penalty, including in the middle of or after completion of the interview. Participant responses and school district will remain confidential and anonymous in the reporting of results. The participant, school, and school district will not be listed in my dissertation or any future study publications.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns about granting participant permission either by phone at (816) 678-8458 or by electronic mail at audreyebbrecht@gmail.com. Additionally, you are welcome to contact the dissertation advisor for this research study, Dr. Barbara Martin, at (660) 543-8823 or by electronic mail at bmartin@ucmo.edu.

If you choose to allow me to contact an educator in your district regarding participation in this research study, please complete the attached permission form. A copy of this letter and your written consent will be provided to you for your records.

Thank you so much for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Audrey Ebbrecht
Doctoral Candidate
University of Missouri-Columbia

Administrative Permission for Educator Participation

I, _____, grant permission for
<Building Name> School in the <School District Name> to be contacted in order to
identify and contact an educator willing to participate in the research study: *Investigating
the Servant Leader Mentor: An Examination of Mentoring Through the Experiences of
K-12 Educators to Promote Selection Strategies for Beginning Teacher Induction
Programs*. This research will be conducted by Audrey Ebbrecht, doctoral candidate at the
University of Missouri-Columbia.

By signing this permission form, I understand that the following safeguards are in place
to ensure protection of the educator choosing to participate in the study:

1. All participation is completely voluntary and a participant may withdraw from the
   study during any phase of the research.
2. All responses will be used for dissertation research and for potential future journal
   publications.
3. All identities and affiliations will be kept confidential during all phases of the
   research study.
4. A researcher will conduct two personal interviews which will take approximately
   one (1) hour each to complete.
5. A third interview will be conducted by phone, taking no more than one (1) hour to
   complete.

Please keep a copy of this permission form and consent letter for your records. If you
choose to grant permission for < Name of District's Educator > to participate in this
study, please complete this *Administrative Permission for Educator Participation* form
and fax it to: Audrey Ebbrecht at (816) 886-5736 or by electronic mail at
audreyebbrecht@gmail.com as soon as possible.

I have read the material above, and have had the opportunity to pose questions
concerning this research study. Questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I grant
permission for an educator in the <District Name> School District to be contacted and
invited to participate in this study.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Title/Position:
_____

School District: _____

**Please return to: Audrey Ebbrecht, 1704 NW Helen Court, Grain Valley, MO 64029
Phone: (816) 678-8458   E-Mail:** audreyebbrecht@gmail.com

Principal Permission for Educator Participation Letter
< Name of School >

Dear < Title > <First Name > < Last Name >:

I would like to request your permission to invite < Name of Participant > to participate in a doctoral research study entitled: *Investigating the Servant Leader Mentor: An Examination of Mentoring Through the Experiences of K-12 Educators to Promote Selection Strategies for Beginning Teacher Induction Programs*. My intention is to examine the narrative stories of quality K-12 educators concerning their thoughts of the mentoring experience from the perspective of the protégé. Information gathered during data collection should be beneficial for K-12 educational leaders as they recruit mentor teachers for beginning educators. This study fulfills my dissertation research for a doctoral degree in Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis from the University of Missouri-Columbia.

For this study, a sampling was selected of educators having received the Missouri Teacher of the Year award who are currently working in K-12 public education as teachers. I am seeking your permission to contact < Name of Participant > and conduct interviews at < Name of School >. Participation will involve two personal interview sessions and one follow up phone interview. For your review, I've attached informed consent forms and interview protocols.

Participation in the study is completely voluntary. < Name of Participant > may withdraw from participation at any time they wish without penalty, including in the middle of or after completion of the interview. Participant responses and school district/school will remain confidential in the reporting of results. The name of the participant, school, and school district will not be listed in my dissertation or any future study publications.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns about granting participant permission either by phone at (816) 678-8458 or by electronic mail at audreyebbrecht@gmail.com. Additionally, you are welcome to contact the dissertation advisor for this research study, Dr. Barbara Martin, at (660) 543-8823 or by electronic mail at bmartin@ucmo.edu.

If you choose to allow me to contact < Name of Participant > regarding participation in this research study, please complete the attached permission form. A copy of this letter and your written consent will be provided to you for your records.

Thank you so much for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Audrey Ebbrecht
Doctoral Candidate
University of Missouri-Columbia

Principal Permission for Educator Participation

I, _____, grant permission for
<Participant Name > to be contacted and interviewed at < School Name > in order to
participate in the research study: *Investigating the Servant Leader Mentor: An
Examination of Mentoring Through the Experiences of K-12 Educators to Promote
Selection Strategies for Beginning Teacher Induction Programs*. This research will be
conducted by Audrey Ebbrecht, doctoral candidate at the University of Missouri-
Columbia.

By signing this permission form, I understand that the following safeguards are in place
to ensure protection of the educator choosing to participate in the study:

1. All participation is completely voluntary and a participant may withdraw from the
   study during any phase of the research.
2. All responses will be used for dissertation research and for potential future journal
   publications.
3. All identities and affiliations will be kept confidential during all phases of the
   research study.
4. A researcher will conduct two personal interviews which will take approximately
   one (1) hour each to complete.
5. A third interview will be conducted by phone, taking no more than one (1) hour to
   complete.

Please keep a copy of this permission form and consent letter for your records. If you
choose to grant permission for your educator to participate in this study, please complete
this *Principal Permission for Educator Participation* form and fax it to: Audrey Ebbrecht
at (816) 886-5736 or by electronic mail at audreyebbrecht@gmail.com as soon as
possible.

I have read the material above, and have had the opportunity to pose questions
concerning this research study. Questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I grant
permission for an educator in < School Name> to be contacted and invited to participate
in this study.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Title/Position:
_____

School District: _____

Please return to: Audrey Ebbrecht, 1704 NW Helen Court, Grain Valley, MO 64029
Phone: (816) 678-8458   E-Mail: audreyebbrecht@gmail.com

Letter of Informed Consent: Educator Participant

[Date]

Dear [Educator Participant]:

Thank you for considering participation in a research study entitled: *Investigating the Servant Leader Mentor: An Examination of Mentoring Through the Experiences of K-12 Educators to Promote Selection Strategies for Beginning Teacher Induction Programs*. This study fulfills my dissertation research for a doctoral degree in Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis from the University of Missouri-Columbia. You have been invited to participate in this research study because you are a quality educator who has won the Missouri Teacher of the Year Award and are currently working in a K-12 public school setting.

Information gathered during data collection should be beneficial for K-12 educational leaders as they recruit mentor teachers for beginning educators. Your participation has been approved by <District Gatekeeper> of <School District>.

Researcher: Audrey Ebbrecht. University of Missouri, Doctoral Candidate. Please contact the researcher by e-mail at audreyebbrecht@gmail.com or by phone at (816) 678-8458.

Dissertation Supervisor: Dr. Barbara Martin, University of Central Missouri, please contact Dr. Martin by phone at (816) 543-8823.

Institutional Review Board: University of Missouri Campus Institutional Review Board, 483 McReynolds Hall, University of Missouri, Columbia, MO 65211. If you have any questions regarding your right as a research participant please contact the Campus IRB at (573) 882-9585.

Purpose: The purpose of this study is to describe the mentoring experience of quality K-12 educators in Missouri schools guided by the lens of servant leadership as perceived by Missouri Teacher of the Year recipients.

The research questions guiding this study are:

1. What are the mentoring experiences of quality K-12 teachers in the state of Missouri?
2. How have mentors, as shared through the narratives of mentees, influenced quality K-12 teachers in their professions?
3. How did mentors of quality K-12 teachers utilize characteristics of servant leadership during the mentoring process?

Procedures: If you decide to give your consent to participate in this study, the researcher will conduct two personal interviews which will take approximately one hour each to complete. A third follow-up interview will be conducted by phone, taking no more than

one hour to complete. The semi-structured interview protocols provide an opportunity for open-ended questions and will be audio taped for accurate record keeping. Interviews will be transcribed verbatim for use by the researcher. All participants will be allowed the opportunity to review the transcripts to ensure accuracy.

Participation: Participation in this research study is voluntary and you may withdraw at any time. If there are any questions regarding participation feel free to contact the researcher at (816) 678-8458 or by e-mail at audreyebbrecht@gmail.com. You may also contact my dissertation supervisor, Dr. Barbara Martin, at (660) 543-8823 or by e-mail at bmartin@ucmo.edu.

Risks: Your choice as to which interview items to answer ensures that there will be no identifiable risk for you greater than that encountered in your everyday life.

Benefits: Participation in this research study will add to the body of knowledge available concerning servant leadership and mentoring.

Confidentiality: As an interview participant your name and answers will remain confidential; only my dissertation supervisor and I would have access to identifiable data. Research collected will be coded for qualitative analysis and summarized for reporting. Your anonymity and confidentiality will be protected in any published results.

Consent: To participate in this study, please sign the attached consent form indicating you understand and agree to participate in the study. A copy of this form will be provided to you for your records.

Sincerely,

Audrey Ebbrecht
Doctoral Candidate
University of Missouri

Informed Consent Form Educator Participant

I, _____, agree to participate in the study
*Investigating the Servant Leader Mentor: An Examination of Mentoring Through the
Experiences of K-12 Educators to Promote Selection Strategies for Beginning Teacher
Induction Programs* conducted by Audrey Ebbrecht, doctoral candidate at the University
of Missouri-Columbia. I understand the following:

- I have been given the opportunity to ask questions prior to the research study and
  those questions have been answered to my satisfaction.
- My responses during the research study will be used for the dissertation and
  future potential publications regarding this subject.
- My participation in the study is voluntary and may be withdrawn at any time
  without penalty, including in the middle of interviews or after it is completed.
- My identity and affiliation will be kept confidential in all phases of the research,
  including any future publications of this study.
- My consent to participate or refusal to participate will not affect employment in
  any way.
- I understand this is a minimal risk study.

Please keep a copy of the consent letter and a signed copy of the consent form for your
records. If you choose to participate in this study, please complete the attached signed
consent form and return it to Audrey Ebbrecht by fax at (816) 886-5736 or by electronic
mail at audreyebbrecht@gmail.com as soon as possible. Please be sure to include contact
information so interview plans can be made and communicated to you. If you have any
questions, please contact the researcher.

I have read the information above and I voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Title/Position: _____

School District:
_____
Contact Information:

Phone: _____ (Circle One: Work,   Home,   Cell)

Best Time to Contact: _____

E-mail: _____

Please return to: Audrey Ebbrecht, 1704 NW Helen Court, Grain Valley, MO 64029
Phone: (816) 678-8458   E-Mail: audreyebbrecht@gmail.com

APPENDIX C

Participant Interview Protocols

1. Inital Participant Interview Protocol

2. Second Participant Interview Protocol

3. Final (Phone) Participant Interview Protocol

Inital Participant Interview Protocol

Participating Educator: _____

Date: _____   Start Time: _____

Introduction:
Greeting (good morning/afternoon), my name is Audrey Ebbrecht and I will be leading the interview today pertaining to your mentoring experiences. Thank you so much for meeting with me and taking your time to discuss your thoughts and experiences from a mentee perspective. I will be recording this interview and taking notes to ensure the accuracy of your information.

I'm curious to know more about your experiences and am approaching this interview as a conversation. I'm hoping to learn more about your personal mentoring story as a mentee through your answers. Simply, I am hoping to listen to your personal story about the people in your life that you consider to have been mentors and their impact on both your personal and professional life. So, please be detailed and feel free to give examples as we discuss. Please let me know if you need a break, as the interview will take approximately an hour.

Questions	Research Question(s)

Introductory Questions: 10-15 minutes

1. What is your current school position and how many years have you been in education?	
2. Describe some of your past educational experiences. *Grade levels/subjects taught.*	Educational Background
3. Explain the process of winning Missouri Teacher of the Year and your reactions to it. *How did the experience impact you personally and professionally?* *What opportunities, if any, has the experience opened for you?*	

Key Questions: 45 minutes

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4. How has your educational background enabled you to impact other educators? *Have you ever mentored another teacher?(Discuss experience)* *What was expected of you during this process?*	Q1

5. Who are some of the men/women you feel have been your mentors during your life (both professionally and personally)?	Q1, Q2

6. Discuss each mentor in detail and how he/she impacted you.	Q2
Why do you feel this person was a mentor to you?	Q2
How would you describe his/her personality?	Q3
Explain how this person influenced you and what are some the key lessons he/she taught you?	Q2
What specific goals did this person help you accomplish? *How did they help you accomplish these goals?*	Q2, Q3

7. What changes have occurred in your personal and professional life because of your mentor's influence?	Q2
How were these changes accomplished?	Q3

8. What key qualities should a mentor have? Why?	Q1, Q2
Share any examples you have of your mentors displaying these qualities.	Q3

Closing Questions: 5-10 minutes

9. Beginning teacher attrition rates are a concern for school districts as many beginning teachers are leaving the profession. What role does mentoring play in the process of keeping quality teachers?	Q1

10. Do you have any other information you would like to share with me?	Q1, Q2, Q3

Second Participant Interview Protocol

Participating Educator: _____

Date: _____   Start Time: _____

Introduction:
Greeting (good morning/afternoon), I hope things have been going well for you since the last time we met. Thank you again for taking time out of your schedule to meet with me. Today I would like to ask you some follow-up questions pertaining to your experience as a mentee. Again, I will be recording this interview and taking notes to ensure the accuracy of your information.

I'm hoping you can expand further on some of the information you shared with me in our initial interview. Please feel free to use detailed descriptions as we discuss or add to anything you shared initially if new thoughts have occurred. Please let me know if you need a break, as the interview will take approximately an hour.

Questions	Research Question(s)

Introductory Questions: 5 minutes

1. Since our last interview have you remembered any information you would like to share to expand on any of your mentoring stories? *What thoughts/feelings did you have after the initial interview in relation to your responses?*	Follow-Up

Key Questions: 45 minutes

1. In your experience as a mentee (officially or unofficially)… *(Be sure to include any stories or details you have.)*	
a. What did the sharing/listening roles look like? *Did active listening play a part for either you/your mentor?*	Q3: 1
b. Did empathy play a role in the relationship?	Q3: 2
c. Explain how mentors encouraged you to move forward in life/career. *How committed to your growth were your mentors?* *What do you think was your mentor's goal in mentoring you?* *How did your mentor encourage you to take action/change?*	Q3: 5, 9

2. Explain your perceptions of your mentor's awareness.
    Self and World Awareness
    Is awareness important in a mentoring relationship?
	Q3: 4

3. How did your mentor approach/solve problems? *Did your mentor use discernment in decision making?*	Q3: 6 Q3: 7

4. What benefits did you receive from your relationship with your mentor?	Q3: 3
5. What benefits do you think your mentor received from the experience of mentoring you? *Why do you think your mentors decided to mentor you?*	Q3: 8
6. What benefits (if any) did the community/organization receive because of your mentee experience?	Q3: 10

Closing Questions: 5-10 minutes

7. Do you have any other information you would like to share with me?	Q1, Q2, Q3

Final (Phone) Participant Interview Protocol

Participating Educator: _____

Date: _____   Start Time: _____

<u>Introduction</u>:
Greeting (good morning/afternoon), this is Audrey Ebbrecht and I hope school and life
are going smoothly for you. Thank you for taking time to speak with me on the phone
about my last few questions pertaining to my study. Today's questions are to conclude
interviews; please feel free to add details and expand on any of the experiences you
have/will share with me today. I will be recording this interview and taking notes to
ensure the accuracy of your information. This interview will take no longer than one hour
to complete.

Questions	Research Question(s)

Wrap-Up Questions: 15-60 minutes

Questions	Research Question(s)
2. Since our last two interviews have you remembered any information you would like to share to expand on any of your mentoring stories? *What thoughts/feelings did you have after the two interviews in relation to your responses?*	Follow-Up
3. What role do mentors play in education? *What are your thoughts on school mentoring programs?*	Q1, Q2, Q3
4. Has it been beneficial to discuss your past mentors? Explain.	Q2, Q3
5. Overall, what are your thoughts on mentoring and the mentee experience? *Benefits? Shortcomings?*	Q1, Q2
6. What final comments/additional information would you like to share with me?	Q1, Q2, Q3

Thank you so much for taking your time to speak and share with me. Salutations (Have a
good day/evening).

APPENDIX D

Predetermined Data Codes for Participants and Interviews

1. Educator Participant 1 (E1)

2. Educator participant 2 (E2)

3. Educator participant 3 (E3)

4. Educator participant 4 (E4)

5. Educator 1 first interview (E1:1)

6. Educator 1 second interview (E1:2)

7. Educator participant 1 third interview (E1:3)

8. Educator 2 first interview (E2:1)

9. Educator 2 second interview (E2:2)

10. Educator participant 2 third interview (E2:3)

11. Educator 3 first interview (E3:1)

12. Educator 3 second interview (E3:2)

13. Educator participant third interview 3 (E3:3)

14. Educator 4 first interview (E4:1)

15. Educator 4 second interview (E4:2)

16. Educator participant 4 third interview (E4:3)

17. Fieldnotes educator participant 1 (E1:F)

18. Fieldnotes educator participant 2 (E2:F)

19. Fieldnotes educator participant 3 (E3:F)

20. Fieldnotes educator participant 4 (E4:F).

VITA

Audrey Ebbrecht was born in Kansas City, Missouri, to James and Veronica Taylor. She graduated from Blue Springs South High School in 2000. In 2003 she earned her Bachelor of Science degree in Middle School Education and received her middle school certification in communication arts and social science. In 2006 she obtained her Masters of Education with an emphasis in literacy, adding to her teaching certificate K-12 special reading. She then earned a Doctorate in Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis form the University of Missouri—Columbia in 2013.

Audrey's teaching career has been devoted to training students how to think critically and understand the value of historical impact. She encourages her students to be life-long learners by stressing the importance of reading and literature. In 2005 she became a teacher consultant for the National Writing Project and in 2008 she had the privilege to be a Missouri STARR teacher, traveling the state engaging in professional development with teachers from all content areas. This is Audrey's ninth year teaching in the middle school setting in Blue Springs, Missouri. She has taught a variety of grade levels and subjects including reading, social studies, and communication arts. Additionally, she teaches a children's literature class for elementary teachers at Metropolitan Community College Blue River since 2009. Her research interests include reading comprehension and curriculum development.

Audrey Ebbrecht currently resides in Grain Valley, Missouri, with her husband.