

Public Abstract

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Title:DEVELOPMENT OF HIGH SCHOOL SCIENCE TEACHERS AS TEACHER LEADERS AT VARIOUS STAGES OF THEIR CAREER: A MULTIPLE CASE STUDY

This dissertation study investigated the processes and pathways through which teachers in different career stages develop as teacher leaders. Teacher leadership involves an amalgam of skills and personal features; it takes place when an individual is willing to take charge and respond to the demand of a particular situation, with the intention of both personal and common good that finally results in improvements in student learning. I used a multiple case study approach to study the development of three high school science teacher leaders. Identity was used as the theoretical framework. The results indicated both similarities and differences in teachers' processes and pathways toward leadership development. The overall leadership development process across all three participants involved an alignment and synergy among their leadership views, leadership practices, and identity as leaders; however, the particular pathways of leadership development were unique for each teacher depending upon their personal priorities, school context and prior life experiences. This study adds to a growing body of knowledge about teacher leadership identity and provides new information regarding teachers' capacity for leadership at different stages of their careers. Identification of various leadership pathways and contextual factors related to enhancement of teacher leadership can help professional developers, teacher educators, school administrators and principals in tailoring programs according to teachers' individual needs.